

Copy of Email – sent by Chairman of SCEG to Multilateral Policy Directorate at the FCO

From: Graham Kerr

Sent: 03 July 2018 06:53

Subject: HMG - SCEG Meeting:

The partnership between the UK Government and SCEG, endorsed by Ministers, has served both parties extremely well over these past 7 years and, whilst the security architecture has evolved in that time, we agree that there is requirement to reassess SCEG's roles for the future. Whatever the conclusions of that process the need for a robust partnership between the private security sector and government departments will remain as important as ever.

Let me say from the outset that the SCEG Executive Committee wishes to thank you for your commitment and engagement with the SCEG during your tenure in the Multilateral Policy Directorate within the FCO. As the Team Leader for Responsible Business you have a direct interest in how the private security sector continues to develop and places human rights and ethical standards at the heart of their business models and your guidance (plus that of your predecessors) has been influential in that development. That work will remain an enduring task because, as you would recognize, Human Rights standards are constantly evolving and necessarily so. That the two international standards (ISO 18788 and 28007) are widely recognised is in no small part due to the efforts of the SCEG Executive Committee and SCEG as an organisation will continue to promote these standards nationally - and internationally as far as is practicable.

You have undertaken a review of the relationship between government and the SCEG - reflecting in part your concern that you have found it difficult to justify attending the SCEG Quarterly meetings which your predecessors have attended. Clearly with the development of the international standards some of the intensity in the engagement between the FCO Multilateral Policy Directorate and SCEG has reduced but I hasten to add that Executive Committee always values your contribution to SCEG meetings. The SCEG engagement with government is of course much wider than the Multilateral Policy Directorate and encompasses a range of government departments and other directorates within the FCO.

The draft MOU that you shared with us only last week has helpfully provided a catalyst for a wider discussion within SCEG as to how to place the partnership on a trajectory for further success for both parties, building on the excellent collaboration of these past 7 years. All SCEG members recognize that the relationship between the UK government and SCEG is fundamentally important and it is therefore vital that any proposed changes are thoroughly considered. The draft as it stands raises some important issues that will need careful consideration before industry is in a position to respond to government and it would be

irresponsible to consider such a fundamentally important document out of committee, particularly given the short time available (a weekend with a couple of days either side). One significant constraint I have is that all the industry members of the committee have 'day jobs' working for private companies and a limited capacity to engage on SCEG matters out of committee. Given these constraints SCEG industry members need time to define the relationship from an industry perspective before responding to government.

As I have said as Chairman of SCEG I have the responsibility to ensure that the industry voice is thoroughly considered and heard. To that end I have convened a meeting of the SCEG EC Industry Members on Wednesday (4th July 2018) to discuss the relationship in detail and the draft MOU. I must therefore continue to insist upon a postponement of the bilateral meeting on that day. Once we have completed our deliberations we will revert and look for an opportunity to put in place a bilateral meeting with government colleagues and your successor.

Any inconvenience is regretted but it is not in anyone's interest to hold a meeting like this ill-prepared. This is not as you suggest a defensive exercise, on the contrary, we believe that the relationship with government is in good health and it will continue to develop for the mutual benefit of both parties. We will look to respond to government in a most positive fashion seeking to exploit opportunities for mutual benefit.

Your characterisation of the current state of the relationship is not one we in the Executive Committee recognise. On the contrary, from our experience, SCEG engages with a number of government departments on a regular sustained and mutually beneficial basis. Recent engagement with the MOD reinforces that point. Over the last 9 months in response to MOD policy development for the use of PSCs the SCEG EC has played a significant role. SCEG provided a high-level panel at the WFA workshop and SCEG has provided bespoke briefings to MOD officials on the following: DoD approach to using PSCs, Insurance implications, accredited certification and international standards. These briefings have been extremely well received by our military colleagues and have directly informed their policy work.

In parallel SCEG has worked closely with PJHQ colleagues in the development of a tender process for a pilot in the Horn of Africa. Much of SCEG's work is on the maritime side which leads to regular engagement with DIT, DFT and the Home Office. SCEG is a standing member of the NMSC(I) and has played a key role in the Maritime 2050 development which is sponsored by DfT. Recently SCEG responding to the Shipping Minister's objective to increase the UK Shipping Registry facilitated a meeting in Athens for DIT officials to meet representatives of the Greek shipping community using a SCEG PMSC. Most departments are seized rightly by the prosperity agenda and recognise the important role SCEG companies play in the security export market. Understandably you may well be unsighted to much of this engagement.

Let me conclude by saying that we greatly appreciate your engagement with SCEG during your current posting at the FCO. We also appreciate the work you have initiated to examine

the relationship between government and SCEG to ensure that it continues to develop for the benefit of both parties. Your draft MOU is a useful first step and industry now needs to consult to provide a positive response to that work. Since we only saw the draft a few working days ago it will not be appropriate to meet with government colleagues this week.

Regretfully, this will mean I suspect that we will not formally meet with you and government colleagues but with your successor. So, may I take this opportunity to pass on an enormous vote of thanks on behalf of the SCEG Executive Committee for your engagement with and interest in SCEG during your tenure and we wish you every success in your next appointment.

With best wishes,

Graham Kerr
Chairman of SCEG