



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Rt Hon Alister Jack MP
Secretary of State for Scotland
Dover House
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AU

**Net Zero, Energy and Transport
Committee**

c/o Clerk to the Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

By email only

netzero.committee@parliament.scot

9 October 2023

Dear Alister,

Invitation to a meeting of the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee

Thank you for your [letter of 28 September](#) regarding our invitation to a Committee meeting to discuss Scotland's deposit return scheme (DRS) and your earlier [response of 20 July](#) to our initial invitation.

The Committee is disappointed that our invitation appears to have been misunderstood. We understand that matters of Scottish Government policy are, of course, best addressed to the Scottish Government. I can assure you the Committee is carrying out this scrutiny, questioning the Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity closely on this issue at a series of meetings, most recently at our [meeting on 26 September](#).

However, the Committee still wishes to discuss this matter with the UK Government to better understand how the exercise of powers in the UK Internal Markets Act 2020 has had a role in relation to the DRS. As those powers were exercised by the UK Government, we consider that it is the UK Government, and not the Scottish Government, that is best placed to help us understand this. We appreciate that the interaction of the 2020 Act with devolved powers is a new, complex and developing area for devolved Parliaments to have to grapple with, and we want to better understand the factors that are in play. We can only do so by hearing from both governments.

Furthermore, it appears to us that the intergovernmental relations in relation to the DRS are worthy of further scrutiny. I'm sure you'll appreciate that it is difficult for the Committee to understand the intergovernmental relations at play without hearing from both governments, and as a Committee we unanimously agreed it was imperative to ensure the UK Government had an opportunity to explain its role, rather than relying solely on the testimony of the Scottish Government. We'd be particularly interested in discussing how the

Resources and Waste Common Framework was utilised in this context and any lessons to be learned in regard to that. Again, this is something the Committee would find it impossible to consider even-handedly without having heard the views of both governments.

As I previously highlighted, the difficulties around the DRS are a matter of great public interest and concern in Scotland. We would therefore like to ensure robust scrutiny is conducted. It would therefore be appreciated if the UK Government could make time to appear before the Committee to allow it to understand precisely what has led to the current state of affairs, and how things will progress from this point to ensure no further negative impact.

I again request that further consideration is given to our invitation.

I request a response by 30 October.

Yours sincerely,

Edward Mountain MSP
Convener
Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee