

Office of the Registrar of Consultant Lobbyists

Summary of investigation

July 2019 to September 2019

Organisation or person investigated: Finn Communications Ltd

Matter(s) investigated: Activities of Finn Communications in provision of secretariat to All Party Parliamentary Group for British Bioethanol.

Registrar's decision: Finn Communications Ltd's activity in support of the APPG for British Bioethanol did not amount to consultant lobbying activity.

Summary of rationale for decision: Clarification from Finn Communications Ltd, subsequently confirmed by the Chair of the APPG for British Bioethanol, that their secretariat services amounted to taking the note of an AGM on one occasion. As there was no communication with Government by Finn Communications in this role, it did not meet a key criterion in the statutory definition of consultant lobbying.

Chronology:

17 July 2019	Notification received from a third party that Finn Communications Ltd (an organisation not on the statutory Register of Consultant Lobbyists) was listed as providing secretariat services to the APPG for British Bioethanol, on both the APPG's website and the APPG's registration papers with Parliament.
17 July 2019	Letter from Registrar to Finn Communications. Explained remit of Registrar, legislation and guidance on consultant lobbying, and indicative evidence received, and asked for a response.
24 July 2019	Reply received from Finn Communications, stating that they did not consider themselves as having provided secretariat services to the APPG on an ongoing basis. Support had been provided on a single occasion in the form of agreeing to take the minutes of an AGM of the APPG, with no communications made to Government by them on behalf of the APPG.
31 July 2019	Letter from Registrar to Nic Dakin MP, Chair of APPG for British Bioethanol, seeking confirmation of the extent of support provided by Finn Communications to the APPG.
18 September 2019	Substantive response from office of Nic Dakin MP, confirming Finn Communications' description of the extent of their support to the APPG. Confirmation that formal record of support to the APPG would be amended appropriately.
19 September 2019	Registrar determines Finn Communications did not appear to meet the statutory criteria for consultant lobbying.