

# PRESS RELEASE

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**TASK FORCE ANNOUNCES PROJECT FOR SIMPLIFICATION OF AN  
AREA OF EUROPEAN LEGISLATION -  
HAVE YOUR SAY**

David Arculus, chairman of the Better Regulation Task Force, today announced the second of the Task Force's forthcoming programme of studies for 2003/04.

Mr Arculus said: "Our role is to examine issues where regulation can be made to work more effectively. And with European legislation accounting for around 40% of significant new regulatory proposals - much higher in some sectors - this must be a hot topic. We have worked on the UK end of EU regulation, how it is negotiated and transposed, and have made recommendations on how it can be improved<sup>1</sup>. But now, for the first time we are going to do some work on the European end of the problem.

"In February 2003 the European Commission launched a new programme for simplifying EU legislation, as part of its Better Regulation initiative. The Commission described it as the beginning of 'a long-term process of gradual modernisation and simplification of existing legislation and policies – not to deregulate or cut back the acquis (the body of EU law), but to replace past policy approaches with better-adapted and proportionate regulatory instruments.' Under this programme the Commission will make recommendations to the Council and Parliament to achieve regulatory change in existing legislation.

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“The Task Force will undertake a review of an area of European legislation that would support and feed into this simplification programme. We would like to identify an area of existing European legislation, where the regulations have built up in an inconsistent, confusing or burdensome manner. Our review will focus on the actual European Directives or Regulations and the problems that are being experienced with them. We are looking for the burning issues and proposals that have been put to us so far include data protection or waste legislation.

“We are calling upon stakeholders to suggest specific regulations or Directives that they want to see reviewed, and the problems associated with them. We are keen to work on issues with wide relevance.”

Michael Gibbons, who will lead the Task Force’s work on European simplification, said: “The Task Force is calling for suggestions of legislation for review from as wide a range of stakeholders as possible – including large and small businesses, trade associations, trade unions, consumer groups, the voluntary sector and central and local government. This is the first time we will be making recommendations to the European Commission and it is an ideal opportunity to spread our better regulation message further afield. We plan to focus on only one particular regulatory regime for this study, but will pass on other suggestions to the European Commission, and will consider them ourselves as candidates for next year’s work programme.”

Individuals or bodies wishing to give evidence to the review should do so by contacting the Better Regulation Task Force Secretariat at 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 22 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2WH. Tel: 020 7276 2142; e.mail: [taskforce@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:taskforce@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk) . Promising ideas will be followed up until the end of December 2003 but the sooner the Task Force receives them, the better: ideally by the end of November.

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<sup>1</sup> Environmental Regulation: Getting the Message Across. July 2003

## NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The Better Regulation Task Force is an independent advisory body set up in 1997. Appointments are made by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, and are unpaid. A team of officials based in the Cabinet Office supports the Task Force.

2. The Task Force's terms of reference are "To advise the Government on action to ensure that regulation and its enforcement are proportionate, accountable, consistent, transparent and targeted."

### 3. Task Force membership

David Arculus, Chairman	Severn Trent plc
Teresa Graham, Deputy Chair	Baker Tilly
Matti Alderson	Fire Horses
Stephen Falder	HMG Paints
Michael Gibbons	Consultant: utility sector
Kevin Hawkins	Safeway Stores plc
Deirdre Hutton	National Consumer Council
Simon Petch	CONNECT (retired from 6 may)
Ian Peters	Engineering Employers Federation
Penelope Rowlatt	Independent economist
Janet Russell	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Sukhvinder Stubbs	Barrow Cadbury Trust
Tim Sweeney	Independent consultant: financial services
Rex Symons	Bournemouth Primary Care NHS Trust
Simon Ward	Consultant: hospitality industry
Victoria Younghusband	Lawrence Graham

### 5. The proposed terms of reference for the Task Force study are:

- To contribute to the European Commission's simplification programme by applying the principles of better regulation – proportionality, accountability, consistency, transparency and targeting - to examine burdensome, complex or inconsistent requirements in one or more European Directives or regulations;
- To look at evidence in a number of member states;
- To identify European partners and stakeholders for our work;
- To make recommendations to the European Commission.
- The work will be led by Michael Gibbons; supported by Matti Alderson, Tim Sweeney, Rex Symons, Simon Ward

6. Journalists wishing to speak to David Arculus or Michael Gibbons should contact Sue Youngman or Susanna Collins at Flagship Consulting on 020 7886 8440. Flagship deals with all media enquiries and press issues for the Task Force.

Media copies of the Better Regulation principles leaflet and Task Force reviews are available from: Susanna Collins or Barnaby Fry at Flagship Consulting

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Others can obtain copies from:

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22 Whitehall

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Tel: 0207 276 2142.

or at the Task Force website [www.brtf.gov.uk](http://www.brtf.gov.uk)