

Andrew McCormick

From: Andrew McCormick [Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry]
Sent: 4 January, 2017 9:16 PM
To: 'McCormick, Andrew (DFE)'
Subject: RHI: Emails from Anonymous Source

Simon,

I need to make you and copy recipients aware of some materials received just at the end of the working day today.

An envelope was delivered to my office, which according to a post office label (insufficient postage had been applied) had been posted on or before 23 December. It contained two documents containing emails from July 2015. All were between individuals in private sector organisations, ie no departmental email addresses appeared.

The point is that these emails appear to show that DETI officials had briefed some players in the renewables sector about the emerging proposals to change the RHI tariffs in July 2015:

- one email was dated 1 July 2015 (ie **before** the key submission of 8 July to the then Minister recommending the changes to tariffs, though after the Minister and SpAd had been briefed on the problem) – that email shows that the inference drawn by the person briefed by officials was that applicants should move quickly to ensure they secured access to the favourable tariff that was then in force, and the email passes on that advice;
- the second key document was dated 23 July, and refers to detailed briefing by officials about the emerging proposals and disclosing October as the projected implementation date for change, though it was also mentioned that that was dependent on the timing of Ministerial approval.

Clearly these are significant in relation to the question of the factors that led to the spike in RHI applications in Autumn 2015. So I am passing the documents to PwC to enable them to build them into their preparations for the second round of interviews in the fact-finding exercise (which already include plans to re-interview the two officials named in the documents). That will ensure that we retain a process that is both rigorous in establishing the facts and fair to all the individuals concerned. PwC **may** want to ask for input from the authors and recipients of these emails, not least to test their authenticity.

Obviously I cannot be sure if these emails have been sent to anyone else, nor do I have any way of communicating to the sender that I have received them and will be acting on the information as described above.

I will keep you informed of any developments.

Many thanks.

Andrew