



Mr Peter McWilliams

Mr & Mrs Peter McWilliams

Personal information redacted by the RHI
Inquiry

06 June 2018

Dear Sir

**Re: The Independent Public Inquiry into the Non Domestic Renewable Heat
Incentive (RHI) Scheme**

**Provision of a Section 21 Notice requiring the provision of evidence in the
form of a written statement**

I am writing to you in my capacity as Solicitor to the Independent Public Inquiry into the Non Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) Scheme (known as 'the RHI Inquiry') which has been set up under the Inquiries Act 2005 ('the Act').

I enclose a copy of the RHI Inquiry's Terms of Reference for your information.

You may be aware from media reports that the RHI Inquiry is conducting its investigations into the matters set out in its Terms of Reference. The Inquiry is continuing with the process of gathering all of the relevant documentation from relevant departments, organisations and individuals. In addition, the Inquiry has also now begun the process of requiring persons who have been, or who may have been, involved in the range of matters which come within the Inquiry's Terms of Reference to provide written evidence to the Inquiry Panel.

In this context, it would be of assistance to the Inquiry to have a statement from you setting out your involvement with the Non Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme in Northern Ireland ('the Scheme').

In keeping with the approach we are taking with others, the RHI Inquiry is now issuing to you a Statutory Notice (known as a 'Section 21 Notice') pursuant to its powers to compel the provision of evidence in the form of a written statement in relation to the matters falling within its Terms of Reference.

The Section 21 Notice enclosed with this letter requires you to provide evidence to the RHI Inquiry Panel in the form of a written statement addressing the matters identified in the Schedule to the Section 21 Notice. As the text of the Section 21 Notice explains, you are required by law to comply with it.

The aim of the enclosed Notice is to require you to provide all relevant evidence within your knowledge which is pertinent to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference. The Schedule to the enclosed Section 21 Notice provides further detail as to the matters which should be covered in the written evidence which is required from you. In the event that there is a category of information in respect of which you have no evidence, please state this in your response. Where you can provide evidence, then the more comprehensive your statement is, the less likely it is that the Inquiry will have to revert to you at a later stage for clarification, although in many cases this is likely to be necessary to some degree.

If it would assist you, I am happy to meet with you (or your legal representative) to discuss what evidence you may be able to provide and whether it is covered by the Inquiry's request.

Receipt of this correspondence and its enclosures places you under a duty of confidentiality to the RHI Inquiry in respect of them. You may share the correspondence and the enclosed Notice with a legal representative or representatives, but neither you nor they may show, communicate the contents of, or provide this correspondence or the Notice to any other person or organisation without the express permission of the RHI Inquiry. Any breach of this duty of confidentiality

is actionable at the suit of the Inquiry Chairman.

You will also find attached to the Section 21 Notice a Guidance Note explaining the nature of a Section 21 Notice and the procedures that the RHI Inquiry has adopted in relation to such a notice. In particular, you are asked to provide your evidence in the form of the template witness statement which is also enclosed with this correspondence.

Given the tight time-frame within which the RHI Inquiry must operate, the Chairman of the Inquiry would be grateful if you would comply with the requirements of the Section 21 Notice as soon as possible and, in any event, by the date set out for compliance in the Notice itself.

Finally, I would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this correspondence and the enclosed notice by email to Patrick.Butler@rhiinquiry.org.

Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss any matter arising.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick Butler". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Patrick Butler

Solicitor to the RHI Inquiry

02890408928

SCHEDULE**[No 108 of 2018]**

1. Provide details of your occupation(s) and/or employment during the period November 2012 to the date of answering this Notice.
2. Explain, in respect of any sector in which you did business in the said period, whether your decision to enter this sector and/or the timing of such entry was related in any way to the availability of subsidies under Non Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme in Northern Ireland ("the RHI Scheme").
3. Explain why you / your business first became interested in the RHI Scheme.
4. Please explain the direct or indirect involvement that you had with, or in relation to, the RHI Scheme or any aspect of it prior to its suspension in February 2016. In particular, please provide full details of the following:
 - a. Why you decided to apply to the Scheme;
 - b. The date each of your biomass boilers was installed;
 - c. The date you made each application to the Scheme;
 - d. The date each of your biomass installations was accredited;
 - e. The installed capacity (in kW) and efficiency of each of your biomass boilers;
 - f. The date upon which you received your first RHI payment;
 - g. The person or company you employed to provide and install each of your biomass boilers; and
 - h. The person or company, if any, you engaged to assist with each of your applications to the Scheme.
5. If you are or have been engaged in work in the poultry sector, provide, for the period from November 2012 to date, a summary of the following:
 - a. The dimensions (length and breadth) of each of your poultry houses;

in contact with any Minister, Special Adviser ('SpAd') or Civil Servant in respect of proposed changes to the Scheme? If so, please provide full details including, in respect of each such contact, who it was with, when it occurred, how it occurred and (insofar as you can) the substance of what was said, discussed or communicated.

- e. Please explain, in respect of your installation(s) for which application for accreditation to the Scheme was made within the above period, how long it took from ordering the relevant plant to it being installed and commissioned.
 - f. Please explain any steps taken by you to expedite your application to the Scheme, including steps taken in order to ensure that your application was submitted in advance of 18 November 2015.
7. Please advise whether you have any connection with the Ulster Farmer's Union ('UFU') (such as, for example, being a member of it) and, if you do have such a connection, please provide full details of same.
 8. Please advise whether you have any connection with Moy Park (such as, for example, supplying chickens to Moy Park and/or being a member of a Moy Park Growers' Association) and, if you do have such a connection, please provide full details of same.
 9. Specify whether you were encouraged by the UFU and/or Moy Park and/or anyone connected with either entity to seek accreditation under the RHI Scheme, were assisted in doing so, or were provided with information which encouraged you to apply or to consider applying or which influenced the timing of such application. Please provide full details of such information, including, but not limited to, the identity of the person(s) providing the information, the relevant dates and any and all documentation relating to this.
 10. Specify whether you were encouraged by any other person to seek accreditation under the RHI Scheme, were assisted in doing so, or were

provided with information which encouraged you to apply or to consider applying or which influenced the timing of any such application. Please provide full details, including the identity of the person or persons concerned and the relevant dates.

11. Specify whether you used any information which had been shared with you to advise, encourage, assist, or cause other persons to apply, or consider applying, for accreditation under the RHI Scheme. In respect of any such instance, please provide full details, including (but not limited to) the information you shared, the third party concerned and the date of any steps taken by you in that regard.
12. Specify whether you are aware of anyone sharing information in relation to the RHI Scheme (in particular, but not limited to, information about the amendment of the Scheme or the introduction of costs controls into the Scheme) with any other persons, giving details of the identity of such other persons and what information was shared in relation to the RHI Scheme, as far as you can.
13. Please provide details of each and every communication, either direct or indirect, between you and any other person in relation to the RHI Scheme (providing the nature, date, and place of each communication as well as details of the persons between whom each such communication occurred).
14. Specify any email addresses used by you and any telephone numbers used by you in relation to any communication about the RHI Scheme.
15. Specify when you first became aware that tariffs payable under the RHI Scheme exceeded the cost of biomass fuel used to produce heat and/or the cost of producing a unit of heat (so that there was an incentive in some cases to produce heat merely to make profit from the Scheme) and how you so became aware. Without prejudice to the foregoing, please also provide details of the following:

- a. The type of biomass fuel burned by each of your / your business' biomass boilers (for example, wood pellets or wood chips) and, in the case of wood chip (if applicable), the moisture content of same;
 - b. Whether you / your business were able to obtain a discount on fuel prices by, for example, bulk buying, group buying, and/or entering into a long-term supply contract and, if you were so able, please provide details of this;
 - c. The prices paid by you / your business for each fuel type (in £/tonne and/or p/kWh) including details of how these prices changed over time (if applicable);
 - d. Any other operating costs you / your business incurred (e.g. electricity) when producing heat with biomass fuel;
 - e. The steps (if any) taken by you to alert other persons (including, for example, DETI or Ofgem officials, politicians, their advisers, and/or other persons in the commercial world) to the fact that the relevant RHI tariff exceeded the cost of biomass fuel and/or the cost of producing a unit of heat with biomass fuel.
16. The Enhanced Capital Allowances Scheme (ECA) was available for certain renewable energy technologies, including some of those falling within the RHI Scheme. This enabled businesses to claim 100% tax relief on the purchase of eligible equipment in the year of purchase. In relation to this, please explain:
- a. Whether you availed of such relief in respect of any of your biomass installations;
 - b. If so, please explain:
 - i. At what stage you became aware of the ECA scheme and how you became so aware;

- ii. Whether you were encouraged to avail of the said tax relief, providing all relevant details of who encouraged you, and when and how they did so;
 - iii. Whether the prospect of benefitting from this tax relief enhanced your interest in the RHI Scheme;
 - iv. Whether you were aware at any time of any changes that occurred in respect of the ECA system (such as, for example, the removal of any renewable heat technology from the list of technologies eligible for 100% write-off in a single year), including, in particular, how you became so aware;
- c. The date(s) on which you purchased your biomass boiler(s);
 - d. The date(s) on which you registered with the ECA scheme;
 - e. The amount of tax relief you benefitted from for each biomass installation under the ECA scheme, providing all documentation in relation to this;
 - f. Whether you applied for, received or in any way benefitted from any further form of financial assistance in order to purchase and/or install any biomass boiler(s) and related heating systems which are accredited under the RHI Scheme, (including but not limited to, grant aid, interest-free loan, tax relief or any other form of financial incentive).
17. Except to the extent that it has already been comprehensively addressed in your answers to the foregoing questions, provide details of your past and current connections (if any) with the following, insofar as they are of potential relevance to the RHI Scheme and the Inquiry's Terms of Reference:
- a. The Democratic Unionist Party ('DUP');

- b. Action Renewables;
- c. The Renewable Heat Association of Northern Ireland ('RHANI').

18. Except to the extent that it has already been comprehensively addressed in your answers to the foregoing questions, please set out any potential risks, flaws, problems, anomalies, loopholes, or other issues regarding the RHI Scheme which came to your attention, setting out details of when you first became aware of each such issue and the actions (if any) taken by you as a result.
19. Except to the extent that it has already been comprehensively addressed in your answers to the foregoing questions, please provide any further evidence within your knowledge or belief which is relevant to the matters that the RHI Inquiry is investigating as set out in the RHI Inquiry's Terms of Reference.

NOTE:

It is important for the efficiency of the RHI Inquiry that the issues identified above are addressed as fully as possible and by reference, where available, to the dates and locations of specific incidents to which reference is made. The statement should be broken down into paragraphs, which should be numbered sequentially from '1' to the end. The use of appropriate section headings or sub-headings is also encouraged. A template witness statement is provided with this Notice for your assistance and should be used as the format for your response.

**RENEWABLE HEAT
INCENTIVE INQUIRY**

INQUIRY INTO THE RENEWABLE HEAT INCENTIVE SCHEME

RHI REF: NOTICE 108 OF 208

DATE: 7TH SEPTEMBER 2018

WITNESS STATEMENT OF: PETER McWILLIAMS,

Personal Information redacted by the RHI Inquiry

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I, PETER McWILLIAMS, will say as follows:-

1. I am a farmer and poultry producer.
2. I have been producing broilers for Moy Park for about 26 years. Prior to that I worked for Moy Park as a chicken chatcher. I also am a farmer with a suckling cow herd. I have approximately 170,000 broilers on my farm all the time over 7-8 crops. I have 6 hen houses which I have had for a number of years prior to RHI.
3. My houses were heated by gas supplied by Calor prior to the changeover to pellets. The reasons I decided to move to pellets were as follows:-
 - a) The reduced costs.
 - b) There was less litter because the heat was drier.
 - c) I got full hockburn and footburn bonus because the litter was drier.
 - d) The working conditions in the houses were healthier because the heat was drier.
 - e) I was reducing CO2 omissions.
4.
 - a) I decided to apply for the Scheme in or about the month of July 2015.
 - b) My recollection is that the boilers were installed in or about September/October 2015.
 - c) I made my submission to the Scheme on the 7th of October 2015.
 - d) I received accreditation on the 24th of December 2015.
 - e) I bought 6 boilers at 90KW.
 - f) I received my first payment in or about January 2016.
 - g) As per attached documentation the boilers were supplied by FG Plumbing, Heating and Renewables LTD.
 - h) None.
5.
 - a) Two of my poultry houses have dimensions 250 x 48 and hold 22,600 birds each. I have four houses with dimensions 260 x 66, each holding 33,000 birds.
 - b) See a above.
 - c) The normal heat demand for each house is 90KW but it could vary slightly when a new crop is going in as the demand would then be greater.

6. a) I made an application at this time. I was aware of it earlier but I hesitated because of the outlay. My outlay was over £300,000 and I didn't want to have any borrowings from the Bank as it was a significant investment.
 - b) I remember attending a Broiler Growers Meeting with Moy Park and Tom McKeown of Moy Park encouraged me to enter the scheme. I don't remember exactly what the reason was but I assume it was for the reasons stated above.
 - c) This was never referred to.
 - d) No.
 - e) The Invoices appear to show that they were ordered in July 2015 and installed in about September 2015.
 - f) I don't recall being aware of any cut off date. I made the application at that time following discussion referred to above.
7. I am a member of Ulster Farmers Union and have been for years but don't have any particular connections with that organisation or anyone in it.
8. I have been a producer with Moy Park for 26 years and previously worked for them as a chicken catcher.
9. As referred to above I did attend at Group Meetings and was encouraged to join. I do recall a lot of others at those meetings who had already joined prior to me. I don't recall being encouraged much before this date to apply although it appears that a lot of other people were in ahead of me.
10. See above.
11. No.
12. No.
13. No other than at Group Meeting referred to above.
14. None.
15. I was aware that the Tariff was more than the cost of the fuel when I applied although this wasn't the whole story as there was a very high installation cost and very high servicing cost.
- a) Wood pellets.
 - b) No.
 - c) £180 per ton.
 - d) I used electricity to drive the boilers. This would have cost about £600-£700 per crop and there were 7-8 crops per year. There was also an annual average servicing cost of £1300 which could go up at some stage as to £1600. I had also parts to replace, etc.
 - e) No.
16. a) My business did avail of ECA on the advice of my Accountant. I would not be familiar with these matters and so clearly I acted on advice from him.

- b) See above. This was not a reason why I joined the scheme in first place.
- c) See Invoice attached.
- d) See above.
- e) I would not be exactly aware of that.
- f) No.

17. Nothing further.

18. Ditto.

19. Ditto.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed: Peter Mc Williams

Dated: 10/9/18