



## OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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### Air Marshall Sir Christopher Harper

Dear Sir Christopher,

You sought the Committee's advice about taking up a commission under your independent consultancy as the Chairman of the Eastern Regional Advisory Board for the Aviation Skills Partnership (ASP). The Committee has now considered your application.

#### Commission details

You advised the Committee that you had been offered a paid position as the Chairman of the Eastern Regional Advisory Board for the Aviation Skills Partnership (ASP).

The position is concerned with co-ordinating outreach in East Anglia – including to education authorities, schools, cadet units and other youth organizations, to generate 'aviation pathways' for children from age 6 and up. This will normally involve one day of work per month, and the chairing of quarterly meetings of the board. You would also be called on, in a non-executive capacity, to report to ASP's main board.

ASP has recently opened a new International Aviation Academy in Norwich (the IAA-N). This academy sees a unique collaboration of employers, trainers, educators, funding bodies, government, industry, and, of course, students and delegates. It offers its students comprehensive, cutting edge, hands-on training across six areas of aviation: Professional Pilot; Flight Operations; Air Traffic Control; Cabin Crew; Airport Operations, and Aviation Engineering.

You had no contact with ASP prior to August 2017 when you first met the CEO at the official opening of the IAA-N. There is no relationship between ASP and NATO and no connection to the defence 'market'.

ASP has a minor link to Defence as the site for its second academy (The Aaron Academy) will be at RAF Syerston - on ground that is being leased back from the Crown Estate. The plans for this academy are already advanced and building will commence in April 2018. The academy will open in time for the 2019 academic year. It will have the same aims and objectives as IAA-N but will also offer its facilities for the training of Air Cadets (Air Training Corps and Combined Cadet Force). ASP will have some dealings with the MOD (Crown Estates, and No 22 Group of the RAF which oversees Air Cadet activities). They will also be in discussion with the Department of Education and the Department of Transport. However,

this academy will be in a different ASP 'region' and will have its own Regional Advisory Board.

You explained to the Committee that your prime motivation for wishing to accept this appointment is to afford youth - from the most diverse possible of backgrounds - the opportunity of pursuing a career in aviation. You also believe that initiatives such as the IAA-N will contribute to regaining the UK's reputation and standing in the international aviation and aerospace sphere.

The Committee's consideration

**The Committee agrees that this commission is consistent with the terms of your independent consultancy, which you described as offering geopolitical and strategic consulting services in the international defence and security sector.**

The Committee can see no propriety concerns associated with this role. You had no dealings with ASP while at NATO or the MOD and the risk that you might afford ASP an unfair advantage is low given the nature of the advisory role that you are seeking to take up and the length of time that has passed since you left your NATO post in July 2016.

The conditions that apply to your independent consultancy are:

- A waiting period of six months from your last day in post (now expired);
- You should not draw on any privileged information available to you from your time in Crown service;
- For two years from your last day in Crown service, you should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of any of your clients or those you advise;
- For 12 months from your last day of service you should not undertake any work as a consultant that involves providing advice to any company or organisation on the terms of a bid or contract relating directly to the work of the MOD or its trading funds;
- For two years from your last day of service, before accepting any new commission you should apply to the Committee for approval to confirm that it is acceptable under the Committee's guidelines.

In relation to this role with ASP, the conditions set out above apply to you acting either directly or through your company CH4C Global Limited.

The Committee would expect to be informed if you propose to extend or otherwise change the nature of this commission as, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for you to make a fresh application.

By 'privileged information' we mean official information to which a Minister or Crown servant has had access as a consequence of his or her office or employment and which has not been made publicly available. Applicants are also reminded that they may be subject to other duties of confidentiality, whether under the Official Secrets Act, the Civil Service Code or otherwise.

The Business Appointment Rules explain that the restriction on lobbying means that the former Crown servant "*should not engage in communication with Government (Ministers, civil servants, including special advisers, and other relevant officials/public office holders) – wherever it takes place - with a view to influencing a Government decision, policy or contract award/grant in relation to their own interests or the interests of the organisation by which they are employed, or to whom they are contracted or with which they hold office.*"

I should be grateful if you would let me know when you take up this commission, or if it is announced that you are to do so. This will enable the Committee to publish this letter and brief details on the regularly updated consolidated list on its website and in its next annual report.

Yours sincerely,

Nicola Richardson  
Committee Secretariat