



Department for International Trade

The Rt Hon Greg Hands MP
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David G Davies
Executive Director
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Our ref: MCB2020/03338

By email: david.davies@pacts.org.uk

13th August 2020

Dear Mr Davies,

Thank you for your letter of the 10th July to the Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP, Secretary of State for International Trade and President of the Board of Trade, and for sharing the associated report into vehicle safety standards. I am replying as this matter falls within my portfolio.

The Government recognises the important role the automotive industry plays in the UK economy. The sector is a significant exporter with 81% of production destined for export in 2019 according to industry data. It is essential to secure Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) which support and help grow this trade and deliver benefits for the industry today and in the years to come.

Your letter highlights issues of great importance to us and which are consistent with the public objectives we have set out in our FTA mandates. In our FTAs we will seek to reduce technical barriers to trade by removing and preventing trade-restrictive measures in goods markets, while upholding the safety and quality of products on the UK market.

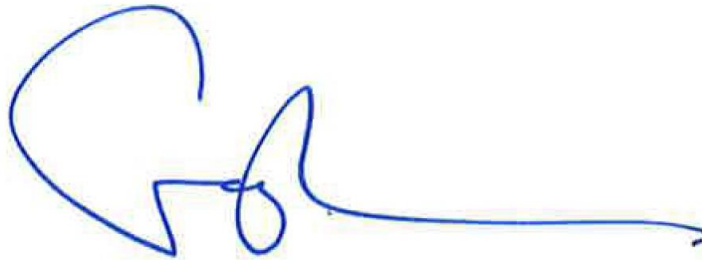
In the automotive industry we are conscious that other nations operate significantly different regulatory regimes. British safety standards are amongst the best in the world and we share the view that our standards should not be compromised.

I encourage stakeholder input which supports our negotiators and the detailed, evidence-based report which you have supplied us with is welcome. Policy and negotiating teams have worked extensively across government and with industry to ensure that we entered these negotiations with detailed knowledge of the issues.

Consistent with our overarching objectives to remove and prevent trade-restrictive measures, we are seeking to improve regulatory dialogue and promote the use of international standards as a general principle of our trade policy work.

I would welcome an opportunity to speak with you directly to discuss your report in detail and opportunities to deliver outcomes which support UK industry whilst maintaining our commitment to high safety standards in this. Please contact my diary manager, Anna Bevilacqua at Hands@trade.gov.uk to discuss suitable dates.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'G Hands', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

THE RT HON GREG HANDS MP
Minister of State for Trade Policy
Department for International Trade