

ANNEX A

5th September 2013

Richard Benyon,
Parliamentary under-secretary for natural environment and Fisheries
Defra, Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SE1P 3JR

Dear Minister,

I have been asked by my members to write to you with to the provision of New Burdens Funding (NBF) in the next spending review period.

You will be aware that NBF, an essential and significant part of the IFCA funding mechanism, was designed to provide Departmental funds in recognition of the introduction of policies or initiatives which increase the cost of providing local authority services including duties, powers or any other changes that may place an expectation on local authorities. These duties and powers are extant; indeed, they are increasing year on year as detailed in the attached briefing note.

As we have discussed previously and has been raised with you at Association meetings that you attended, continued funding of the IFCAs is of paramount importance to our ability to continue to deliver management measures that will enable the UK Government to achieve its marine targets and objectives in inshore waters.

The IFCAs are fully aware of the current, although now improving, financial climate and the Government's commitment to reducing the structural deficit and are committed to engage with Defra and our delivery partners in a constructive and cost effective manner to ensure that the IFCAs can continue to demonstrate their lead role in Fishery and Conservation management for years to come.

Clearly, with April 2015 only 18 months away, the IFCAs are already well into the planning process and key decisions regarding future resources will be needed very soon. With the delivery of the first round of byelaws to manage fishery interactions with sensitive EMS features by the end of 2013 and the expected work up until 2016 on the amber risks IFCAs are now facing tough decisions on budgets and their ability to deliver all their statutory responsibilities.

I am sure you will agree that the IFCAs are currently leading in the delivery of the revised approach in inshore waters required by Defra on the European Marine Sites (EMS) as well as engaging positively in implementing Marine Conservation zones (MCZs), Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), Water Framework Directive (WFD) and continuing to provide visible and effective inshore management and enforcement.

The first tranche of MCZs will be announced shortly and the IFCA's recognize fully their role in delivering the management and protection of the features of the new sites. These new sites coupled with the revised approach to EMS management are providing new budgetary challenges for the IFCA's and their local Authority funders. The continued commitment by you and Defra to 'New Burdens' funding will allow the IFCA's to be able to put in place long term strategies to deliver a fully integrated MPA network for England.

It is over two years since the IFCA model was launched, and we believe that it is demonstrating leadership and cost effective management of inshore fishery and conservation management which needs to be recognized and appropriately funded going forward.

The purpose of this letter is to seek to more formally engage with yourself and Defra regarding the mechanisms and timescales required to support the process of ensuring continued progress towards achieving the UK Government's aims as set out in the Marine Policy and enacted by the Marine Act.

I look forward to hearing from you

Dr Stephen Bolt
CEO Association of IFCA's
07834 381721

Enclosed: Briefing note

cc. Rob Matthews, Defra