



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Fergus Ewing  
Cabinet Secretary for the Rural  
Economy and Connectivity  
Scottish Government

**Public Audit and Post-legislative  
Scrutiny Committee**

Room T 3.60  
The Scottish Parliament  
EDINBURGH  
EH99 1SP

By email only:

Direct Tel: (0131) 348 5390  
(RNID Typetalk calls welcome)  
Fax: (0131) 348 5252

Email: [papls.committee@parliament.scot](mailto:papls.committee@parliament.scot)

13 June 2017

Dear Fergus,

Thank you for your letter of 24 May. Three members of the committee attended the informal briefing on Fujitsu's final report, which was hosted by the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee. From the discussion, it is clear that there have been a number of very serious problems affecting the IT systems that underpin the delivery of CAP Futures, and that many of these problems have still to be resolved.

As you know, we will consider on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June a further report by the Auditor General on CAP futures. While not yet published, it seems highly likely that the audit will make at least some reference to the final report.

As you will understand, we must be able to question the Auditor General on the audit's contents freely and without inhibition, in order to determine whether we should undertake any further work on this issue.

I note the Scottish Government's position that the final report should not be published for reasons of commercial confidentiality, and confirm that the Committee will respect this request. However, as I said in my last letter, it is not credible that MSPs were asked not to quote directly from the previous summary report when the Scottish Government itself did so.

At the very least, we must be able to discuss publicly the relevant issues arising from the final report so that we can explore with the Auditor General how they could be addressed, and what the cost of doing so would be.

A possible solution, which would address both parties' concerns, would be for the Scottish Government to provide a redacted version of the full report, removing only those parts that are very clearly and demonstrably commercially sensitive (and those which may credibly increase the risk of a cyber-attack). The balance of judgment must be on the side of retaining rather than redacting information. Should this not be possible, the Scottish Government could instead prepare a separate public document setting out, in a fair and balanced manner, the key issues in a way that would not breach commercial confidentiality.

I want to ensure that both the Auditor General and the members of our committee are clear about the terms on which our meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> can be conducted, and therefore look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Baillie', with a large, stylized initial 'J' and 'B'.

**Jackie Baillie MSP**  
**Acting Convener of the Committee**