



SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY
THAMES HOUSE SOUTH
MILLBANK LONDON SW1P 4QJ
01 211 6402

Tim Flesher Esq
Private Secretary to
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

16 January 1984

Dear Tim,

GAS SAFETY: TRANSFER OF MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

I understand that Graham Davey, our Parliamentary Clerk, has spoken to you and Charlotte Stevens earlier today about the attached text of the arranged question and answer on gas safety responsibilities.

As you know the Table Office has refused to accept the Question for answer by our Secretary of State. I should therefore be most grateful if you could arrange for the question to be tabled today for ordinary written answer, by the Prime Minister, tomorrow.

The question and answer have already been cleared with you (in David Barclay's letter to Michael Reidy of 22 December).

Yours ever,

John

J S NEILSON
Private Secretary

DRAFT QUESTION AND ANSWER

Q. To ask the Prime Minister what steps she proposes to take to remove the present overlap in gas safety responsibilities between the Secretary of State for Energy and the Secretary of State for Employment.

A. It is intended that, as from 1 February 1984, the gas safety responsibilities which are now exercised by the Secretary of State for Energy should be transferred to the Secretary of State for Employment. Broadly, these responsibilities involve the power to make gas safety regulations under S 31 of the Gas Act 1972 and the associated powers on penalties and prosecutions under S's 42 and 43: and the enforcement of the Gas Safety Regulations 1972 and the Gas Safety (Rights of Entry) Regulations 1983. The Secretary of State for Employment will also become responsible for making gas appliance safety orders under the Energy Conservation Act 1981 and for associated questions relating to gas appliance safety, including European Community activities in this area.

I understand that the Secretary of State for Employment intends to make an agency agreement with the Health and Safety Commission to carry out most of these functions on his behalf. In addition, the Secretary of State for Energy proposes to make a separate agreement with the Health and Safety Commission to cover the issue of consents under S 29 of the Gas Act 1972, since currently safety is the only consideration.

Tuesday 17 January 1984

(Answered by the Prime Minister on Tuesday 17 January 1984)

UNSTARRED Mr Jerry Wiggin: To ask the Prime Minister, what
NO. 125 steps she proposes to take to remove the present overlap in gas safety responsibilities between the Secretary of State for Energy and the Secretary of State for Employment.

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