

SUBJECT

file

MFS

cc Master
Ops.

↑ Pl amend
file ref on these.

CONFIDENTIAL



cc Cabinet
Law Officers
Chief Whip
Paymaster Gen
RTA.

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

Personal Minute

No.

M 12/84

MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF DEPARTMENTS

We have been keeping under review the administrative and legislative burdens placed on business by existing legislation and regulations.

At the same time it is important that we should, in considering proposals for new policies or regulatory measures, be aware of their implications for business, and in particular for small firms.

I should therefore be grateful if all Ministers in charge of Departments would take account, in preparing new proposals, of their administrative and legislative implications; would consider how the potential burdens, particularly on small firms, may be minimised; would consult the Department of Trade and Industry when the imposition of new burdens is thought to be inescapable, and would draw this to the attention of colleagues before final decisions are taken.

9 October 1984

CONFIDENTIAL

EU



Pl type to PM's
Signature

AT
8/10

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

Pune Minister

I have one suggestion in RTA's minute.
Administrative and legislative burdens are
not just a problem for small firms
though they find them more difficult to
cope. I have suggested amendments to
your minute and generalize the
initiative

Agree RTA's proposals and his
minute as amended?

AT

5/10

AT



Ref. A084/2664

PRIME MINISTER

DT4

Administrative and Legislative Burdens on Small Firms

At your meeting on 24 July, I was asked to consider:

(1) whether the Cabinet Office machinery was able to scrutinise adequately the impact on regulation of Community legislation; and

(2) how best papers to Cabinet Committees could bring out the impact of policy proposals on regulation and small firms.

2. On the first point, the Official Committee on European Questions has sufficiently wide terms of reference and representation to enable it to scrutinise adequately the impact on industry of regulations stemming from Community legislation. Indeed, Commission proposals in the industrial area form well over one-half of the Committee's work. But it could with advantage give more systematic attention to the potential effects of Community legislation on British industry. Departments have already been asked to give particular thought to the possible impact of Commission proposals on small firms and to press for appropriate relief in Brussels. In future they will also be required to include a separate assessment of the likely effect of draft Community legislation on British industry in all papers that come forward to the Official Committee on European Questions. Where these effects are particularly significant it may sometimes be more appropriate for the issues to be considered in the relevant Sub-Committee of the Ministerial Steering Committee on Economic Strategy than in the Ministerial Committee on European Questions: we shall keep a careful look out for such cases.

3. On the second point, I believe that the best course would be for you to send a minute to all Ministers, inviting them to take account, in preparing new proposals, of their administrative



and legislative implications for small firms, to consider how they may be minimised, to consult the Department of Trade and Industry about them and, if they conclude that some additional burden for small firms may be involved, to draw this to the attention of colleagues before final decisions are taken.

--- 4. I attach a draft minute.

R

Approved by
ROBERT ARMSTRONG
and signed in his absence

5 October 1984

CONQUEROR



DRAFT MINUTE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO
ALL MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF DEPARTMENTS

We have been keeping under review the administrative and legislative burdens placed on ^{business} ~~small firms~~ by existing legislation and regulations.

2. At the same time it is important that we should, in considering proposals for new policies or regulatory measures, be aware of their implications for ~~small businesses~~, *and in particular for small firms.*

3. I should therefore be grateful if all Ministers in charge of Departments would take account, in preparing new proposals, of their administrative and legislative implications ~~for small firms~~, ^{particularly} would consider how the potential burdens on small firms, may be minimised, would consult the Department of Trade and Industry when the imposition of new burdens is thought to be inescapable, would draw this to the attention of colleagues before final decisions are taken.