



European Scrutiny Committee

Select Committee Announcement

16 May 2011

For Immediate Release:

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ORAL EVIDENCE SESSION

Parliamentary Scrutiny of Opt-In Decisions and the European Investigation Order

Parliamentary Scrutiny of Opt-In Decisions

Under a Protocol to the Treaty of Lisbon the UK is not bound by EU legislation falling within the “Area of Freedom, Security and Justice” — police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters, judicial cooperation in civil matters, asylum and immigration — unless it opts into it. This the Government can do within three months of a proposal being presented to the Council of the EU, or at any time after it has been adopted by the Council. This is a growth area in EU legislation which can have significant implications for national law and civil liberties.

The European Scrutiny Committee is to hold an evidence session with the Secretary of State for Home Affairs to explore proposals for the parliamentary scrutiny of opt ins contained in the Written Ministerial Statement from the Minister for Europe of 20 January 2011, and the application of the opt-in Protocol to EU international agreements. The Committee heard evidence from the Minister for Europe on 27 April on these topics and a transcript is available on the Committee’s website.

European Investigation Order

The European Investigation Order is being negotiated in Brussels. It will create a single instrument for obtaining evidence from police and prosecutors in other EU Member States for the purposes of criminal investigations. It marks a significant change from current mutual legal assistance procedures in the EU.

The European Scrutiny Committee is to hold an evidence session with the Secretary of State for Home Affairs to explore the impact that the

European Investigation Order will have on the ability of the UK to refuse a request, on current national mutual legal assistance procedures, and on the rights of suspects in criminal trials.

The session will take place on:

Wednesday 8 June 2.15pm Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP, Secretary of State for Home Affairs, Home Office, and officials

The meeting will be held in a Committee Room at the House of Commons.

Media enquiries:

Members of the press with enquiries should contact Alex Paterson, Select Committee Media Officer, on 020 7219 1589, or by email to patersona@parliament.uk

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Committee Membership is as follows:

Mr William Cash (Chairman), (Stone), Conservative; Mr James Clappison (Hertsmere), Conservative; Michael Connarty (Linlithgow and East Falkirk), Labour; Jim Dobbin (Heywood and Middleton), Labour; Julie Elliott (Sunderland Central), Labour; Tim Farron (Westmorland and Lonsdale), Liberal Democrat; Nia Griffith (Llanelli), Labour; Chris Heaton-Harris (Daventry), Conservative; Kelvin Hopkins (Luton North), Labour; Chris Kelly (Dudley South), Conservative; Tony Lloyd (Manchester Central), Labour; Penny Mordaunt (Portsmouth North), Conservative; Stephen Phillips (Sleaford and North Hykeham); Jacob Rees-Mogg (Somerset North East), Conservative; Henry Smith (Crawley), Conservative; Ian Swales (Redcar), Liberal Democrat

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Committee Website: www.parliament.uk/escom

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