On behalf of my Committee I would like to thank you for taking the time to come before the Committee and answer questions on the subject of the proposed merger between British Antarctic Survey and the National Oceanography Centre.

I hope that the report was useful in informing the deliberations of the NERC Council on 1 November and in coming to the decision not to merge the two institutions. I would like to invite you to respond to the Committee’s report and recommendations. I would hope that while you focus on the recommendations in the report that you also respond to some of the other concerns expressed within the text. I believe that everything within the conclusion chapter is worthy of consideration and response.

In addition, when you have looked at the transcripts of the evidence session we would like you to clarify particular points that the oral evidence left potentially uncertain.

The Committee would like to better understand the sequence of events by which Professor Hill was appointed, particularly why he was a better choice than the Deputy Director who was in post at that time. We would also like to have some clarity on the plans to appoint a Director to NERC who will be able to engage the willingness to develop and grow communicated to us by Professor Hill and ensure a future for BAS as prestigious as its past.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Miller
Chair