Dear Julian,

I am writing in response to your letter of 4 December 2018 requesting further information pertaining to the Poseidon (P-8A) programme error in the original publication of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Equipment Plan 2018.

The MOD became aware of the omission in the Project Performance Summary Table (PPST) on the date of publication, when a defence journalist queried a PPST P-8A figure. It is extremely regrettable that this discrepancy was discovered after publication. We investigated and rectified this issue as quickly as possible.

The error occurred because the P-8A Project Team misread the Defence Equipment Plan PPST guidance. This meant that some P-8A cost variations reported in our Corporate Management Information System were unintentionally omitted.

The revised P-8A figures have been extensively scrutinised at senior levels, approved by both the Senior Responsible Officer and the Operating Centre Director, and independently validated by the Cost Assurance and Analysis Service (CAAS). As soon as the error was identified, all other PPST projects were immediately reviewed by the Chief Finance Officers and we have established that correct PPST policy and procedures have been followed for all other project cost variations.

An internal review has been conducted and a number of actions have already been implemented to prevent such an error being made in future. I attach a copy of a letter from Sir Simon Bollo to Meg Hillier which sets out in greater detail the action that is in hand.

Yours sincerely,

STUART ANDREW MP

The Rt Hon Dr Julian Lewis MP
Chair, Defence Select Committee
House of Commons
London
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Enclosure(s)