Dear Stuart,

Thank you for your letter of 26 March, updating the Committee on developments in the replacement of RAF Sentry aircraft, in which you told us that a contract has now been signed with Boeing Defence UK for five E-7 aircraft.

As you will be well aware, the Committee takes a close interest in this issue, and I should be grateful if you would answer the following questions, by 10 May:

1. For what reason are you confident that the aircraft will be delivered in four and a half years, when the production line has been closed for five years and historically the minimum time between contract signature and first delivery of these aircraft has been at least six years?

2. Whether any developments used in the 737 MAX aircraft generation are used in the aircraft, which you have described as ‘based on’ the 737 NG aircraft generation?

3. Does the contract cover any training, infrastructure and other services, or is it limited to delivery of the aircraft alone?

4. What opportunities the contract provides for small and medium-sized enterprises, the importance of which you stressed in your meeting with the President of Boeing International on 6 November last year?

5. When the modification work in the UK will start and how long you expect it to last?

6. What opportunities for support for the aircraft and training of their crews will be available to UK companies and when?

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

[Name]