FROM THE PERMANENT SECRETARY
Noel Lavery

Kate Hoey MP (Acting Chair)
Northern Ireland Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Ms Hoey

NORTHERN IRELAND AFFAIRS COMMITTEE TOURISM INQUIRY

I am responding to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee inquiry which is examining the importance of tourism to the economy and society of Northern Ireland, and investigating ways in which the industry could be improved or further supported.

The Department for the Economy has policy responsibility for tourism in Northern Ireland, and I enclose a memorandum for the Committee’s attention. The memorandum aims to provide a factual analysis of the tourism sector and has been prepared in the absence of Ministers, so the views it contains are necessarily those of officials.

The memorandum includes input from two of the Department’s Arm’s Length Bodies, Tourism NI and Invest NI, which reflect their respective roles to support tourism. Tourism NI is responsible for the development of tourism and the marketing of Northern Ireland as a tourist destination to domestic tourists within Northern Ireland, and to the Republic of Ireland. Invest NI is the economic development agency for Northern Ireland and has responsibility for support to the tourism accommodation sector.

The memorandum also includes material from Tourism Ireland, for which the Department shares joint oversight responsibility with the Irish Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. Tourism Ireland is a company set up under the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement to market the island of Ireland to Great Britain and overseas.

In the interest of providing a comprehensive submission to cover the Committee’s Terms of Reference, the Department has also included contributions from several other NI Departments which reflect the respective roles they play in helping to support tourism. These contributions are presented as appendices to the document. I would wish to advise that if the Committee requires further details on those particular aspects, I would need to seek the information from the relevant Department.

I hope the Committee finds the memorandum helpful.

Yours sincerely,
NOEL LAVERY
Permanent Secretary

cc Margaret McKinnon, Clerk to the Committee