Dear Ms Hillier,

Thank you for your letter of 3 May in response to the information provided on EU Exit workstreams across Government. I welcome your recognition that the summaries provide the most comprehensive picture yet of the breadth of the challenge to be tackled.

The number of workstreams across all departments reflects the most up-to-date picture of departments’ work. The EU Exit programme has to evolve with the negotiations and therefore it is not a static picture. The precise number has changed over time, as departments consolidate their programmes, merge and demerge workstreams, and reassess priorities in light of developing policy.

The information provided in my letter of Monday 30 April sought to balance the Committee’s request with the need to not do anything that risks undermining our negotiations with the EU. This was agreed with consideration of the detail published by the National Audit Office in their recent report.

Whilst I cannot provide any further details of workstreams, my offer to provide an in-person briefing on preparedness issues still stands. This could provide additional context and explain in more detail the progress the Civil Service is making to prepare for leaving the EU.

I am copying this letter to the Cabinet Secretary, Permanent Secretaries of the Departments for which we provided information, the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, and the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Yours sincerely,

PHILIP RYCROFT
PERMANENT SECRETARY
DEPARTMENT FOR EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION