

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
11 Downing Street
London SW1A 1AB.

Monday 21st February 2022

Dear Chancellor,

Red Diesel Legislation, April 2022: Another sucker punch to a beleaguered and unsupported industry

I write in the upmost urgency on behalf of the events industry, and as President of the National Outdoor Events Association (NOEA).

As you are no doubt aware, the last two years for our industry have been dire. Starved of the opportunity to do what we love, we have seen businesses fold, thousands of workers made redundant, and our industry decimated.

Despite many requests, we have yet to receive a package of support from this government, that specifically recognises and supports the events industry. Our main revenues are earned in a specific period within the UK summer, outside of this period we rely on deposits that are taken from pre-paid tickets. During this time, some nine months of the year, our businesses need to retain professional staff, and support jobs.

Inflation is a big issue for us. The revenues we have taken have been from tickets sold in 2019 and only for those that have not been cancelled, only postponed. This means we have rising costs based on the morsels of three-year-old revenues. Set this against the fact that many of our businesses took advantage of the loans and grants available, to them to keep their businesses liquid, we now also have a massive debt rating across the industry.



This is an industry that just cannot afford another attack on its margins; and now we have the issue of Red Diesel legislation being bought in by your government.

The events industry has been identified as one that needs to follow this legislation and that it is not exempt like other sectors, such as the Showman's Guild and travelling fayres. Event organisers create complex infrastructure in green field sites, so temporary power is essential. With this legislation, events are now looking at additional financial liabilities of between 10 and 15-fold, costing hundreds of thousands of pounds per event.

This legislation has had very little input from the event industry despite it presenting a coherent voice to government through the Events & Entertainment Group (DCMS), the Events Industry Board, and the Business Visits & Events Partnership. For that reason, it has an element of stealth, and the timing could not be worse, hitting businesses as they get back onto their feet and are looking to both pay back governmental loans, and bring back their work forces. We appreciate that there was a consultation period, but whilst other industries were invited to participate the event industry was sadly missed, we would certainly have participated because of the seismic effect this will have on our industry.

Your government needs to decide if it wants an event industry or not? If it does, it needs to defer this legislation for at least five years, until cleaner and renewable energies can be sourced, that support this industry financially and our own commitments to sustainable business. As an industry we are at the forefront of green issues, making major public contributions through our events and experimenting with reusable and renewable energies. We are confident that in this time we will be able to switch to a far greener model than diesel, regardless of the colour.

In the meantime, the event industry should be treated with the same parity as other, very similar, sectors, such as the Showmen's Guild.



It is our opinion that this legislation is being aimed at the wrong industry sectors. In contrast to larger industries, events will have very little effect on its objectives because of its relative size. Conversely, the impact is so much larger because of our current fragility.

I implore you to reconsider the scope and timing of this legislation as soon as possible.

I look forward to receiving your response that I will share with our members and the event industry in general.

Yours faithfully,

Tom Clements Dip.ESM,
President

Copied for Information to:

Members of Parliament | Devolved Leadership:

- Rt Hon Boris Johnson, Prime Minister
- Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister, Scotland
- Rt Hon Mark Drakeford, First Minister, Wales
- Rt Hon Oliver Dowden MP, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport
- Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng, Secretary of State, Department of Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy
- The Rt Hon Grant Shapps, Secretary of State for Transport
- The Rt Hon Michael Gove was appointed Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- Theresa Villiers MP (Chair of the All -Party Parliamentary Group for Events)
- Robert Langan MP (Member, All -Party Parliamentary Group for Events)
- Robert Seely MP (Member, All -Party Parliamentary Group for Events)
- Owen Thompson MP (Member, All -Party Parliamentary Group for Events)
- Andrew Slaughter MP (Member, All -Party Parliamentary Group for Events)
- Stephen Hammond MP (Member, All -Party Parliamentary Group for Events)
- Rachel Hopkins MP (Member, All -Party Parliamentary Group for Events)



- Debbie Abrahams MP (Member, All -Party Parliamentary Group for Events)
- Mark Menzies MP (Member, All -Party Parliamentary Group for Events)
- Caroline Dinenage MP, Minister of State for Digital and Culture

Industry Associations:

- Association of Show and Agricultural Organisations
- Association of Festival Organisers
- Association of Independent Festivals
- Business Visits & Events Partnership
- Production Services Association
- Professional Lighting and Sound Association
- The Nationwide Caterers Association
- Night Time Industries Association
- The Events Industry Forum

Civil Servants:

- Tom Dammers, DCMS
- Jon Davies, DCMS
- Alexandra Gillespie, DCMS
- Nicole Huggins, DCMS
- Tom Rodden, DCMS
- Sarah Bayliss, DCMS
- James Haworth DCMS