

# [RPC Launches New Opinion Templates](#)

The Regulatory Policy Committee's (RPC) key role is to provide independent scrutiny of the assessments which departments and regulators prepare when proposing new regulatory measures. These include impact assessments (IAs), post-implementation reviews (PIRs) and business impact target (BIT) assessments. Our review and opinions on the quality of evidence and analysis supporting new regulatory proposals are an important part of the policymaking process. In our opinions, we comment only on how effectively the relevant department or regulatory has assessed the policy's potential impacts, but not on the merits of the policy itself.

To help improve clarity and transparency of our views, we are launching new opinion templates. We believe the updated format for our opinions will help ensure that policymakers, Parliamentarians and other stakeholders can readily understand the key messages in our opinions. In the new format, we set out our key messages up front in a more "bitesize" way, while still providing detail in the body of the opinion for those that want it.

## **RPC formal ratings**

In many cases, we formally rate IAs (and other submissions such as PIRs) as "fit for purpose/not fit for purpose" on specific areas set out in the [Better Regulation Framework \(BRF\)](#) and the [Business Impact Target: Statutory Guidance](#). For example, in our opinions on final stage IAs, we give formal ratings for two areas: the equivalent annual net direct cost to business (EANDCB) and the small and micro business impact assessment (SaMBA).

For the areas on which the RPC provides a formal rating we use the following ratings (based on the criteria indicated):

Rating	Criteria
<b>Green ("fit for purpose")</b>	The IA (or other submission) is fit for purpose. The RPC has no significant concerns over the quality of the IA, or there are some minor issues that could be improved. There may be many points for improvement, which the department should consider.
<b>Red ("fit for purpose")</b>	The IA (or other submission) is not fit for purpose. The RPC has major concerns over the quality of the evidence and analysis, and the overall quality of the IA (or other submission), that need to be addressed.

## **New RPC quality indicators**

In addition, in our opinions, we often comment on the quality and robustness of the evidence and analysis in other areas, on which we do not provide a formal rating. We note, in such cases, where the analysis is of particularly high quality, and areas where we consider improvements are needed.

In the interests of increased clarity and transparency, we have introduced “quality indicators” in our opinion summaries, covering key areas, which we consider in our opinions, but which are not formally rated. For example, for IAs these areas include the quality of analysis and evidence supporting the ‘rationale and options’, ‘cost-benefit analysis’, ‘wider impacts’ and ‘monitoring and evaluation’ (and similar areas in other types of submissions).

We use the following quality indicators:

Quality indicator	Criteria
<b>Good</b>	Addresses the issue well. The analysis is sufficiently robust and addresses the issue properly. The analysis is based on good to high-quality, proportionate evidence and uses appropriate assumptions. It could be improved only in minor areas (if at all) and provides good support for decision-making on these aspects of the assessment.
<b>Satisfactory</b>	Addresses the issue adequately. The analysis is considered satisfactory. The analysis is based on adequate, proportionate evidence and uses appropriate assumptions. Some improvements could be made, but it provides sufficient support for decision-making on these aspects of the assessment.
<b>Weak</b>	Weak analysis of the issue. The analysis is not sufficiently robust to address the issue. Improvements are required in one or a number of areas. It provides inadequate support for decision-making on these aspects of the assessment.
<b>Very weak</b>	Very weak analysis of the issue. The analysis is poor and has significant flaws. Significant improvements are required in one or a number of areas. It provides inadequate support decision-making on these aspects of the assessment.

We believe that the new opinion templates will help us convey our key messages in a clearer and more consistent way. We hope that our key messages will stand out more clearly in the new format, so that all stakeholders can easily see our key findings, without sacrificing the detail where it is needed to explain our views.

We are intending to review how this new approach is working in around six months. In the meantime, we are always keen to hear from our stakeholders. If you have any comments, please pass them on to your regular contacts in the Secretariat or email [regulatoryenquiries@rpc.gov.uk](mailto:regulatoryenquiries@rpc.gov.uk).

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**[Self Assessment deadline: less than a](#)**

## [month to go](#)

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## [PM call with Prime Minister Modi: 5 January 2020](#)

News story

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to Prime Minister Modi.



The Prime Minister spoke to Prime Minister Modi this morning, to express his regret that he will be unable to visit India later this month as planned.

In light of the national lockdown announced last night, and the speed at which the new coronavirus variant is spreading, the Prime Minister said that it was important for him to remain in the UK so he can focus on the domestic response to the virus.

The leaders underlined their shared commitment to the bilateral relationship, and to continuing to build on the close collaboration between our countries – including in response to the pandemic.

The Prime Minister said that he hopes to be able to visit India in the first half of 2021, and ahead of the UK's G7 Summit that Prime Minister Modi is due to attend as a guest.

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## [GAD's role in the Balance Sheet Review Report](#)

News story

Initiatives supported by GAD are in a report into a project to improve public finances. The Balance Sheet Review identified opportunities for reforms.



Initiatives supported by the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) featured in the government's [The Balance Sheet Review Report: Improving public sector balance sheet management](#) (BSR).

This publication is the culmination of a project set up to improve public finances. The BSR, which began in 2017, identified opportunities for reforms and improvements in the government's management of assets and liabilities. Examples of this included:

- setting out a public sector balance sheet framework
- improving risk management across the government's contingent liabilities and publishing the [Government as insurer of last resort](#) report
- unlocking value from [intellectual property](#) and other intangible assets in the public sector

- improving transparency around major asset sales and publishing guidance

Although the BSR has concluded, the government will continue to focus on improving balance sheet management.

## **GAD's contributions**

The BSR includes several projects with which GAD has been closely involved such as the:

- risk protection arrangement for Academies
- [airline insolvency review](#) – the BSR found there was an opportunity to learn from the Review findings and review compensation arrangements involving ATOL
- [The Trade Credit Reinsurance Scheme](#), which was setup to ensure that trade credit insurance coverage and credit limits are maintained during the coronavirus pandemic – GAD modelled the costs of different scheme options to inform policy design
- clinical negligence claims – GAD works with [NHS Resolution](#) which deals with medical negligence compensation claims in England
- pooling Local Government Pension Scheme investments – GAD provided expert input to the initiative

Government Actuary Martin Clarke said: “GAD has worked closely with HM Treasury and others throughout the course of the BSR. It was very pleasing for us to be referenced in several places in the report demonstrating the range of government policy initiatives that actuaries are able to support.

“The review has set out balance sheet management policies and has noted that the work will continue in key areas going forward.”

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[\*\*Change of British High Commissioner to\*\*](#)

# India: Alex Ellis

Press release

Mr Alex Ellis CMG has been appointed British High Commissioner to the Republic of India.



Mr Alex Ellis CMG has been appointed British High Commissioner to the Republic of India in succession to Sir Philip Barton KCMG OBE. Mr Ellis will take up his appointment during January 2021.

Full name: Alexander Ellis

Married to: Teresa Adegas

Children: One son

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Role</b>
<b>2020 to present</b>	Cabinet Office, Deputy National Security Adviser
<b>2017 to 2019</b>	Department for Exiting the European Union, Director General
<b>2013 to 2017</b>	Brasilia, Her Majesty's Ambassador
<b>2011 to 2013</b>	FCO, Director of Strategy
<b>2007 to 2010</b>	Lisbon, Her Majesty's Ambassador
<b>2005 to 2007</b>	Adviser to the President of the European Commission
<b>1990 to 2005</b>	Postings to Lisbon, Madrid and to EU. British Government negotiation team on euro, EU Budget framework, Treaty of the EU and EU Enlargement; worked on South Africa's transition to multi party democracy.

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