



Rt Hon. Nick Thomas-Symonds MP
Minister for the Cabinet Office
His Majesty's Paymaster General
Cabinet Office 70 Whitehall London
SW1A 2AS

Ciara Ferguson
Chairperson, Windsor Framework Democratic
Scrutiny Committee
Room 382, Parliament Buildings
Stormont
Belfast, BT4 3XX

19th January 2026

Dear Ciara,

REGULATION ON THE SAFETY OF TOYS

Thank you for your letter dated 8 January 2026, regarding Regulation (EU) 2025/2509 on the safety of toys.

The Government's assessment of this Regulation has been set out in the Explanatory Memorandum from the Department for Business and Trade dated 5th January 2026, which I am attaching for completeness. This has been supplied by the Government in line with its scrutiny commitments.

Whilst some of these issues engaged by the regulation would be reserved matters, the Committee's scrutiny of the regulation in the round is important. With regards to reserved matters specifically, I would draw the Committee's attention to the fact that the Government will be launching a Call for Evidence within the next six months, which will cover the requirements of the new EU Toy Safety Regulation. This will be used to inform potential future regulatory changes ahead of the main provisions of the Regulation applying from August 2030, reflecting the Government's manifesto commitment to the UK internal market. I would note that many of the Government's toy safety objectives are included in the new EU Toy Safety Regulation.

Subject to assessment, the Government has powers to make changes to legislation in Great Britain, including through use of powers in the Product Regulation and Metrology Act 2025. I have asked that my officials provide details of the Call for Evidence to the Committee, Northern Ireland departments and SOLACE when it has been launched, so that any points that they consider relevant can be submitted and considered directly.

Those bodies may also wish to pass the details of that Call for Evidence on to stakeholders they deem relevant.

In any case, the Government does not expect the Regulation to create significant barriers to the movement of goods from GB into NI, due to extended transition periods, as well as the Europe wide nature of the toy industry. However, it is right that we build on our understanding through this Call for Evidence and provide opportunity for industry and public authorities in Northern Ireland to share their views, reflecting that commitment of the Government to the health of the UK internal market.

Since the Regulation was first proposed, the Government has sought to engage officials in Northern Ireland departments on their interests in this act and I note the Executive Office's correspondence with the Committee dated 15 December. My officials remain ready to continue this engagement with them, including on matters of economic policy, consumer affairs, and the interests of local councils. Northern Ireland departments and/or SOLACE of course remain entitled to put any further views or issues to the Committee relating to the Regulation and can also engage local industry on the issues, beyond the Call for Evidence that the Government is undertaking.

If the Committee has any questions as to the Government's Explanatory Memorandum or wishes to make any representations ahead of the Call for Evidence, I would be happy to consider those issues in writing.

I trust this information will be of assistance to the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Thomas-Symonds', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

**RT HON NICK THOMAS-SYMONDS MP
MINISTER FOR THE CABINET OFFICE
HIS MAJESTY'S PAYMASTER GENERAL**



Mrs Ciara Ferguson MLA, Chairperson
Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny
Committee (DSC)
Ref: DSC 20/26
16 January 2026

Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds MP
Paymaster General and Minister for the Cabinet Office
Issued via email to: [REDACTED]

Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
Issued via email to: [REDACTED]

Hilary, Nick, a chairde,

Re: [Regulation \(EU\) 2025/2509 on the safety of toys](#)

I refer to my enclosed letter on behalf of the Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee (DSC) dated 8 January 2026, in relation to the above published replacement EU act. On 8 January 2026, the DSC decided to hold an inquiry into the act, pursuant to paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 6B to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

In the enclosed correspondence, I had formally requested (on behalf of the Committee) that officials from the British Government's Office of Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) attend the meeting of the DSC on 15 January – remotely – to give oral evidence on the replacement EU act.

Officials did not attend the meeting, and, at the time of writing, no response has been received to my correspondence.

In oral evidence at today's meeting, officials from the Executive Office (TEO) told the Committee that product safety sits solely with the OPSS and is not within the policy remit of any departments here. Similarly, SOLACE NI (on behalf of local councils) has previously stated in [correspondence](#) to the Committee – dated 30 June 2025 - that the OPSS is the “*appropriate body with national level policy and legislative responsibility for consumer product safety regulation in Northern Ireland.*”

In [correspondence](#) to Alex Maskey - former MLA and the then Speaker of the Assembly - dated 2 February 2024, The Rt Hon Chris Heaton-Harris, - former MP and the then Secretary of State - stated that, “*The UK Government will endeavour to ensure the Assembly has timely access to all*

the necessary information and analysis it needs to carry out its work, including from the EU.” The Committee therefore agreed that I write to you both to express deep disappointment that OPSS officials did not attend the Committee meeting to provide oral evidence, and to ask that you encourage your colleagues and officials to engage with this Committee as and when necessary.

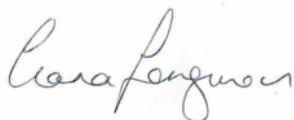
SOLACE NI also stated – in [correspondence](#) to the Committee dated 18 April 2025 – that it would expect “*national and regional level engagement with affected businesses and regulatory impact assessments be completed, with practical guidance for businesses and enforcing bodies also provided by the central competent authority for the specific regulatory function.*” SOLACE NI also stated in the same correspondence that it would expect the OPSS to undertake this.

The Committee therefore agreed to request confirmation from the British Government of which body or department will undertake regional level engagement with affected businesses and complete regulatory impact assessments in relation to this EU act.

I would appreciate a response in relation to this request for information – and the requests for information in my enclosed correspondence - as soon as possible.

The Committee must publish its inquiry report by 22 January 2026. Therefore, in light of the time constraints under which the Committee is operating, the Committee would accept some/all of the requested information being provided in correspondence from officials if it would facilitate a timelier response.

Le meas,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ciara Ferguson'.

Ciara Ferguson MLA
Chairperson
Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee
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Mrs Ciara Ferguson MLA, Chairperson
Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny
Committee (DSC)

REF: DSC 01/26

8 January 2026

Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds MP
Paymaster General and Minister for the Cabinet Office

Issued via email to: [REDACTED]

Cc [REDACTED]

Nick, a chara,

At its meeting on 8 January 2026, the Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee (DSC) considered [Regulation \(EU\) 2025/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 November 2025 on the safety of toys and repealing Directive 2009/48/EC](#).

This act was notified to the DSC on 2 January 2026.

The DSC decided to hold an inquiry into the replacement EU act, pursuant to paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 6B to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Under paragraph 9(2)(a), the DSC must seek substantive discussion and engagement with the British Government. Therefore, the Committee is requesting your assessment of:

- Whether it appears likely that the application of the replacement EU act would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities here in a way that is liable to persist; and
- Whether it appears likely that not applying the replacement EU act would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities here in a way that is liable to persist.

In considering the potential for divergence, the Committee also requests details of the position in England, Scotland and Wales.

The Committee also agreed to formally request that officials from the British Government's Office of Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) attend a meeting of the DSC **on Thursday 15 January 2026** – remotely – to provide oral evidence on the replacement EU act.

I would appreciate a response to the request for OPSS officials to attend by 11.00am on Monday 12 January 2026, and a response to the wider requests for information as soon as possible thereafter (and by Monday 19 January 2026 at 11.00am at the latest).

Le meas,

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Ciara Ferguson, MLA

Chairperson, Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee

Mrs Ciara Ferguson MLA, Chairperson
Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny
Committee (DSC)

REF: DSC 01/26

8 January 2026

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Ciara Ferguson, MLA

Chairperson, Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee