

WEBER SHANDWICK COMPLYING WITH SCOTLAND'S NEW LOBBYING RULES

New legislation is set to fundamentally change the rules on engagement with MSPs and Scottish Government ministers and their special advisers, yet the implications of these are not widely understood.

Potentially anyone who carries out any face to face communication with an MSP will be regarded as a lobbyist, with the burden on individuals – not their employer – to register their activities.

As well as formal meetings, these activities could include visits by MSPs to business premises, third-party events where MSPs have been invited to attend, conferences or even receptions at the Scottish Parliament.

While public affairs or government affairs professionals will clearly need to register, it's also likely that chief executives, directors and any other staff that meet with MSPs/Ministers will be required to register. This is a huge challenge for companies across Scotland.

Lobbyists will be required to submit regular updates to the register detailing their 'lobbying activity' – e.g. details of meetings and events.

Weber Shandwick is a longstanding member of the APPC, PRCA and ASPA and has always taken a 'best in class' approach to engaging with politicians. We abide by industry codes of conduct in all our activity and are best placed to advise on the potential impacts of this legislation.

We have the largest public affairs consultancy team in Scotland and it is made up of former political staffers, journalists, government officials and others with public and voluntary backgrounds.

Our political experts can provide briefings, training and workshops to give you real insight in to the potential pitfalls. We can give you the tools you need to not only meet the legal requirements, but also ensure that your interactions with politicians are well thought through and delivering you real

business benefits. Engagement with politicians is important and it is vital that you don't waste any opportunities you have to get your point across and see action by MSPs or the Government.

Workshops will include input from Moray Macdonald, Conor Magowan and Luke Skipper.

Moray is our managing director in Scotland. He previously worked as head of communications for Strathclyde Passenger Transport, was Director and Head of Research for the Scottish Conservatives and was a special adviser (media) to a cabinet minister in New Zealand's first coalition government. He is a regular political commentator on BBC Scotland.

Conor Magowan is our head of public affairs and has worked in communications for over 10 years, both for a politician and agency-side, gaining an expert understanding of the policy landscape and decision-making process across UK Government and devolved nations.

Luke Skipper is an associate director and provides strategic counsel on government affairs. Prior to joining Weber Shandwick in 2015, Luke was chief of staff to the SNP Westminster Group for the previous eight years.

WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU

- ▶ A full briefing on the Lobbying Act
- ▶ Training on the Act and Code of Conduct to ensure your organisation is able to comply with the final provisions
- ▶ Develop scenario-based exercises and Q&A for your organisation

CONTACT



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