

Darren Jones MP
Chair of the Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Sent by email: beiscom@parliament.uk

29th June 2022

Dear Mr Jones,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Association of Professional Staffing Companies and OutSource (APSCo) following the Government's announcement to implement a Statutory Instrument to repeal regulation 7 of the Conduct Regulations. Given the potential repercussions of this legislation on the recruitment industry, APSCo are calling for a consultation period to assess the likely repercussions and impact of this change in regulation in the context of international labour standards.

APSCo UK and OutSource are the representative bodies for the professional recruitment industry and are comprised of approximately 1000 recruitment and affiliated members from start-ups to listed global groups. APSCo recruitment members and outsourcing providers recruit professionals in STEM, accountancy, legal and finance, life sciences, qualified social work, education, and clinical healthcare into a range of permanent and contractor roles at blue chip firms, high growth organisations, public sector and SME companies.

Given the significance of the proposed legislation and the fact that our members, and most sectors our members cover, are not unionised, we have sought the views and input of our membership. Our public policy forums were united in concern over the Government's proposal to amend legislation to remove the prohibition on recruiters supplying agency workers to replace strikers.

Members are sceptical about the impact of removing this prohibition for several reasons:

- Most of the roles are skilled and therefore agency workers may require upskilling, onboarding, and compliance checks. This means that there would likely be a time lag before workers would be ready to fill resourcing needs. In a very skills short market, skilled workers, such as train drivers for example are unlikely to be "on the bench" and readily available.
- Workers and recruitment businesses are likely to be unwilling to "cross the picket line" to replace strikers.
- There is concern at the mismatch with international labour standards and recruitment regulations.

We have raised these concerns by writing to the Secretary of State and relevant Minister, but we believe an inquiry conducted by your Committee to understand the wider impacts this legislation will have for the economy following your evidence session with the Business Secretary would allow Government, impacted sectors, and workers to understand the impacts of this regulation change.

APSCo would be more than happy to support the Committee in such an inquiry into this issue. I would also be delighted to meet with you to discuss this further should you wish.

Yours sincerely,



Tania Bowers
Global Public Policy Director