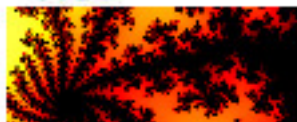


Permanent Secretary
Sir John Elvidge KCB

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Mr David Russell
Chairman
CVDG



Our ref: B3090768
24 July 2009

Dear Mr Russell,

Thank you for your recent letters to the First Minister and the Permanent Secretary. I am replying on their behalf.

I understand that Roseanna Cunningham, Minister for Environment, has informed you of the Scottish Government's position regarding the allegations you have made – she advised you to contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). I note from your letter to the First Minister that "CVDG wish for nothing more than independent scrutiny of the facts.....". I can duly confirm that the SPSO is the independent body set up to investigate complaints about organisations providing public services in Scotland, and I would therefore suggest that you reconsider Ms Cunningham's advice.

Yours sincerely,

DR NICOLA RICHARDS
Private Secretary