

DR. CAROLINE LUCAS

Green Party
for the South East of England

Joan Ruddock MP - Minister of State
Department for Energy and Climate Change
3 Whitehall Place
London
SW1A 2AW

November 16th 2009

Dear Minister,

As you may be aware, I was deeply disappointed by the government's failure to safeguard the Vestas plant on the Isle of Wight from closure. Whilst I appreciate that ultimately this was a commercial decision by Vestas, the government's policy has not lived up to its rhetoric on renewable energy and the absence of a viable onshore wind market in the UK was a significant contributory factor for the company. However, what is prompting me to write to you on this occasion is the treatment of the Vestas workers.

Firstly, I would like confirmation that the EU's Collective Redundancies Directive was adhered to in full by Vestas, as some reports from the workers suggest this may not have been the case. I trust that the government has monitored this redundancy process and is confident that Vestas complied with the necessary notice periods and consultation with workers' representatives?

Secondly, I understand that those workers involved in the occupation of the Vestas factory have had their right to redundancy pay removed. Whilst I appreciate that this is lawful, I would hope that the government would intervene in this instance, given its responsibility for the overall situation. Please can you advise whether any moves were made by DECC, or other government departments, to protect the redundancy pay of those Vestas employees' campaigning to oppose job losses and the destruction of the Isle of Wight's wind turbine manufacturing economy during a recession?

Finally, EU law allows for member states to apply for Globalisation Adjustment Fund support for workers that lose their jobs as a result of changing global trade patterns and need help to find another job as quickly as possible. I believe that the Isle of Wight Vestas case meets the funding criteria and would like to enquire whether the government has applied for GAF support? Investment in retraining and new jobs is critical if the redundant Vestas workers are to re-enter the economy, so please can you also tell me what specific efforts are being made to this end, as well as to ensure that the UK's onshore wind market develops in such a way as to attract back manufacturers like Vestas in the near future?

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Lucas - Green Party MEP for South East England.

Suite 58, The Hop Exchange, 24 Southwark Street, London SE1 1TY, UK
Tel: 020 7407 6281 Fax: 020 7234 0183 E-mail: carolinelucas@greenmeps.org.uk
Web: www.carolinelucasmep.org.uk