DRAFT BUDGET 2015-16: INCREASING EXPORTS

SUBMISSION FROM ResDIARY

Thank you for approaching ResDiary for our input on this topic.

We have benefited from the support of the Scottish Government, in the shape of Scottish Enterprise (SE) and Scottish Development International (SDI), since 2006. That support has taken the shape of places on subsidised trade missions and also grant assistance for us to travel to overseas markets to explore the potential of those markets.

I am pleased to say that we currently have customers operating in 25 countries around the world and resellers active in 11 countries around the world. We plan to increase the number of our resellers and to continue to extend our global reach.

The funding provided by SE and SDI has been immensely valuable to us, especially in the early years before we reached breakeven; though nowadays we are profitable, the funding remains a key enabler, allowing us to do more than we otherwise would.

In terms of how the Scottish Government could improve upon the support it provides to Scottish companies as they grow their exports, in our opinion there are two things which could make a real difference; the first is to continue to grow the network of SDI offices and representatives around the world - having these local contacts makes a real difference, the second is to make available a set of realistic allowances to Scottish companies to enable them to make use of the research services provided by UK Trade and Investment, such as the OMIS (Overseas Market Introduction Service) reports and other chargeable services - all too often we have enquired of UKTI for particular research to be carried out as an OMIS report and been shocked at the charges quoted for the activity.

We appreciate that in a time of austerity that services cannot be provided entirely free of charge - but when the charges are so high that they cannot be afforded, then the OMIS services may as well not be available. I should add that I made a similar point to William Hague at a luncheon in Edinburgh last year when he sought input from exporting companies.

Finally, may I add a word of praise for the people in SE and SDI - without exception they have always gone out of their way to help us achieve our ambitions to grow this company and secure a customer base from around the world.

Mike Breewood
Chief Operating Officer, ResDiary