Lobbying Register Team Ten Top Tips

1. Although we check each return please ensure that your return has been proof-read, free from grammatical error, and avoids acronyms (or at least is written out in full first-time).

2. The description field and the purpose field are not meant to be duplicates of each other. All that's needed in the description box is a brief outline of who you spoke to, including constituency or ministerial title, and the what the meeting or event was.

3. Always ensure that we have as much location information as possible. Postcodes, name of the venue/office.

4. Consider in which role you are lobbying a Member who is an MSP and a Cab Sec/Minister.

5. If a number of members of your staff were at an event/meeting, did they all speak and need to be listed in a return. If they did not then do not include them. This also goes for people not employed by your organisation. These people could be listed in the description field for context should you wish them to be included.

6. When submitting a return, perhaps from a speech that has been given from a member of your staff, and a large number of MSPs have been listed, ensure that they were actually there and don't rely on an invite list.

7. Many users still click 'No' when completing the field asking if the lobbying was on their own behalf, and then proceed to put in the name of their own organisation. Remember, this is an organisational account, and not the account of an individual.

8. As previously mentioned, we check all returns and regularly will contact your organisation to query details, whether an exemption has been considered etc. Please ensure that the registered mailbox is regularly checked. We spend a lot of time having to chase up organisations to respond to our emails queries.

9. If you are an organisation who hasn't engaged in any regulated lobbying then make sure that if submitting a Nil Return, both boxes at the top of the screen are all completed, and then you use the submit button at the bottom to send this to us. Again, we often find through correspondence that organisations think they have submitted these but it transpires that they haven't completed the process.

10. Another common issue is that users don't know how to access returns which we have placed back as a draft for more work to be carried out. This is done through the 'Information Return history' page and then selecting the 'Show Returns Not Submitted' box.