



NEWS RELEASE

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Crofting Federation welcomes review of Commission

The Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF) has welcomed the review of the Crofting Commission recently initiated by Scottish Government, stating that the governance of crofting is at stake.

“We asked for a review of the way in which the Crofting Commission has handled itself over the past six months”, said Fiona Mandeville, chair of the SCF. “Three grazings committees have been removed and ordinary folk, trying to do a difficult job in maintaining this crofting asset, have had their reputations dragged through the mud. This cannot be the correct way for a regulator to behave. We appreciate that the board of the Commission has recognised its mistakes and has issued an apology to the crofters, albeit without the acquiescence of the convener, Colin Kennedy. It is time to move on and we hope a review of procedures will enable a better way of working.”

A review of governance arrangements at the Crofting Commission is underway, seeking to assess the current position and make recommendations on future action. The review will consider matters including:

Governance arrangements relating to the board and a review of the systems, procedures and support mechanisms to underpin effective decision making;

The systems, processes and procedures in relation to decision making in three recent Common Grazings cases – at Bohuntin, Upper Coll and Mangersta. The review will not consider the decisions taken;

Arrangements for handling conflicts of interest.

Ms Mandeville added, “The SCF has drawn fire from the Convener for being critical of the actions taken by himself and the Commission. I must make it clear that it is the mandate of the SCF to defend crofting. SCF is the only organisation dedicated to the representation of crofters and our nearly 2000 members democratically drive what our organisation does. It has been clear that our members expect us to stand up to defend crofting when it is being so blatantly abused by the regulator.

“A review of the way in which the Commission acted is essential as the very future of crofting governance is at stake,” Ms Mandeville concluded.

END

Notes to editors

- Pictures can be found at: <http://www.crofting.org>