



Kitty Usher announces Centre of Excellence on Financial Regulation

The establishment of a new International Centre for Financial Regulation (ICFR), to be led by Barbara Ridpath as CEO, was announced today by Economic Secretary and City Minister Kitty Usher and Interim ICFR Chairman, Mervyn Davies.

The ICFR is an industry-led project independent of the UK Government and will be officially launched at the end of the year and aims to become an international centre of excellence focused entirely on financial regulation.

More than £5 million in funding to support the Centre's establishment will be provided by 19 financial services firms and The City of London Corporation. The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) will also release the £2.5 million that the Government has committed to the project.

The ICFR was first proposed by industry at a meeting of the Chancellor's High Level Group in 2006. Since the publication of Lord Currie's prospectus for the Centre in May 2007, the development of the Centre has been led by an Interim Executive Committee, chaired by Mervyn Davies, Chairman of Standard Chartered Bank.

Kitty Usher said:

"I welcome the strong support from across the City for the establishment of this new centre of excellence. As a world leader in financial services, it is important that Britain continues to be at the forefront of new developments in best practice in this sector."

Mervyn Davies said:

"I am delighted that the ICFR will be established this year, with the support of such a wide range of companies and donors. The City recognised several years ago that we need an international body to promote cutting-edge training and research and recent events in financial

markets underline this is the right time to launch. I am confident that Barbara Ridpath will make the ICFR a huge success.”

Bill Rammell, Minister for Further and Higher Education, said:

"I am delighted that DIUS is supporting this important project. Recent turbulence in global financial markets has only emphasised the valuable contribution that an independent centre for world-class regulatory research and training can make to the regulators and practitioners across the world and how important these financial skills are for the future of the UK economy."

Barbara Ridpath, today confirmed as the Centre's CEO, is currently Executive Managing Director and Head of Ratings Services Europe at Standard and Poor's.

Barbara Ridpath said:

“The need for independent, objective research, thought leadership and training in the field of optimal financial regulation is becoming ever more apparent. It is important to provide this in a way that addresses the concerns of all market participants throughout the world, so as to ensure continued, open and vibrant capital markets. I am delighted to have a role to play in forwarding the agenda of the ICFR.”

Notes for Editors

1. In Budget 2006 the-then Chancellor Gordon Brown announced a commitment to work with the financial sector to establish a High-Level Group of senior representatives from across the financial sector, to develop and support a new strategy to promote London as the leading international financial centre. The High-Level Group has met previously on three occasions: on 18 October 2006, 9 May 2007 and 14 November 2007.
2. The High-level Group met earlier today to discuss: conditions in financial Markets, along with European and international regulatory responses, and the Government's proposed reforms to UK financial stability and depositor protection arrangements; international issues including overseas promotion of the UK-based financial sector; the International Centre for Financial Regulation; and future plans for the High-level Group.
3. Based in the City of London, but truly global in scope, the ICFR will: carry out and sponsor training and research into cutting-edge regulatory issues; support the development of new regulatory approaches

and international standards; and organise debates on the key regulatory issues facing industry practitioners and national regulators alike.

4. Following the first meeting of High-Level Group in October 2006, the then Economic Secretary asked Lord Currie to chair a working group to draw up plans for an international centre for financial regulation: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/7/5/icfr_prospectus220607.pdf. Since Lord Currie's prospectus was agreed by donors in May 2007, an interim executive committee comprising the major donors and chaired by Mervyn Davies have been developing a business plan and governance model for the Centre, which have recently been agreed by the wider donor group.
5. Today, the Government, industry and the City have reconfirmed their provision of start-up funding for the ICFR. Barclays; Citigroup; Dresdner Kleinwort; Goldman Sachs; HSBC; JP Morgan; Man Group; Merrill Lynch; Morgan Stanley; Prudential, Standard Chartered; UBS; Aviva; Aberdeen Asset Management and 3i and have all agreed to provide start funding of £100,000 per year for three years for the ICFR, with a further £100,000 per year provided by a consortium of Ernst and Young, PriceWaterHouseCoopers, KPMG and Deloitte. The City of London Corporation have also pledged £1 million to the ICFR. It is intended that the ICFR will become self-funding after the initial set-up phase.
6. Barbara Ridpath will be taking up her appointment as CEO of the ICFR in September 2008 and the Centre will be officially launched at the end of 2008. In the interim, all questions about the ICFR should be directed to daniel.mobley@standardchartered.com

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