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Secretary of State for Industry

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13 September 1982

The Rt Hon Lord Cockfield
Secretary of State for Trade
Department of Trade
1 Victoria Street
London SW1

Dear Arthur,

STANDARDS, QUALITY AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

I note that in his letter to you of 28 July 1982 Sir Geoffrey Howe suggests you consult colleagues regarding sharing the costs of some of the initiatives proposed in the White Paper.

2 Several of these proposals directly relate to the enhancement of industrial efficiency and my Department already has the machinery to take them further within existing provisions under the Science and Technology Act. I have particularly in mind the Metrology and Standards Requirements Board - on which your Department has official representation - whose remit encompasses both standards and quality assurance matters and is actively considering a range of support measures relevant to the White Paper with a view to implementing them later this year.

As you know, this Board already funds technical work in support of BSI through my Department's Research Establishments, and is also active in the certification field through its support of the British Calibration Service and the National Testing Laboratories Accreditation Scheme, NATLAS.

The important proposals regarding the funding of certification bodies and their accreditation do not obviously fall within the scope of the Science & Technology Act, but provision may be available under Section 8 of the Industry Act. If you wish, my officials will look into this possibility.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of Geoffrey Howe's letter of 28 July.

You are
Patel

Cont Mach, Nov '81, Standards
and International Trade