

WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM THE ROYAL INSTITUTION OF CHARTERED SURVEYORS (RICS)

1. A global organisation, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) is the principal body representing professionals employed in the land, property and construction sectors. In Scotland, we represent over 10,000 members comprising chartered surveyors (MRICS or FRICS), technical surveyors (AssocRICS), trainees and students. Our members practise in sixteen land, property and construction markets and are employed in private practice, central and local government, public agencies, academic institutions, business organisations and non-governmental organisations.

2. As part of its Royal Charter, RICS has a commitment to provide advice to the government[s] of the day and, in doing so, has an obligation to bear in mind the public interest as well as the interests of its members. RICS Scotland is therefore in a unique position to provide a balanced, apolitical perspective on issues of importance to the land, property and construction sectors.

3. RICS Scotland's Dispute Resolution Service (DRS) retains information on specialist problem-solvers around the country, and is able to respond to enquiries concerning all types of dispute involving property (both residential and commercial).

4. Arbitration is used by chartered surveyors to settle disputes with regard to the rent review values of commercial properties in Scotland and to settle legal, technical and commercial disputes within the construction industry. Currently RICS Scotland process around 500 applications for rent review arbitration in a year and is the biggest appointing body in Scotland.

5. RICS Scotland recently attended the 'conversation' meeting with the Minister, Jim Mather, and we found this to be a beneficial way to interact with the government and to debate more fully the fundamentals of the proposed bill.

6. On the whole, RICS Scotland is broadly supportive of the bill and we wish to make no further additional comments.

Sarah J Speirs
Head of Communications
RICS
14 May 2009