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24 March 2011

Dear Ken

FOLLOW UP TO DETI ASSEMBLY QUESTIONS ON 23RD MARCH 2011

As a follow-on to a question posed about job creation since May 2007 during DETI Assembly Oral Questions on 23rd March, you asked me to provide figures of how many jobs have specifically been created and safeguarded in the East Antrim constituency during my tenure. As I did not have all of the relevant information to hand at the time, I am now writing to you in response to the queries raised.

Projects approved by Invest NI in the East Antrim Parliamentary Constituency Area during the period 1st June 2008 to 28th February 2011, expect to create nearly 340 new jobs and safeguard around 20 existing jobs. However, not all of these jobs are created immediately since some projects can take up to 5 years to fully mature.

In addition to these employment creation projects, Invest NI assisted a range of business development activities which were designed to increase business competitiveness, which generates growth, leading eventually to improved productivity and increased employment opportunities.

Invest NI also assisted the creation of almost 300 new jobs in the East Antrim area indirectly through the Enterprise Development Programme (formerly the Start a Business programme), delivered in conjunction with Enterprise Northern Ireland.

I shall be sending copies of this response to the Speaker's Office and to Alex Maskey MLA, who tabled the original question. I have also asked for a copy to be placed in the Assembly library.

Yours sincerely

ARLENE FOSTER MLA
Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment