

CASTLE, Bob

From: FOICOMMONS
Sent: 29 July 2009 17:57
To: 'Juliet Samuel'
Subject: F09-426

Dear Ms Samuel

FOI Response F09-426

Thank you for your request for information which is copied below.

You have clarified your request as follows: by "Operations Directorate" I mean the House of Commons body responsible for administering MPs' expenses, commonly referred to in the press as the "Fees Office".

In 2001 the Fees Office ceased to exist to be a separate office within the Department of Finance and Administration (now known as the Department of Resources). The work of administering MPs' expenses was subsumed into a broader Operations Directorate with responsibility for:

- Payment of salary to Members, their employees and House of Commons staff
- Payments to suppliers of goods and services to the House
- Payment of parliamentary allowances
- Pensions payable to Members, their staff and staff of the House (Pensions for Members are managed on behalf of the Pension Trustees, not the House of Commons)
- Guidance to Members on personnel issues
- Training for Members' staff

Given the range of services provided it is not possible to separately identify operating costs just for the administration of MPs' expenses and allowances. However, I hope that you will find the following figures which relate to the Operations Directorate as a whole useful.

Operations Directorate

	2005/06		2006/07		2007/08		2008/09	
	Budget £000s	Actual £000s	Budget £000s	Actual £000s	Budget £000s	Actual £000s	Budget £000s	Actual £000s
Receipts		(2)	0	(3)	0	(2)	0	(2)
Salary related		1,920	1,521	1,912	2,098	2,212	2,333	2,884
Other Staff Costs		62	0	83	50	58	0	29
Travel and Subsistence		3	0	1	0	2	0	11
Office Supplies		0	10	15	0	6	0	12
Information Work		4	0	2	0	8	0	4
commissioned		119	0	105	0	91	0	110
Computer support		1	0	2	0	6	0	7
Total	-	2,107	1,531	2,117	2,148	2,382	2,333	3,055

Notes:

(1) The 2005/06 budget for the then Department of Finance and Administration was not broken down to an extent which allows a budget for the Operations Directorate to be separately identified;

(2) A PCPF (Members' Pensions) Secretariat staff cost re-charge is not included in the above figures. This was £231,140 in 2007/08 and £258,889 in 2008/09 - figures for the earlier years are not readily available. This re-charge should be offset against the salary related costs shown. The salary related figure shown for 2005/06 excludes a one-off technical accounting adjustment related to pensions;

(3) Increased staff costs in 2008/09 arose primarily from additional work on Members' Allowances (e.g. £250 limit on claim receipt requirement reduced to £25) and growth in the number of enquiries received under Freedom of Information Act 2000.

(4) Changes in the volume and scope of work (e.g. introduction of the Communications Allowance from 1 April 2007) makes it difficult to compare years against each other.