



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Baile Átha Cliath 2

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Dublin 2

Mr Ted McEnery
Clerk to the Public Accounts Committee
Leinster House
Dublin 2



11th October 2012

Dear Mr McEnery,

Thank you for your letter of 21 September 2012. As requested, I enclose tables setting out details of the allowances paid by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Foreign Service Allowances

The Department's system of foreign service allowances, details of which are contained in Table 1, was most recently updated in 2002 following detailed discussions with the then Department of Finance and was approved by that Department. These allowances are designed to compensate officers for costs arising from their service overseas and they are not in the nature of pay. The system is similar to those used by the foreign ministries of many other countries. The main elements of the allowances system are:

- Cost of Living allowance (COLA)
- Local Post Allowance (LPA) and
- Child Foreign Allowance (CFA)

The COLA is linked to notional net home-based salary by grade and the allowances currently paid, therefore, reflect the reductions in take-home pay due to the salary reductions and income tax increases of recent years. The allowances are also regularly reviewed and adjusted, upwards or downwards, to take account of changes in the cost of living in Ireland and at post, as well as currency fluctuations where relevant. The general information and cost of living indices used in the reviews are sourced from an independent consultancy firm based in the UK. Changes to allowances as a result of reviews are routinely notified to Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

A copy of the business case as recently published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform relating to each element of the system of foreign services allowances is enclosed for ease of reference.

Other allowances

Details are contained in Table 2 of other allowances that are specific to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. A copy of the business case made in respect of each of those is also enclosed for ease of reference.

With regard to general civil service-wide allowances, details of those that are relevant to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade are outlined in Table 3.

The Tables reflect the outcome of the review by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the related Government Decision.

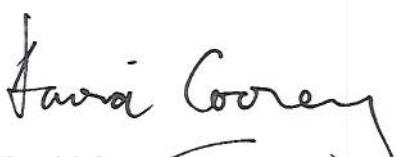
Review of duty officer services

The Passport Service currently provides emergency out-of-hours passport services in Dublin and Cork. The Department also operates an out-of-hours Duty Officer arrangement to deal with other emergencies, including provision of urgent consular assistance to Irish citizens in difficulty abroad.

The need to assess all services with a view to achieving cost savings has given rise to a full review of the Department's duty officer services in Ireland. This has resulted in a proposal for a new integrated duty officer service based in Dublin which will deal with all emergencies, including emergency passport services to the country as a whole. The cost of maintaining emergency passport duty officer services in Dublin and Cork separate from the diplomatic duty officer is no longer seen as justified from a cost/benefit perspective.

Departmental management and the Staff Side unions are working together to finalise the operational aspects of the proposed new integrated duty officer service. The sanction of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform for certain aspects will also be required. It is hoped that the new service will be operational from late November, yielding savings of in excess of €67,000 per annum.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require clarification on any of the details provided.



David Cooney
Secretary General

Table 1 - Foreign Service Allowances

No	Title of Allowance	Number of current rec	Total Annual Cost of Allowance in 2011	Range of allowance	Date payment commenced	Beneficiary (Grade) / Duration	Will allowance be paid in respect of new recruits / appointments
1	Cost of Living Allowance (COLA)	325 approx at any one time (not including about 75 non DFAT)	2,394,000	Based on Net Pay - varies depending on grade, personal status, cost of living at location and currency	Payment of allowances in respect of service abroad began at the foundation of the State's office abroad. The most recent sanction for the system dates from 2002.	All officers posted abroad, ranging from Service Officer to Second Secretary-General, for duration of posting only	Yes. For duration of posting only.
2	Local Post Allowance (LPA)	as above	5,557,000	Based on Net Pay - varies depending on grade, personal status, cost of living at location and currency	As above	Yes, subject to modification. For duration of posting only.	
3	Child Foreign Allowance (CFA)	Approx 128 DFAT officers in respect of 224 children at current time	709,000	Varies depending on number of children, cost of living at post and currency exchange	All posted officers with children under 21 in full-time education, for duration of posting only	Yes. For duration of posting only.	
4	Other		156,000	Varies	Duration of assignment to Joint Secretariat	Yes. For duration of posting only.	
5	Rent Allowance	265 approx at any one time (not including about 175 non DFAT, and those in directly provided accommodation)	7,937,000	Varies depending on market conditions, personal circumstances, grade	All officers posted abroad at all grades, for duration of posting only	Yes. For duration of posting only.	
6	Furniture Allowance	Approx 50 in 2011	97,773	2,000-4,000 max, dependent on grade.	Officers on first posting, those who have not availed of allowance before only.	Yes. For those who have not availed of allowance before only.	
7	School Fees Assistance	Approx 46 DFAT officers; 76 children at current time	1,062,000	Payable only where local state education is not accessible or of a suitable standard, in order to provide for the child's Constitutional right to education. Vouched.	Posted officers with children in fee paying school at post or boarding in Ireland, or duration of post, or 50% boarding in Ireland for officers subject to compulsory posting	Yes	
8	Representationa l Allowance	Payable at all Missions - allocated to individual officers at discretion of Head of Mission	2,033,000	Expenditure on promotional and representative activities - allocated to individual officers at discretion of Head of Mission and normally vouched	Posted officers required to undertake certain representational duties	Yes. For duration of posting only.	
9	Health Insurance top up	Approx 318 DFAT officers and 335 dependents at current time	811,000	Varies (paid directly to VHI) according to age and location	Majority of posted officers and their accompanying dependents	Yes. For duration of posting only.	
10	Other Medical	Approx 50 DTAT in total in 2011	65,000	500-800 average (vouched), depending on comparative cost of medical treatment at post	Occasional Requirement where costs higher than Ireland (or not charged in Ireland e.g. childhood vaccinations) and not covered by Health Insurance	n/a	
11	Detention	Approx 60 officers in 2011	140,109	Varies	All posted officers in temp accommodation at beginning of posting	Yes.	
12	Disturbance	Approx 57 in 2011	280,237	28 nights Dublin rate	All posted officers at end of posting	No. Abolished in DPER Review	

Temp Accomodation	Approx 60 in 2011 3	284,030 Varies (vouched)	" variety of posted officers while giving long term accommodation at post	Yes.
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Title of allowance	Amount of allowance	Beneficiary (Grade)	Number of current recipients	Date payment commenced	Date the rate of payment last changed	Total Annual Cost of Allowance in 2011	Will allowance be paid to new recruits or in respect of new appointments
Passport Office Dublin Duty Officer Allowance	24 hours overtime per week in summer (22 weeks), 19 hours overtime per week in winter (30 weeks) plus an additional €100 for working on a public holiday	CO, SO, EO, HEO	2 per week	Jun-99	1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay	€80k to €90k per annum approx	See covering letter - allowance under review
ICT Unit On Call Allowance	€250 per week + overtime at 3 hours Monday-Friday 9pm-Midnight + 6 hours overtime Sat and Sun	HEO	1 officer each week, on a roster basis	End 2003	No change	€13k + overtime of approx €40k	Yes, subject to review/modification
Diplomatic Duty Officer Allowance	€633.38 per week (or a reduced amount plus leave-in-lieu) plus overtime for hours worked in excess of 10 per week plus additional €324.26 for working on a public holiday	Third Secretary	One officer each week, on a roster basis	01-Jul-79	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay	€36k approx - some officers opt to take a reduced allowance plus leave-in-lieu. Average of 6 hours overtime also payable each week.	See covering letter - allowance under review
Passport Office Cork Duty Officer Allowance	€575.80 per week (or a reduced amount plus leave-in-lieu) plus overtime for hours worked in excess of 10 per week plus additional €294.78 for working on a public holiday	CO, SO, EO, HEO	1 per week	1999	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay	€33k to €35k per annum approx - some officers opt to take a reduced allowance plus leave-in-lieu.	See covering letter - allowance under review
Deputy Head of Division Allowance	€4,750 per annum	Counsellor/PO	7 in 2011; currently 3	01-Jul-99	Mid 2000s	€33,250	Abolished for new beneficiaries from 1/2/12; to be reviewed for current recipients
Perm Rep Brussels On Call Allowance	€400 per week + €100 for working on a public holiday + overtime for call outs	HEO, EO, CO	1 per week	04/09/2006	13/08/2007	€22k approx plus overtime	Yes, subject to review/modification
PCW Allowance	Variable - 1% of Salary	Assistant Legal Advisers, Professional Accountants and Translators who are members of IMPACT	12 in 2011; currently 8	01-Jul-99	€7,650.84		Yes

Title of allowance	Amount of allowance	Beneficiary (Grade)	Number of current recipients	Date payment commenced	Date the rate of payment last changed	Total Annual Cost of Allowance in 2011	Will allowance be paid to new recruits or in respect of new appointments
Gratuity for Public Holiday Allowance	€200 for Christmas Day and St Stephen's Day + €100 for other Public Holidays	Service Officers/ Nightwatchmen	3 per Public Holiday	2000	Mid 2000s	€4k per annum approx	Abolished for new beneficiaries from 1/2/12; to be reviewed for current recipients
Press Officer Allowance	€2,412.51 per annum	First Secretary	1	01-Jul-99	Mid 2000s	€2,412.51	Yes
Chief of Protocol Clothing Allowance	Maximum of €2,000 per annum. The cost of the purchases is amortised over 3 years at a rate of 40% in each of the first two years and 20% in the third year.	Previously Assistant Secretary level, post downgraded to Counsellor from March 2012	1	04/05/1989	27/03/2007	Up to a maximum of €2,000	Yes
Meal Allowance	€10	Cleaner/Services Officer	Depends on number of functions	information not readily available	information not readily available	€600 approx	Yes

TABLE 3 - General civil service-wide allowances

Title of allowance	Amount of allowance	Beneficiary (Grade)	Number of current recipients	Date payment commenced	Date the rate of payment last changed	Total Annual Cost of Allowance in 2011	Will allowance be paid to new recruits or in respect of new appointments
Child Allowance	€2.16 per week, per child	All grades	43	pre 1978	information not readily available	€7,193.69	No
Delegates Allowance	See attached table	Grades from EO to Deputy Secretary	119 in 2011	28/02/1975	01/01/2010	€141,092.26	No, allowance abolished with effect from 19/9/12 for existing staff and new beneficiaries
Driver (Van) Allowance	Modified Rate €49.58 p.w., PPC Rate €52.21 p.w.	Services Officer	4 3x€49.58 1x€52.21	01/03/1991	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay	€10,485.55	Yes, subject to review and/or modification (to be carried out by D/PER)
Employee Assistance Officer Allowance	€4,625.92 per annum	EAO (HEO)	1	information not readily available	information not readily available	€4,625.92	No as Employee Assistance Service centralised in D/PER from 2012
Franking Machine Allowance	Modified Rate €32.60 p.w. PPC Rate €34.29 p.w.	Service Officer	7 2 x €34.29 5 x €32.60	03/01/1984	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay	€10,449.83	Yes, subject to review and/or modification (to be carried out by D/PER)
Key Holder Allowance	€33.91 p.w. Modified Rate €35.67 p.w. PPC Rate	9 Service Officer 1 Clerical Officer	10	01/12/1990	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay	€14,082.71	Yes

				No longer applicable in this Department as the former recipients no longer perform paperkeeper duties
Paperkeeper Allowance	Modified Rate €51.84, PPC Rate €54.58	Service Officer 3	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay 1990s	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay €8,372.00
Personal to Holders Allowance	Former Revenue staff who transferred to this Department under decentralisation scheme Linked to grade/salary scale	11	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay Approx 2004	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay €25,793.03
Private Secretary - Min & Min State Allowance	€19,653 Modified Scale €20,685 PPC Scale	Private Secretary 2.5	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay pre 1940s	Yes (retention element no longer payable for officers appointed after 31/1/2012)
Private Secretary to Sec Gen Allowance	€10,405 Modified Scale €10,951 PPC Scale	Private Secretary to Sec Gen 1	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay pre 1970s	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay €36,546.71
Service Officer Supervisory Allowance (Deputy Head Service Officer)	€61.07 Modified Rate x 2 €64.26 PPC Rate x 2	Deputy Head Service Officer 4	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay 01/05/1986	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay €13,034.22
Shift Allowance (Communications Centre)	Shift Allowance, Percentage of Salary (1/6th).	Clerical Officer 3	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay Approx 1990	Yes €20,788.57

Shift Allowance (Passport Office Balbriggan Production)	Shift Allowance, Percentage of Salary (1/6th).	EO/SO/CO	8 (2 vacancies)	Approx 2004	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay	€45,749.35	Yes
Shoe Allowance	€65 per annum	Service Officer	28	1991		€1,820	Yes, payable once every two years and must be vouched
Switchboard Allowance	Paid after 30 hours worked on switchboard. €34.32 (Modified PRSI Rate), €36.09 (Full PRSI Rate)	Nightwatchman/ Services Officer	13	01/06/1981	information not readily available	€7,724.03	Yes, subject to review and/or modification (to be carried out by D/PER)
Unsocial Hours Allowance	€40.08 p.w. Modified Rate €42.18 p.w. PPC Rate	3 Nightwatchmen	2 x €42.18 1 x €40.08	pre 1990	Allowance reduced on 1/1/2010 in line with general reductions in pay	€6,470.88	Yes

Delegates Allowance

Grades above HEO (D/Finance Circular 4/79).				
	First night	2, 3 & 4th night	Sat/Sun	Chairperson
01-Jan-10	€218.89	€64.52	€80.65	€80.65
Grades up to & including HEO (D/Finance Circular 1/81 applies)				
	First night	2, 3 & 4th night	Sat/Sun	Chairperson
01-Jan-10	€103.69	€34.56	€0.0	€80.65