

## IPSA Bulletin

### Issue 2: 3 June 2010

We welcome feedback on the Bulletin. Please email comments and suggestions to [info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk](mailto:info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk).

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#### **IPSA's advice and information line**

IPSA has a team of people dedicated to answering queries from MPs and their staff. Since going operational after the General Election, IPSA has dealt with almost 1,500 emails and around 2,000 phone calls.

Dealing with these questions in a timely and accurate way is a priority for IPSA. We are now putting in place new arrangements to the way we handle MPs' queries.

#### **Staffing matters**

##### **MPs' Staff: exceptions to the Expenses Scheme**

As you will probably be aware, the Expenses Scheme rules state that all MPs' staff must be covered by employment contracts that are consistent with IPSA's model employment contract, job descriptions and salary ranges. However, the rules do allow returning MPs to tell IPSA of exceptions for staff employed before 6 May 2010. This must be done by **30 June 2010**.

##### **Do you have a member of staff whose contract is an exception to the Scheme?**

If so, please complete a form for each member of your staff for whom this applies, and return it to us by 30 June 2010. The form accompanies this Bulletin, and you will shortly be able to download it from our website.

##### **Getting advice on employment matters**

We have been getting questions from MPs about staff employment matters that fall outside the scope of the Expenses Scheme rules. Unfortunately we are not able to answer these. For advice on all employment matters outside the Expenses Scheme, you should contact the House of Commons Parliamentary Advisory Service (PAS) on 020 7219 2080.

Please note that neither IPSA nor PAS can give MPs advice in relation to the handling of their staffing expenditure budget.

## Online expenses system

### Have you received your log-in details?

If you have attended an IPSA induction session, either at the NMRA or elsewhere, and you have not yet received an email from us giving you your log-in details, please email us at [info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk](mailto:info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk), with the email Subject 'log-in details'.

### RSA security token PIN

Arrangements have been put in place between IPSA and our IT system contractor to enable us to waive the £45 administrative charge in the event that a user's PIN needs resetting. Consequently, this particular line in the RSA token declaration that MPs sign as part of their induction no longer applies.

## Registering and validating documents with IPSA

To date, around 100 MPs have had documents validated by the IPSA Document team in 1 Parliament Street. If you're planning a visit, before doing so please remember first to register on the online expense system any of the following:

- accommodation you wish to rent
- constituency office you wish to rent
- dependants on whose behalf you wish to claim
- a disability which means you require additional assistance
- security needs beyond those of other MPs
- vehicles for which you wish to make mileage claims

Once you have registered this information online, you will be prompted by the system to call the IPSA Information Line on 020 7811 6400 to book an appointment with the IPSA Document team.

Full details are on pages 9-12 of the 'Information for MPs' booklet given to all MPs at their IPSA Induction session and on the IPSA website at [www.parliamentarystandards.org.uk](http://www.parliamentarystandards.org.uk) (follow the Information for MPs and Staff link).

## IPSA Travelcard

IPSA's Travelcard enables you to charge certain travel expenses to it. Expenses incurred via the card still need to be submitted on the online expenses system, and receipts sent to IPSA with a claim report in the normal way. Apologies for the reference in Bulletin 1 that certain hotel costs could be charged to the Travelcard. This is not the case.

**How do I get a Travelcard?** Contact us on 020 7811 6400 or email [info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk](mailto:info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk)

### **IPSA Training for MPs' Staff**

More than 140 staff have already booked a place on IPSA's programme of training for MPs' staff, beginning next week until mid-July. You will find full details, including dates, venues and how to book, in a pdf letter accompanying this Bulletin.

Please note that the first four London sessions are now fully booked (7, 10, 11 and 17 June).

### **Interim Compliance Officer**

Alan Lockwood has been appointed to the role of Interim Compliance Officer by IPSA's Board.

During the next six months Alan will be in charge of setting up the compliance office and ensuring that policies and procedures are developed and implemented.

Alan has a distinguished military career with the Royal Air Force during which he led operations in Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan. Since leaving the RAF, Alan has been active in politics, defence and the media, and has served as a Trustee Board Member with the Citizens Advice Bureau.

The compliance office is independent of IPSA and is responsible for investigating complaints regarding breaches of the expenses rules by an MP or IPSA.

### **Contacting IPSA**

**Phone:** IPSA Information Line: 020 7811 6400

Opening hours: 8.00am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday.

**Email:** [info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk](mailto:info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk)

**Post:** IPSA, 7th floor, Portland House, Bressenden Place, London, SW1E 5BH