

Anne Maine MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Date:- 15 January 2010

Dear Anne,

As requested by the Minister of State for Business, I would like to respond to your Parliamentary Question on how much we've spent on hotel accommodation for our officials in each of the last five years.

Apart from the last financial year, we have archived our records covering the previous four years of your request.

We have worked out it would take three members of our staff to retrieve the relevant boxes from our stores, then another from our finance team to manually analyse around 48 files covering those four years, as unfortunately we cannot do this digitally because we don't identify accommodation costs separately from travel and subsistence expenses.

As such we do not believe it is a good use of our resources and hope you will understand and appreciate our reasoning.

However I am very happy to let you have the information for the financial year 08/09 as we have not yet archived this.

During this period we spent £21,506.70 on hotel accommodation for staff and our non-executive board. The majority of these costs cover our proactive initiative to meet our key stakeholders who are not based in London. This allows us to ensure the likes of the Chambers of Commerce in Greater Manchester and the Wales-based DVLA have a voice in how postal services are regulated because an efficient postal system is critical to them.

We have always been greatly appreciated for making this effort in order to ensure we can regulate effectively for all types of customer in all parts of the country. We believe this an important part of our work but recognise that hotel accommodation can be costly and as such are striving to bring down this cost. We are expecting the next financial year's accommodation costs to be lower by at least £5,000.

The rest of the accommodation costs cover our meetings in the European Union (we have a mandatory responsibility to represent the Department for Business Innovation and Skills at one particular regulators' group which meets in Europe). We are also

expected to represent the UK on regulatory issues for the European Union such as the Postal Directive Committee led by the European Commission DG -MARKT.

I hope the information we have been able to provide is helpful to you.

Yours sincerely,



TIM BROWN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE