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30th September 2010

Philip Davies MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr Davies

Parliamentary Question 15708

I am writing with regard to your Parliamentary Question, number 15708, tabled on 14th September 2010, to which John Penrose replied on 16th September.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport how much the Horserace Betting Levy Board has spent on external legal advice in each of the last five years.

John Penrose: The Department does not collate this information for its arm's length bodies. Accordingly, I have asked the chief executive of the Horserace Betting Levy Board to write to the hon. Member for Shipley. Copies of the reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The information that you requested is set out on the next page, and we have also provided some other figures to put the legal expenditure in context.

The legal expenditure covers all areas of HBLB activity, such as that relating to levy collection, the arrangements involved in arranging and (if necessary) securing loans to racecourses from HBLB's Capital Fund, legal questions arising from specific Freedom of Information Act requests, specific human resources matters and wider strategic advice.

Levels of legal expenditure, along with HBLB's other administrative costs, are reported regularly to the Board which, as you know, comprises appointees from both the racing and betting industries as well as Government-appointed independent members.

HBLB's administrative expenses in 2009/10 were their lowest in the past five years. Legal expenses were their second-lowest in that same period. The Board seeks to operate in a highly cost effective manner in pursuit of its statutory objectives.

I should point out that the statistics exclude legal advice taken by the Bookmakers' Committee.

I hope that this information is helpful.

Douglas Erskine-Crum
Chief Executive

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Levy income	£99,340,000	£99,300,000	£115,580,000	£90,550,000	£75,390,000
HBLB administration expense	£3,606,000	£3,372,000	£3,631,000	£3,614,000	£3,153,000
HBLB legal expense	£272,506	£382,745	£681,695	£460,227	£297,613
HBLB admin expense as % of levy	3.63%	3.40%	3.14%	3.99%	4.18%
HBLB legal expense as % of levy	0.27%	0.39%	0.59%	0.51%	0.39%

Yours sincerely



Douglas Erskine-Crum
Chief Executive

copy: Alana Curtis, DCMS