



DEBATE PACK

Number CDP-2017-0040, 3 February 2017

Funding of the Serious Fraud Office

Westminster Hall Debate 7 February 2017 at 0930hrs

A Westminster Hall debate on the Funding of the Serious Fraud Office has been scheduled for 0930hrs on Tuesday 7 February 2017. The Member in charge of this debate is Stephen Timms MP.

Sally Lipscombe and
Sarah Pepin

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

1. Background

The [Serious Fraud Office](#) (SFO) is an independent Government department responsible for investigating and prosecuting suspected offences involving serious and complex fraud, including bribery and corruption. It covers England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The SFO is superintended by the Attorney General in accordance with the principles set out in the [Protocol between the Attorney General and the Prosecuting Departments](#).

The SFO was created by the [Criminal Justice Act 1987](#) and was established in 1988.

1.1 The role of the SFO

In recent written evidence to the Justice Committee, the SFO set out details of the type of work it undertakes:

The SFO initially had a financial threshold for its cases of £1million, which was later increased to £5million. However, such thresholds soon became outdated and the current Director has published a Statement of Principle to make clear the main factors he takes into account when considering a case. These are:

- whether the apparent criminality undermines UK PLC commercial or financial interests in general and in the City of London in particular,
- whether the actual or potential financial loss involved is high,
- whether actual or potential economic harm is significant,
- whether there is a significant public interest element, and
- whether there is new species of fraud.

The type of investigation that the SFO takes on is best illustrated by considering a sample of some of its live cases. These include cases relating to:

- manipulation of the 'LIBOR' rate (London Interbank Offered Rate);
- the re-capitalisation deal by Barclays Bank with Qatar at the height of the financial crisis;
- alleged bribes paid for the award of contracts relating to Rolls-Royce;
- alleged false accounting relating to Tesco;
- alleged bribery of public officials relating to Alstom;
- alleged bribes paid to induce customer orders relating to GlaxoSmithKline;

- the way in which G4S/Serco secured contractual payments from the MoJ;
- the relationship between GPT and the Saudi National Guard;
- alleged fraud, bribery and corruption at Airbus; and
- the activities of Unaoil, its offices, employees and agents.¹

1.2 Funding

The SFO has a core budget which is supplemented by additional funding. This additional funding includes so-called “blockbuster” funding, which is used to enable the SFO to take on big cases where the annual expenditure is expected to exceed an agreed percentage of its core budget. The [SFO’s website](#) provides details of current and recent funding settlements:

Our total funding and spending for the current and recent years is shown in the table below.

| Year | Core funding (voted in Main Estimate) | Additional funding ¹ | Income ² | Gross budget ^a | Gross spend ^a |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2016-17 <i>(as of 22 November 2016)</i> | £35.7m | £10m | <i>(Not yet available)</i> | £45.7m | <i>(Not yet available)</i> |
| 2015-16 | £33.8m | £28m | £0.9m | £62.6m | £61.2m |
| 2014-15 | £33.2m | £24.5m | £1.7m | £59.4m | £56.4m |
| 2013-14 | £29.6m | £24m | £0.4m | £54.0m | £52.1m |
| 2012-13 | £33.4m | £7.4m | £2.9m | £43.7m | £40.9m |
| 2011-12 | £33.9m | (£0.7m) | £7.0m | £40.1m | £38.5m |
| 2010-11 | £34.1m | £2.8m | £4.4m | £41.3m | £39.9m |
| 2009-10 | £35.1m | £6.0m | £3.3m | £44.6m | £43.0m |

¹An element of the additional funding has been provided as part of the Main Estimates since 2013-14, the total funding for the year is voted in the Supplementary Estimates.

²Up to 2013-14, the SFO received a proportion of the sums recovered from confiscation orders and civil recovery proceedings under the Asset Recovery Incentivisation Scheme (ARIS). However, because this income stream was extremely difficult to manage – consisting of infrequent and highly unpredictable sums – the SFO agreed with HM Treasury that from April 2014 all ARIS receipts on SFO cases would go to central funds, with a fixed sum added to the SFO’s core funding. This amount covers the approximate cost of running the Proceeds of Crime Division.

^aExcludes Annually Managed Expenditure (certain spend on items which will be paid for in future financial years) and Capital Expenditure (for example, spending on IT software and equipment). For further information see our [Annual Reports and Accounts](#).

The SFO has described this arrangement as “a workable mechanism which allows the SFO to respond flexibly to a demand-led workload”.²

¹ Justice Committee evidence session: The Work of the Serious Fraud Office (SFO), [Pre-hearing memorandum from the Serious Fraud Office](#), 27 October 2016

² Ibid

However, in a 2016 report into the SFO's governance arrangements, HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate identified some concerns with the blockbuster funding approach:

The blockbuster funding model is not representing value for money and it prevents the SFO building future capability and capacity. Temporary and contract staff are often more expensive than permanent staff and managing surge capacity is a constant drain on Human Resources (HR) and other staff. Increasing core funding would provide the SFO with the ability to build capacity and capability in-house and lead to less reliance on blockbuster funding.³

The report gave some further analysis of the SFO's funding requirements:

The core budget for the SFO has been agreed (after the latest Government Comprehensive Spending Review) at approximately £35m each year from 2016-17 for four years. With the addition of blockbuster funding the SFO's budget has been around £50m per annum over the last seven years, with highs of £54m in 2008-09 and £58m in 2014-15, and a low of £39m in 2011-12. Whilst the variance in budget in any one year demonstrates the need for flexibility in the organisation's funding, the addition to the core budget has been increasing in recent years and the need for additional funding is likely to continue for some time.

Blockbuster funding is applied for when it is expected that the costs to investigate and potentially prosecute a case exceed 5% of the SFO's core budget (at present, cases likely to exceed £1.7m). The ability to have recourse to additional funding for very large cases was agreed with the Chief Secretary to the Treasury in October 2012 and this funding model is supported by the Attorney General. Blockbuster funding however remains a controversial issue with other criminal justice partners, who do not have similar access to funds, and with the media.

The logic behind blockbuster funding is that it provides funds to deal with large complicated cases of economic crime, such as the LIBOR investigation, which fall to the SFO to investigate but which cannot be predicted in any one financial year. Without such access to funding, cases already under investigation could stall or the Director would need to make a decision not to take on cases purely because of budgetary constraints. Neither is desirable and the Director has reinforced his pledge that the SFO will never turn down any investigation simply on grounds of cost.⁴

The report acknowledged that the blockbuster model gave the SFO flexibility to expand and contract its workforce, but suggested that it also gave rise to "significant staffing concerns":

New blockbuster cases may leave gaps in staffing and skills in other ongoing investigations so, according to need, these may also be backfilled with contract or temporary staff. At the time of our inspection 21% of SFO staff were non-permanent. There is therefore an inherent lack of consistency in teams, which becomes particularly problematic because of the lengthy nature of

³ HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate, *Inspection of the Serious Fraud Office governance arrangements*, May 2016, para 1.10

⁴ Ibid, paras 4.37-4.39

SFO investigations. This disruption increases the risk of delay in cases and may weaken the investigative strategy going forward.

(...)

Another disadvantage of the current funding model is that contract and temporary staff are brought in but then subsequently leave with valuable experience and skills which are lost to the SFO. The advantage of increasing core funding would be to build capability and experience within teams. Building this capability by increasing permanent staff would enable the SFO to build better resilience for future needs, be more cost effective and less disruptive organisationally.⁵

The report concluded that the current funding model was not providing the best value for money, and that more efficiency could be achieved by raising core funding. If core funding were increased, then the cost level at which blockbuster funding could be applied for could also be increased and the need to resort to additional funds would be significantly reduced.

⁵ Ibid, paras 4.40 and 4.43

2. Media

2.1 Articles and blogs

Guardian

[Serious Fraud Office given extra funds to investigate Unaoil bribery claims](#)

David Pegg, Rob Evans and Holly Watt 1 November 2016

Financial Times [Registration required]

[UK awards extra funds for SFO probe into ENRC's mining deals](#)

Caroline Binham and Tom Burgis 3 July 2016

Financial Times [Registration required]

[Serious Fraud Office hurt by reliance on 'blockbuster funding'](#)

Jane Croft 24 May 2016

Law Society Gazette

[Lawyers call for SFO funding boost ahead of anti-corruption summit](#)

Chloe Smith 11 May 2016

Financial Times [Registration required]

[Crime agency to be given powers over SFO in shake-up](#)

Caroline Binham, Gonzalo Vina and Lindsay Fortado 14 February 2016

Law Society Gazette

[Serious Fraud Office requests 'blockbuster' funding](#)

Chloe Smith 8 January 2016

Telegraph

[Serious Fraud Office asks for 'blockbuster funding' to help pay for Libor and other probes](#)

Marion Dakers 23 October 2014

Financial Times [Registration required]

[Serious Fraud Office left with £4m bill for wrongly reclaimed tax on barristers' fees](#)

Caroline Binham 1 July 2014

Financial Times [Registration required]

[Serious Fraud Office fined for value added tax mistakes](#)

Caroline Binham and George Parker 28 February 2014

Financial Times [Registration required]

[UK's Serious Fraud Office seeks £19m emergency funding](#)

Caroline Binham 30 January 2014

2.2 Press releases

HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate

[SFO governance arrangements](#)

23 May 2016

Transparency International UK

[TI-UK concerned by news of SFO losing its independence](#)

8 April 2016

Attorney General's Office

[Law Officer Departments' settlement at the Spending Review 2015](#)

25 November 2015

3. Parliamentary Business

3.1 Ministerial Statements

[Serious Fraud Office \(Contingencies Fund Advance\)](#)

7 January 2016 | Written statement | HCWS 449

Robert Buckland (The Solicitor General) | Department: Attorney General

I would like to inform the House that a cash advance from the Contingencies Fund has been sought for the Serious Fraud Office (SFO).

In line with the current arrangement for SFO funding agreed with HM Treasury, the SFO will be submitting a Reserve claim as part of the Supplementary Estimate process for 2015-16.

The advance is required to meet an urgent cash requirement on existing services pending Parliamentary approval of the 2015-16 Supplementary Estimate. The Supplementary Estimate will seek an increase in both the Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit and the Net Cash Requirement in order to cover the cost of significant investigations and the settlement of material liabilities.

Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £21,137,000 (twenty one million, one hundred and thirty seven thousand pounds) will be sought in a Supplementary Estimate for the Serious Fraud Office. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £15,500,000 (fifteen million, five hundred thousand pounds) will be met by a repayable cash advance from the Contingencies Fund.

The advance will be repaid upon Royal Assent of the Supply and Appropriation (Anticipation and Adjustments) Bill.

[Serious Fraud Office \(Contingencies Fund\)](#)

HC Deb 23 October 2014 c75WS

Robert Buckland (The Solicitor General) | Department: Attorney General

I would like to inform the House that a cash advance from the Contingencies Fund has been sought for the Serious Fraud Office (SFO).

In line with the current arrangement for SFO funding agreed with HM Treasury, the SFO will be submitting a reserve claim as part of the supplementary estimate process for 2014-15.

The advance is required to meet an urgent cash requirement on existing services pending parliamentary approval of the 2014-15 supplementary estimate. The supplementary estimate will seek an increase in both the resource departmental expenditure limit and the net cash requirement in order to cover the cost of significant investigations and the settlement of material liabilities.

Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £26,500,000 will be sought in a supplementary estimate for the Serious Fraud Office. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £26,500,000 will be met by a repayable cash advance from the Contingencies Fund. Should further resources be required, the Serious Fraud Office will seek authority through the Treasury in the normal way.

The advance will be repaid upon Royal Assent of the Supply and Appropriation (Anticipation and Adjustments) Bill.

[Serious Fraud Office \(Contingencies Fund Advance\)](#)

HC Deb 30 January 2014 c39WS

Oliver Heald (The Solicitor General) | Department: Attorney General

I would like to inform the House that a cash advance from the Contingencies Fund has been sought for the Serious Fraud Office (SFO).

The SFO has incurred higher than anticipated expenditure and a reserve claim has been agreed by HM Treasury as part of the supplementary estimate 2013-14 process.

The advance is required to meet an urgent cash requirement on existing services pending parliamentary approval of the 2013-14 supplementary estimate. The supplementary estimate seeks an increase in both the resource departmental expenditure limit and the net cash requirement in order to settle material liabilities.

Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £19 million will be sought in a supplementary estimate for the SFO. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £11 million will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

The advance will be repaid upon Royal Assent of the Supply and Appropriation (Anticipation and Adjustments) Bill.

3.2 Debates

[Criminal Finances Bill](#)

HC Deb 25 October 2016 c194-244 [Extract c233-4]

Keith Vaz:

We—Committees of this House, Members of Parliament—have made the point over a number of years that the assets and finances available to our law enforcement agencies cannot compare with the level of criminality in existence. Let us look at the budgets of the three main organisations dealing with this issue: the National Crime Agency has a budget of £450 million; the Financial Conduct Authority has a budget of £500 million; and the Serious Fraud Office has a budget of £45 million. However, the amount of criminal assets recovered has been very poor—only £155 million was recovered in 2014-15.

In defence of those three agencies, whose assets total about £1 billion a year, they say that it is not just about the recovery of assets—they are involved in other areas and they are part of other operations, which mean that the contribution that they make is not fully assessed. However, if we just compare like for like, we will see quite a difference between what the budgets are and what is recovered.

3.3 Parliamentary Questions

[Serious Fraud Office: Staff](#)

Asked by: Nick Thomas-Symonds

To ask the Attorney General, how many contract and temporary staff the Serious Fraud Office employed annually from 2010 to the most recent period for which figures are available; and what the cost was of that employment for each such year.

Answered by: Robert Buckland | Department: Attorney General

The average number of temporary contract staff employed annually by the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) since 2010 and the cost of that employment is detailed in the table below. The figure for 2016-17 is the actual number of temporary contract staff engaged by the SFO as at 31 October.

| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Tempor ary Staff Cost | £3.69 3m | £2.29 6m | £2.67 2m | £3.92 6m | £4.64 6m | £6.99 1m | £3.73 5m |
| Tempor ary Staff FTE | 20 | 51 | 29 | 36 | 69 | 106 | 113 |

The Serious Fraud Office operates a flexible resourcing model due to the demand-led nature of its casework and to take account of the mix of core and blockbuster funding. The majority of temporary staff are assigned to work on blockbuster cases and the number of such cases has increased since 2010.

Prior to April 2014 the SFO did not maintain a centralised record of temporary staffing and the figures prior to that date are estimates.

[Serious Fraud Office: Finance](#)

Asked by: Nick Thomas-Symonds

To ask the Attorney General, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of blockbuster funding for the Serious Fraud Office and the effect of the funding model on the body's staffing and resources.

Answered by: Robert Buckland | Department: Attorney General

The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) blockbuster funding model allows the SFO the flexibility to take on the complex and high value cases for which it was established. SFO officials meet regularly with my staff and with Treasury officials to review the financial position and we will continue to work closely with Treasury colleagues to ensure that the SFO has an effective and sustainable funding model.

2 December 2016 | Written questions | 55015

[Offence of Economic Crime](#)

Asked by: Barry Sheerman

The Attorney General knows that I have campaigned for much more vigorous action in this sector. I have called for proper resources to be given to the Serious Fraud Office, because it has become far too dependent on this country's big accountancy firms, and that is the road to ruin and ineffective action.

Answered by: Jeremy Wright | Department: Attorney General

I am aware of the hon. Gentleman's campaigning record. As he knows, the amount of money that the Serious Fraud Office receives as part of its core budget has increased over the past few years and it will continue to increase. As he also knows, it has access to "blockbuster" funding for particularly large and unexpected cases. Of course, this is not just about money; it is also about the tools that the Serious Fraud Office and other investigators and prosecutors have at their disposal. That is one of the reasons why it is always worth keeping this area under review, which is what we are doing.

HC Deb 21 July 2016 c953

[Tax Evasion](#)

Asked by: Tulip Siddiq

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Answer of 12 May 2016 to Question 36479, to where the £10 million funding for the multi-agency taskforce has been allocated; and what proportion of that funding has not yet been allocated.

Answered by: David Gauke | HM Treasury

The cross-agency task force will be led by HM Revenue and Customs and the National Crime Agency in collaboration with all relevant agencies, including the Serious Fraud Office and the Financial Conduct Authority. Between them, these agencies have some of the most sophisticated technology, experts and resources to tackle money laundering and tax evasion anywhere in the world.

The funding for the taskforce will be distributed as appropriate via the supplementary estimates process.

6 June 2016 | Written questions | 38701

[Serious Fraud](#)

Asked by: Barry Sheerman

Is the Attorney General conscious of the fact that there is a deep problem in the Serious Fraud Office, in that it is underfunded and under-resourced and cannot attract the greatest talent for complex cases? Is he aware that it is believed that £400 million of British taxpayers' money is still affected by the disaster with the Icelandic banks and should be retrieved? Will he look at the close relationship that the SFO has with the big accountancy firms, which do not have the necessary expertise in-house, and will he look particularly at Grant Thornton in that respect?

Answered by: Jeremy Wright | Department: Attorney General

I am sure the hon. Gentleman will recognise that I am not going to comment on specific cases. He will understand that it is the responsibility of the director of the Serious Fraud Office to decide whether to open investigations and prosecutions. In fact, the core funding for the Serious Fraud Office has increased, not decreased. It also has access to so-called blockbuster funding to enable it to take on very large and substantial cases when the need arises. Were it to retain that core capability throughout a given period, it would sometimes not be using it to its fullest extent when such cases were not on its books, which is an appropriate way to proceed. We will always make sure that the Serious Fraud Office has the funding it needs to prosecute the cases it ought to prosecute.

HC Deb 26 May 2016 c663

[Serious Fraud](#)

Asked by: Jo Stevens

I listened carefully to that response from the Attorney General, because this week's report from Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service inspectorate into the Government's arrangements for the SFO found that the blockbuster funding model does not represent value for money and is incompatible with long-term strategy for building prosecutorial capability and capacity in-house for future investigations and prosecutions. Will he look at alternative funding models to ensure that the SFO is on a sustainable footing and not, in effect, subject to a Treasury veto?

Answered by: Jeremy Wright | Department: Attorney General

The hon. Lady will recognise that the report from the chief inspector, which I asked him to produce in order to look at the way in which the Serious Fraud Office is governed, was a very balanced report that also put forward some very positive points about the way in which the Serious Fraud Office has improved under the direction of the current director. She is right, however, that questions were asked about the funding model. There is a balance to be struck, as I indicated to the hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr Sheerman). We have to make sure that the Serious Fraud Office has the money it needs, and we will. The

director will never refuse to proceed in a case for lack of funding, so there is no Treasury veto as she suggests. However, we have to balance the need for that money with the need not to have unused capacity that is being paid for by the taxpayer. The blockbuster funding model has so far been considered to strike that balance correctly, but I will of course look carefully at what the chief inspector says, and we will consider whether further change is appropriate.

HC Deb 26 May 2016 c663-4

[Serious Fraud Office](#)

Asked by: Tulip Siddiq

To ask the Attorney General, (a) how much funding he has allocated to and (b) how many full-time equivalent staff were employed by the (i) Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and (ii) SFO's Proceeds of Crime Division in each year since 2009.

Answered by: Jeremy Wright | Department: Attorney General

The information requested is contained in the following tables.

| | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| SFO gross budget | £44.6m | £41.3m | £40.1m | £43.7m | £54m | £59.4m | £62.2m |
| SFO Proceeds of Crime Division ² | £0.920m | £1.021m | £1.571m | £1.683m | £1.931m | £2.304m | £2.674m |
| | | | | | | | |
| Full time equivalent staff³ | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| SFO | 307 | 305 | 306 | 292 | 305 | 401 ⁴ | 393 |
| SFO Proceeds of Crime Division | 13 | 17 | 21 | 20 | 23.43 | 32.71 | 31.43 |

1. The figures includes any blockbuster funding received in each year. They exclude capital expenditure, annually managed expenditure.

2. The Proceeds of Crime figures include the budget for the current year and outturn for the previous years. They do not include £110k funding received from the Department for International Development in the financial years 2014-15 & 2015-16.
3. This data covers FTE staff in post as at 31st March each year including fixed term contractors, but not agency staff. Complete records for staff in post in the Proceeds of Crime division before 2011-12 are not held centrally and the figures provided for these years are based on available data.
4. This is a revised figure which corrects the number previously published in the SFO Annual Report and Accounts 2014-15.

9 May 2016 | Written questions | 35794

[Serious Fraud Office](#)

Asked by: Catherine McKinnell

To ask the Attorney General, pursuant to the Answer of 15 October 2015 to Question 11456, whether any additional blockbuster funding has been requested by the Serious Fraud Office for 2015-16; and what assessment he has made of the likelihood of that office making further requests for additional blockbuster funding in the remainder of this financial year.

Answered by: Robert Buckland | Department: Attorney General

As I explained in my answer on 15 October, the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) receives additional funding as part of the Main and Supplementary Estimates processes. The SFO received £10m of additional funding through the 2015-16 Main Estimates process.

The Supplementary Estimates process for 2015-16 has not concluded. The SFO does expect to request additional funding as part of this process and details will be published at the appropriate time.

9 November 2015 | Written questions | 14694

[Serious Fraud Office: Finance](#)

Asked by: Catherine McKinnell

To ask the Attorney General, how many requests for blockbuster funding were made by the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) in (a) 2010-11, (b) 2011-12, (c) 2012-13, (d) 2013-14, (e) 2014-15 and (f) 2015-16 to date; how much funding was requested on each such occasion for which investigations; what proportion of the SFO's annual budget such blockbuster funding represented in each of those years; and on how many occasions such funding requests were not approved in each of those years.

Answered by: Robert Buckland | Department: Attorney General

The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) has a core budget to investigate and, where appropriate, prosecute the most serious and complex cases of fraud, bribery and corruption, and some exceptionally large cases will arise that require additional resources.

Where this is the case, the additional funding which is commonly referred to as 'blockbuster funding' is allocated as part of the Main and Supplementary Estimates processes. Therefore, the additional funding has been approved as part of this process each year.

The table below shows the SFO's total net Departmental Expenditure Limit for each year since 2010-11, and the amount of this which was blockbuster funding in each year.

| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------|
| Total budget | £36.9m | £33.2m | £40.8m | £53.6m | £57.7m | £43.8m* |
| 'Blockbuster' funding | £2.8m | £0 | £6.7m | £24m | £25.2m | £10m to date |

* This is the figure from the Main Estimate for 2015-16 and so may be revised as part of the Supplementary Estimates process.

The figures in the table do not include capital expenditure or Annually Managed Expenditure, or any income from costs awards or other recoveries. The blockbuster funding during this period also includes support for civil litigation costs relating to the investigation into Kaupthing.

As has been explained in response to previous questions from Members, it is not appropriate to provide a breakdown of the funding allocated to each SFO investigation.

15 October 2015 | Written questions | 11456

[Serious Fraud Office](#)

Asked by: Nick Smith

What his future funding proposals are for the Serious Fraud Office.

Answered by: Robert Buckland | Department: Attorney General

The Serious Fraud Office is a small and demand-led organisation that comprises investigators, prosecutors, accountants and other specialists. The model, which is known as the Roskill model, gives the director of the SFO the flexibility to have the right combination of expertise to tackle the most complex and large cases. The current blockbuster funding approach allows him to take on cases that are exceptionally demanding in terms of resource, such as the LIBOR case, while avoiding the need constantly to maintain high levels of permanent staff, which are not always necessary.

HC Deb 2 July 2015 c1609

[Serious Fraud Office](#)

Asked by: Nick Smith

The SFO going cap in hand to the Treasury when it wants to take on a major case could mean delaying justice. Why not let moneys recovered by the SFO be kept by it so that it has autonomy?

Answered by: Robert Buckland | Department: Attorney General

Attractive though that proposal sounds—I take it in the constructive spirit that I know the hon. Gentleman intends—my worry is that that is an even more uncertain means of funding the SFO. The advantage of blockbuster funding is that it allows the SFO the flexibility it needs,

allows significant amounts of money to be allocated to its work, and proves the point that funding will never be a bar to the work of the SFO in investigating serious fraud.

HC Deb 2 July 2015 c1610

[Serious Fraud Office](#)

Asked by: Emily Thornberry

To ask the Attorney-General for how many cases the Serious Fraud Office has sought additional funding from the Exchequer in the last two years; and on how many occasions such funding was granted (a) in part and (b) in full.

Answered by: Oliver Heald | Department: Attorney General

The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) has sought additional funding in relation to three cases in the last two years, and this was granted in full on each occasion.

Some additional funding has also been provided in relation to other matters as set out in the recent report of the Justice Committee on the SFO's supplementary estimate for 2013-14.

HC Deb 1 April 2014 c584W

[Serious Fraud Office](#)

Asked by: Emily Thornberry

To ask the Attorney-General pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 30 January 2014, how much of the £19 million additional resources for the Serious Fraud Office has been ear-marked for specific investigations or prosecutions.

Answered by: Oliver Heald | Department: Attorney General

It is not in the public interest to specify what resources the Serious Fraud Office intends to dedicate to each case.

HC Deb 4 February 2014 c147W

4. Organisations and further reading

HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate, [Inspection of the Serious Fraud Office governance arrangements](#) , May 2016.

House of Commons Justice Committee, [Work of the Serious Fraud Office](#) , one-off evidence session web page

House of Commons Justice Committee, [Letter dated 25 October 2016 from David Green, Director, Serious Fraud Office, on orders obtained by the Serious Fraud Office](#) , 1 November 2016

House of Commons Justice Committee, [The work of the Serious Fraud Office: oral evidence 25 October 2016: David Green](#) , HC 629 2016-17, 27 October 2016

House of Commons Justice Committee, [Pre-hearing memorandum from the Serious Fraud Office](#) , 27 October 2016

National Audit Office, [Serious Fraud Office 2011-12 accounts](#) , 1 November 2012

National Audit Office, [Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the House of Commons into the Serious Fraud Office accounts 2011-12](#), Undated [November 2012]

Serious Fraud Office, [Annual report and accounts](#) , 2012-13 to 2015-16

Serious Fraud Office, [Our funding and budget](#) , web page

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