



## The publication of MPs' expenses by IPSA

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The Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) is now responsible for the publication of details of MPs' expenses. This Note sets out the background to the information made available by the Commons for Members' allowances paid in the 2005-2010 Parliament. Following a decision of the High Court in 2008, the Commons prepared to release redacted receipts relating to allowances. In May and June 2009 the *Daily Telegraph* obtained a leaked copy of these receipts and printed a series of articles based on information gained from them. The subsequent expenses crisis led to the passage of the *Parliamentary Standards Act 2009* and the creation of IPSA, which took over the administration of MPs' allowances from the beginning of the new 2010 Parliament. Standard Note 5783 [The Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority: operating the Members' Expenses Scheme](#) gives further details.

IPSA consulted on its publication scheme under the *Freedom of Information Act 2000* in June 2010. On 18 November 2010 it announced that it would publish the first tranche of information about allowances on 2 December and published a new policy on proactive disclosure. IPSA reiterated that it would not publish invoices and receipts as this would not be a good use of public money. There has been some media criticism of this decision.

Further media criticism followed, with the disclosure of details of rental arrangement by Members, where full details for 51 MPs were not made available, due to concerns about security.

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## 1 Background

Standard Note 4732 *MPs allowances and Fol requests* sets out the sequence of events in the 2005-2010 Parliament on the publication of MPs allowances. Both Houses of Parliament were included within the public bodies subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 2000*, which came into effect on 1 January 2005. The Commons and Lords issued a Publication Scheme, required under the Act, to indicate the types of information which would be made available. As preparation for implementation of Fol, the administration of both Houses released information on individual Members' allowances in October 2004. The allowances information was updated annually. The information covered the financial years from 2001/2 and was released under 9 categories: Additional Cost Allowance (ACA), London Supplement, Incidental Expenses Provision, Staffing Allowance, Members' Travel, Members' Staff Travel, Centrally Purchased Stationery, Centrally Provided Computer Equipment and Other Costs. The summary tables from 2004-5 to 2007-8 are available on Parliament's website.<sup>1</sup>

The process leading to the decision by the House of Commons Commission to release a total sum for each allowance, rather than a detailed breakdown, is given in the Information Tribunal decision of 16 January 2007.<sup>2</sup> The Commission is a statutory body responsible for the overall supervision of the House of Commons. The Speaker chairs the Commission.

Following a series of Fol requests for the details of individual claims made by Members, and initial decisions by the Information Commissioner and the Information Tribunal, the High Court ordered the Commons authorities to release full details of allowances in July 2008. The judgment commented that disclosure was required due to the lack of confidence in the administration of allowances:

We have no doubt that the public interest is at stake. We are not here dealing with idle gossip, or public curiosity about what in truth are trivialities. The expenditure of public money through the payment of MPs' salaries and allowances is a matter of direct and reasonable interest to taxpayers. They are obliged to pay their taxes at whatever level and on whatever basis the legislature may decide, in part at least to fund the legislative process. Their interest is reinforced by the absence of a coherent system for the exercise of control over and the lack of a clear understanding of the arrangements which govern the payment of ACA. Although the relevant rules are made by the House itself, questions whether the payments have in fact been made within the rules, and even when made within them, whether the rules are appropriate in contemporary society, have a wide resonance throughout the body politic. In the end they bear on public confidence in the operation of our democratic system at its very pinnacle, the House of Commons itself. The nature of the legitimate public interest engaged by these applications is obvious.<sup>3</sup>

The Members Estimate Select Committee (which has identical membership with the House of Commons Commission) decided not to make a further appeal on 19 May 2008 and in answer to a parliamentary question it indicated that information down to receipt level would be made available for all Members in the autumn of 2008.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/members-allowances/house-of-commons/house-of-commons-scheme-guides/hocallowances07/members-allowance-and-travel-breakdown/>

<sup>2</sup> Information Tribunal Decision Notice 26 February 2008 EA/2007/1060, 0061,0062,0063,0122,0123,0131

<sup>3</sup> Case No:CO2888/2008 *Corporate Officer of the House of Commons v Information Commissioner, Heather Brooke, Ben Leapman, Jonathan Michael Ungeod-Thomas*, available at <http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2008/1084.html>

<sup>4</sup> HC Deb 20 May 2008 c174W

The cost of this work was estimated at £950,000.<sup>5</sup> Following representations from Members concerned at the security implications of the proposed release of receipts the then Leader of the House, Harriet Harman, brought forward the *Freedom of Information (Parliament and National Assembly for Wales) Order 2008* to exempt the following items of information:

- Residential address of a Member of either House;
- Regular or forthcoming travel arrangements of Members of either House;
- Persons delivering goods and services to Members of either House;
- Expenditure on security arrangements to Members of either House.

The release of information was delayed beyond the autumn, and the House authorities noted the costs and time involved. Harriet Harman introduced a draft Order to exempt MPs allowances from Freedom of Information legislation. If the Order had been passed, then the types of information disclosed by the Commons would have been dependent on the terms of a parliamentary resolution passed in the House. In the event, she withdrew the Order following criticism from Members and media and announced that in future the House would publish information under 26 detailed categories on a yearly basis.<sup>6</sup> In the meantime the process for scanning the 1.2m receipts for all Members continued, to comply with the High Court judgment. Arrangements for redaction were made and Ms Harman indicated that costs had risen to around £2m.<sup>7</sup>

During May and June 2009 the *Daily Telegraph* carried an extensive series of articles on the details of Additional Costs Allowances claims by Members in the period 2004-2008. These had been obtained through a leak of the material being prepared for publication by the Commons authorities. The source of the leak has not been established. On 11 May the then Speaker, Michael Martin, made a statement indicating that the publication of the details of Members' allowances would be brought forward from the original target date of July 2009. Mr Martin stood down as Speaker on 21 June 2009 and John Bercow was chosen as his successor.

The details of claims and the scans of receipts were made available on the website on 18 June 2009. The [Parliament website](#) currently gives details of claims from the financial period 2004/5 to 2008/09, as follows:

In June 2009 more than a million documents and receipts were made available to the public online. These related to MPs' claims dating back to 2004/05 and up to 2007/08. These pages have been updated to include information about claims made for costs incurred when staying away from the MPs' main home in 2008/09 and the first quarter of 2009/10. Further updates will be made during 2010.

Initial press coverage was dominated by the extensive redaction of the receipts.<sup>8</sup> A number of Members complained that they had wished to publish more information. New guidelines on

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<sup>5</sup> HC Deb 30 Jun 2008 c546W

<sup>6</sup> HC Deb 22 January 2009 c923

<sup>7</sup> HC Deb 22 January 2009 c926

<sup>8</sup> "How the censors filleted the meat out of Commons expenses" 18 June 2009 *Times*

redaction were developed by the Members' Estimate Committee. Final publication of the outstanding information is not now expected until the end of February 2011.<sup>9</sup>

In its [report into MPs' expenses](#) published in November 2009 the Committee on Standards in Public Life took the view that receipts should continue to be published by the new independent regulator:

#### **Recommendation 60**

The independent regulator should continue to publish, at least quarterly, each individual claim for reimbursement made by MPs with accompanying receipts or documentary evidence. The information published should not be confined to claims actually reimbursed.<sup>10</sup>

## **2 IPSA policy on release of allowances data**

The *Parliamentary Standards Act 2009* was brought forward as a result of the expenses crisis and was passed in just over a month, receiving royal assent on 21 July 2009. It created a new Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) to administer allowances for MPs. Several major amendments were made to the 2009 Act by the *Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010*. These are summarised in [Research Paper 10/18](#). In particular section 6(7) of *Parliamentary Standards Act 2009* required IPSA to publish appropriate information on claims and payments of allowances, determining its procedures in this respect after consulting the Speaker, the Leader, the Standards and Privileges Committee, the Compliance Officer and any other person IPSA considered appropriate.

In Section 3A of the *Parliamentary Standards Act 2009* IPSA was given a duty to be transparent as well as cost-effective:

- (1) In carrying out its functions the IPSA must have regard to the principle that it should act in a way which is efficient, cost-effective and transparent.
- (2) In carrying out its functions, the IPSA must have regard to the principle that members of the House of Commons should be supported in efficiently, cost-effectively and transparently carrying out their Parliamentary functions

IPSA was included within the list of public bodies covered by Schedule 1 of the *Freedom of Information Act 2000* and from the start of the new Parliament it took over the responsibility for releasing details of Members' expenses paid by it. IPSA therefore was not bound by the 2008 Order restricting the publication of aspects of MPs' allowances.

IPSA consulted about its [Publication Proposals](#) in June 2010.<sup>11</sup> Responses were requested by 7 July 2010. IPSA proposed to:

- publish salaries for all MPs staff in ranges of £5000 and the full salary for 'connected parties' (relatives employed by MPs);
- publish date, origin and destination of MPs' journeys;

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<sup>9</sup> *Letter to Members and Former Members: Publication of Expenses Details* November 2010 House of Commons

<sup>10</sup> *MPs expenses and allowances* Cmnd 7724 November 2010

<sup>11</sup> *Consultation on IPSA's publication proposals* June 2010 <http://parliamentarystandards.org.uk/transparency/Our%20consultations/2010/Publication/Consultation%20-%20Publication.pdf>

- publish first half of postcode of MPs' addresses;
- Publish only the total amount claimed for security and disability costs, not broken down by individual MP.

The consultation paper proposed to publish all claims, both accepted and rejected, but with a 14 day window for MPs to resubmit claims where there had been an administrative error. The consultation paper proposed publishing details on a monthly basis and to publish in machine-readable form the raw data on a quarterly basis.

The Information Commissioner was broadly supportive of the IPSA approach but warned that IPSA needed to inform third parties of the implications:

We would like to take this opportunity to re-iterate a point that we made in one of the initial consultation meetings. Namely that there will be a need for guidance to be produced to assist MPs in ensuring that their staff and 3rd Parties who might be affected are adequately informed about how they may be affected by the publication of expense details.

3rd Parties will include individuals such as landlords, lease-holders, mortgagees and service suppliers<sup>12</sup>

The Unite response, on behalf of MPs staff, queried the need for the release of salary details when all salaries of MPs' staff had to fall within IPSA pay scales and be approved by the Authority before they are paid (with some exemptions for staff employed before 7 May). It also suggested that the release would be contrary to the *Data Protection Act 1998* and the *Human Rights Act 1998*.<sup>13</sup> This argument was supported by a number of MP respondents. Meg Russell, from the Constitution Unit, argued that releasing details of Members' travel arrangements was not necessarily in the public interest. Unlock Democracy was concerned at the short period set for the consultation, of three weeks.

## 2.1 IPSA response to consultation

The IPSA website contains a list of respondees and a [report](#) on the consultation on its [Consultations](#) page.

In its response, IPSA modified its policy on connected parties, so that precise salary details are not to be disclosed:

10. Given the quality of the argument that publishing all staff salaries in bands of £5000 provides sufficient information to show this transparency and accountability, IPSA was persuaded that the publication of precise salaries for connected parties was not necessary. We do however remain convinced that it is important that such connected parties are declared by their employer, and published on the IPSA website.

11. As such, our policy on publication of MPs' staff salaries is as follows:

**IPSA will publish, at least annually, a list of MPs' staff paid from public funds, listed in terms of their job function, including salaries expressed in ranges of**

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<sup>12</sup> ICO response to the IPSA consultation on publication schemes  
[http://www.ico.gov.uk/upload/documents/library/corporate/detailed\\_specialist\\_guides/ico\\_response\\_ipsa\\_consultation\\_publication\\_proposals\\_20100707.pdf](http://www.ico.gov.uk/upload/documents/library/corporate/detailed_specialist_guides/ico_response_ipsa_consultation_publication_proposals_20100707.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Unite Parliamentary Staff Branch Consultation Response 7 July 2010  
[http://www.w4mp.org/html/personnel/tgwu/Unite\\_IPSA\\_publication.pdf](http://www.w4mp.org/html/personnel/tgwu/Unite_IPSA_publication.pdf)

**£5000. Names of staff will not be included, other than the names of connected parties employed by MPs and paid from public funds.**

The response took note of MPs' concerns about security, but considered that the proposals would stand. Times of regular journeys would not be shown:

12. IPSA proposed to publish the date, the origin and destination of MPs' journeys. We set out that we would not publish the time the journey was undertaken.

13. This proposal also had a mixed response. Despite the proposal to omit the time journeys were undertaken, several respondents felt that regular travel patterns could still be deduced, and hence this would threaten the security of MPs.

14. IPSA did not take decisions on this topic lightly, and understands MPs' concerns around the risk of compromising their security. It is for this reason that we met with both the Parliamentary security co-ordinator, and the Information Commissioner. From the security co-ordinator we have noted the nature of the threat to some individual MPs, and are working with him to ensure that the details we publish on those MPs facing particular threats will not put their security under threat. From the Information Commissioner, himself an expert on the security implications of releasing data, we take encouragement that he agreed that our proposals are comprehensive enough to allow the public to gauge the necessity of an MP's journey without putting the individual at increased risk on their regular journeys.

IPSA modified its plans to publish the first part of the postcodes for the residential addresses of MPs, but only to ensure equality of treatment. The first alphabetical block and the first numerical block will be published.

## **2.2 Announcement of publication date**

ON 18 November IPSA announced the publication date of 2 December 2010 for its first set of MP expenses claims. It announced it would not be producing the scanned receipts online in its press release, citing the cost:

IPSA will not be publishing receipts proactively –the cost of preparing tens of thousands of receipts for publication would be more than £1 million a year and would not provide value for taxpayers' money.<sup>14</sup>

A series of FAQs set out the plans:

IPSA will be publishing proactively the relevant details of all expenses claimed by MPs under the MPs' Expenses Scheme, in accordance with its publication policy. Our publication website will show what MPs have claimed, the date they claimed it and how much was reimbursed. We will publish for each claim type, the information set out below.

We will publish for each claim type, the information set out below.

- **For all claims:** MP's name, constituency, financial year, month, date, claim reference numbers, expense type (e.g. Travel, Accommodation, General admin), expenditure type (e.g. public transport – rail, council tax, photocopier hire), short description, details, amount claimed, amount reimbursed.

- **Travel and subsistence claims:** date, place of origin, place of destination, category of journey, class of travel, mileage, length of hotel stay, category of hotel stay.

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<sup>14</sup> "IPSA set to publish MPs expense claims" 18 November 2010 <http://parliamentarystandards.org.uk/NewsAndMedia/Press%20Releases/2010/November%202010.pdf>

- **Constituency office claims:** rent claims, utility bill claims, business rates claims.
- **Accommodation claims:** rent claims, utility bill claims, council tax claims.

Claims containing certain personal or sensitive data, such as bank account details, will be appropriately redacted.

In this first cycle we are publishing claims made and reimbursed from 7 May to 31 August. We will then publish in two monthly cycles, three months in arrears. For example in February we will be publishing the claims made in September and October.

### **Why are you publishing the transactional data only?**

The information IPSA is publishing contains the relevant data on the claim. IPSA does not intend to publish the underlying receipts, as administering this would not be an effective use of public money<sup>15</sup>

Not all MPs will be covered by the release of data:

### **Which MPs does this cover?**

All 650 MPs are eligible to claims expenses under the Scheme, but only claims made in the first few months of the Scheme are being published in the first cycle. This covers 576 MPs, whose claims were processed between 7 May and 31 August.<sup>16</sup>

The announcement made some changes to the proposals in the consultation document, which planned for monthly releases of information and quarterly release of 'raw data'. It set a target date for February 2011 for publication of data in other formats to assist with searching.

## **2.3 Proactive publication policy**

IPSA also published on 18 November a policy on proactive publication of MPs' expense claims.

3. We will be publishing various information about this expenditure in regular cycles, as set out below.

- Every two months we will publish details of MPs' expense claims, recorded on the online claims system.
- Annual publication of additional information about MPs' use of public funds. This will include information on constituency offices, staffing budgets, residential accommodation and connected parties<sup>1</sup>.
- Annual publication of certain aggregated data<sup>2</sup>

12. Staff salaries are separate from expense claims and, as such, are not published as part of this regular cycle of proactive publication of expense claims. We will publish details of MPs' staffing arrangements annually, as set out below.<sup>17</sup>

The new policy also made clear that not all claims would be made available in the first publication cycle:

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<sup>15</sup> FAQs on publication 18 November 2010 <http://www.parliamentarystandards.org.uk/>

<sup>16</sup> Ibid

<sup>17</sup> IPSA's policy on the proactive publication of MPs' expenses 2010 <http://www.ipsa-home.org.uk/docs/IPSA%20Publication%20Policy.pdf>

In the first publication cycle, which will cover claims made and reimbursed between May and August 2010, we will only be publishing the amount IPSA reimbursed. We are not publishing details of claims where a determination was made not to reimburse. This reflects our earlier public statement that in order to provide both MPs and IPSA with a period to become accustomed to the new rules and new online system, we would return to MPs, and not publish, any claims deemed not suitable for reimbursement. This period ran up to 14 September 2010. A small proportion of claims in our second cycle of publication will therefore also be treated in this manner.

The document said that information on spending on constituency offices and residential accommodation as well as staff budgets, including salary details in £5000 bands would be released as soon as possible after the end of the financial year. However, staff names would not be published, unless they were connected parties:

MPs' staffing arrangements, where we will publish a list of MPs' staff paid from public funds, listed by job function and including salaries expressed in £5,000 bands. Staff names will not be published, unless they are those of connected parties employed from public funds.<sup>18</sup>

Subsequently, on 30 November 2010, IPSA issued a revised policy which clarified that it would publish details of "repayments of reimbursements made by MPs where they may have over-claimed".<sup>19</sup>

## 2.4 Reaction to the IPSA announcement

There was some media comment about the decision by IPSA not to scan and display invoices and receipts. The *Sunday Telegraph* considered that without the receipts, it would not be possible for the find out exactly what has been purchased and that voters were entitled to know how their money was being spent.<sup>20</sup> It is possible that IPSA might respond to individual FoI requests by releasing more detailed information. This process would be subject to review by the Information Commissioner and the Information Tribunal.

On 25 November 2010 IPSA issued a letter responding to these concerns:

MPs' expense claims will be fully searchable using a similar approach to that of the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales. You will be able to search by period of time, by MP, by constituency, and by general expense category (such as travel or accommodation). For each expense category you will further be able to search by the particular type of expenditure (such as "public transport – rail", council tax, and photocopier hire). The search results then provide various further details, including class of travel, place of origin and destination, and number of nights spent in a hotel. Often these will be accompanied with additional details providing further information.

We will also in future publication cycles make available a "flat file" (.CSV format) of the expense claims, enabling other organisations and individuals to search and reuse the data in a variety of ways.

The letter argued that the publication of receipts and invoices would be of limited value, considering the creation of a system of robust and transparent regulation by IPSA and that

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> *IPSA's policy on the proactive publication of MPs' expense claims* 30 November 2010 IPSA. This and the 18 November 2010 version are no longer available

<sup>20</sup> "A retrograde step on MPs' expenses" 21 November 2010 *Sunday Telegraph*

Members could no longer claim for items relating to the upkeep, furnishing or decoration of their publicly subsidised homes.<sup>21</sup>

### 3 Publication of data on MPs' rental arrangements

IPSA's publication scheme as agreed in 2010 was to release only the first part of the postcode of an MP's address. The policy also made clear that IPSA would release the names of landlords and other suppliers of goods and services where this was in support of a claim made under the Scheme for Business Costs and Expenses. The Speaker expressed concern in relation to an FOI request to IPSA for details of the landlords and agents renting accommodation to Members, for which MPs claimed expenses. He related concerns about security implications, made by individual MPs and the Serjeant at Arms and the Parliamentary Security Director.<sup>22</sup> *The Freedom of Information (Parliament and National Assembly for Wales) Order 2008* which precluded the release of details of MPs' addresses only applied to information held by both Houses and the National Assembly for Wales.

IPSA contacted the 320 MPs affected by the request; of these 50 had expressed concern by October 2012. Sir Ian Kennedy wrote to the Speaker on 18 October 2012, outlining IPSA's intentions on releasing details of addresses:

I might add for the sake of completeness, that where members raise explicit security concerns and these are supported by the police and/or security agencies, we withhold **all** information relating to their addresses, including the first part of the postcode. In advance of the recent FOI request, we had been approached by three MPs.

We take the security of members of Parliament and their families very seriously. It is with that concern in mind that we approach the request made to us regarding information about MPs' landlords. In responding to the request, we are keen, therefore, to balance the obligations placed on us by the Freedom of Information Act and Data Protection Act and our statutory duty of transparency against the legitimate public interest in the safety and security of MPs.

Information was eventually released to Channel 4 which featured in a Despatches programme on MPs on 19 December 2012.<sup>23</sup> In its letter releasing the information IPSA explained that some details had been redacted:

At Annex A, in response to your request, is a full list of all Members of Parliament who, as at 22nd October, claim for rental accommodation under the MPs' Scheme of Business Costs and Expenses. Where we do not hold information, this is marked "N/A" on the list. Where, by applying the exemptions listed above, we have withheld information, this is marked "Redacted". We would point out that an exemption under Section 40(2) might have been applied because the address was identifiable, or because of an evidenced security concern.<sup>24</sup>

The *Daily Telegraph* reported that 51 MPs had had details redacted.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Letter on publication of expenses data 25 November 2010 <http://parliamentarystandards.org.uk/NewsAndMedia/Press%20Releases/2010/November%202010.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> "MPs expenses: row over disclosure of MPs letting details" 19 October 2012 BBC News

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.channel4.com/microsites/D/Dispatches/FOI2012-A067a-2012-11-19-AnnexA.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> Letter to Geoff Atkinson 19 November 2012 from IPSA

<sup>25</sup> "MPs expenses: MPs allowed to hide expenses details" 19 November 2012 *Daily Telegraph*

## 4 Publication of allowances data in Scottish Parliament

The *Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002* applies to the Scottish Parliament. The Scottish Information Commissioner examined the question of MSPs' allowances in the case of McLetchie:

The Commissioner found that the SPCB[Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body] had breached Part 1 of FOISA in failing to release the destination points of taxi journeys undertaken by Mr McLetchie. Although the information was personal data, the release of the data would not breach any of the data protection principles. Accordingly, the information was not exempt under section 38(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA).

In addition, the Commissioner was not satisfied that the release of the information would endanger the safety of Mr McLetchie and, accordingly, held that the information was not exempt under section 39(1) of FOISA.

The Commissioner ordered the release of the information which had been withheld from Mr Hutcheon, but stressed that each case has to be treated on its own merits and that he will not order release of this information in future cases should the release of the information put a person at risk.<sup>26</sup>

The Scottish Parliament website now provides searchable datasets as follows:

How to use the MSP Allowances Search Facility

The MSP Allowances Search application allows members of the public to view details of MSP allowances claims directly from the Scottish Parliament web site. It provides a search engine that allows one to search by any combination of four criteria:

financial year, and then relevant claim month or range of claim months

one, many or all MSPs

one, many or all allowance types

one, many or all expense types

For the financial year 2005/06 the query results are displayed as a summary table with access to scanned images of the allowance claim form and associated documentation (bills, receipts, etc.).

For all other financial years (starting with 2006/07) the system has been improved. The query results are displayed as a summary table with each row giving access to the individual transactions that make up the claim amount. This secondary table contains the same category of information as the scanned images did for 2005/06, but does so in a more concise and legible fashion. An illustration of the format is shown below in Steps 6a and 6b of this User Guide.<sup>27</sup>

Further background is given in a SPICe briefing 10/56 [Parliamentary Pay and Expenses](#).

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<sup>26</sup> The full transcript of the decision is available at <http://www.itspubliknowledge.info/home/ScottishInformationCommissioner.asp>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/msp/mspallowances/searchGuidance.htm>

## **5 Publication of allowances data in the National Assembly for Wales**

The National Assembly for Wales is covered by the *Freedom of Information (Parliament and National Assembly for Wales) Order 2008* and therefore the information made available omits details of regular travel, security etc. At present only the data for 2008-09 is fully searchable:

### **Which financial years am I able to search?**

At present the Allowance Publication System only includes data for 2008/2009. However, we will be publishing expenses for the current financial year in the Autumn Term. We will be publishing all expenses three months in arrears (e.g. claims in May would be published in August etc).<sup>28</sup>

Travel costs, office costs and additional costs are available separately for 2006-7 and 2007-8.<sup>29</sup>

## **6 Publication of allowances data in the Northern Ireland Assembly**

The Assembly is covered by the *Freedom of Information Act 2000* and provides detailed breakdowns of allowances expenditure from 2007: Summary data is available for earlier years.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> <http://www.assemblywales.org/memhome/mem-allow-pay-pensions/allowances-faq.htm#faq2>

<sup>29</sup> [http://www.assemblywales.org/memhome/mem-allow-pay-pensions/allowances/freedom\\_of\\_information\\_requests.htm](http://www.assemblywales.org/memhome/mem-allow-pay-pensions/allowances/freedom_of_information_requests.htm)

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Your-MLAs/Members-Salaries-and-Expenses/>