

From Employment Judge Prichard

Commission on Standards in Public Life
By E Mail only to
Inquiry@standards.x.gsi.gov.uk

5 June 2009

Dear Sir / Madam

Submission to the Inquiry into MP's Expenses

This submission is limited to expenses for travel and subsistence. We appreciate this is not the appropriate forum to ask for a review of judicial expenses, but we feel the Commission on Standards in Public Life should be aware of the substantial contrasts here, to provide some benchmark.

There is no direct comparison between MP's and the judiciary, however, you may appreciate that when our overnight subsistence allowance has been £21 per night, and £2.90 personal incidental expenses unchanged, and not reviewed, since 1995 [sic], the Council's membership feel that we should make a submission to this particular enquiry inquiry, to underline the contrasts within the public service.

The day subsistence rates are similarly unchanged at £4.25 for 5-10 hours, £9.30 for 10-12 hours and £13.55 for over 12 hours.

Hotel expenses are at cost capped at £95 in London and £75 elsewhere.

Many judiciary, particularly in remoter regions, have to undertake a substantial amount of travelling every year.

The judiciary are public office holders, just like MP's. We cannot understand why historical accidents continue to dictate such diverse remuneration.

It is hard to witness people carrying out similarly responsible public work obtaining such disproportionately large travel and subsistence expenses, not only for themselves but their families too (which in no way exists for the judiciary).

Most employment judiciary spend more than they are reimbursed which means they are subsidising a necessary public service. We perceive that MP's receive more than they spend, and enjoy a regime where there are not similarly low caps on expenses.

It is a remarkably long time since these judicial expenses have been reviewed by the government, expenses which were always very modest.

G Prichard
Employment Judge