



Seirbhís Thithe  
an Oireachtais  
Houses of the  
Oireachtas Service

Office of Secretary General and Clerk of the Dáil  
Leinster House  
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Dublin 2  
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15 November 2012

Mr Ted McEnery  
Clerk  
Committee of Public Accounts  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

Dear Ted

Further to my attendance at the meeting of the Committee of Public Accounts on Tuesday 23 October 2012 and to Niamh Maguire's letter dated 30 October 2012, I attach documentation for the Committee's information outlining:-

*A breakdown of Deputies Ministers and Senators who are availing of the unvouched allowances payments and the amounts paid in these categories in 2011. Please note that the breakdown of Deputies, Ministers and Senators availing of the unvouched allowances are the current (2012) figures and the 2011 amounts paid are in respect of both the pre-election and post-election period in 2011.*

*A note on the costs of allowances paid to members on Committees*

*A note outlining the number of Members who have claimed a grant for a constituency office and who are also availing of extra accommodation for their staff in Leinster House.*

Members also requested information in relation to the allowance paid to Commission Members. Each Member of the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission receives an allowance of €9,500 per annum. It is expected that total payments for 2012 will be in the region of €76,000.

For the convenience of the Committee members, a table is also included below that sets out the information requested in a user-friendly format.

I would also like to take this opportunity to clarify, for the information of the Committee, the position in relation to the increase in the leaders' allowance which was granted in 1996. When reading the transcript of the PAC meeting of 23rd October, I obviously misread a question by Deputy Eoghan Murphy on the *independent* Leaders' Allowance and replied in the context of the overall increase of the Allowance to all parties in 1996 which was significant. The allowance for independents was commenced in that 1996 legislation and was not obviously the subject of the increase. The allowance was set at €10,000 at that stage.

If the Committee requires any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Kieran Coughlan  
Clerk of the Dáil and Secretary General

Table 1		
Allowance	Cost in 2011	Estimated Cost in 2012
Travel and Accommodation	€4,650,164.00	€5,008,104.00
Public Representation Allowance	€1,141,162.00	€1,136,000.00
Designated posts in Dáil Éireann	€56,447.00	€63,000.00
Designated posts in Seanad Éireann	€45,801.00	€55,000.00
Oireachtas Committees	€83,692.00	€117,100.00
Members of the Oireachtas Commission	€60,529.00	€76,000.00
Secretarial Assistance Allowance	€247,751.00	€228,886.00
Additional Telephone Allowances	€13,430.00	€15,698.00
Total	€6,298,976.00	€6,699,788.00

#### Question 1 - Unvouched Allowances

(a) The breakdown of Ministers, TDs and Senators opting for unvouched allowance payments at present is as follows:

##### PSA (Parliamentary Standard Allowance)

Ministers (inc Ministers of State)	12
TDs	39
Senators	44

##### Secretarial Allowance (unvouched options)

Ministers (inc Ministers of State)	8
TDs	2
Senators	21

(b) The amount paid in unvouched allowance payments in 2011 is as follows:

##### PSA

Ministers (inc Ministers of State)	€ 177,112	
TDs	€3,988,792	
Senators	€1,628,426.	Total €5,794,330

Made up of:

##### PRA (Public Representation Allowance) only

Ministers (inc Ministers of State)	€ 140,643
TDs	€ 630,811
Senators	€ 369,710
Total	€1,141,164

##### TAA (Travel and Accommodation Allowance) only

Ministers (inc Ministers of State)	€ 36,469
TDs	€3,357,981
Senators	€1,258,716
Total	€4,653,166

TOTAL: €5,794,330

Secretarial Allowance (unvouched options)

Ministers (inc Ministers of State)	€78,939
TDs	€19,575
Senators	€149,237
<i>Total</i>	<i>€247,751</i>

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Question 2 – Cost of allowances paid to members on Committees :

The total cost of allowances for Committees for 2012 (excluding entertainment allowance – see note below) is €130,900.

*This is made up of:*

Payments to the Chairs of Joint Committees for 2012 will be **€114,000**. This consists of €9,500 paid to 12 Chairpersons which is paid in equal amounts during the year.

There is one payment for the Chair of the Select Committee on Members' Interests of Seanad Éireann amounting to €3,100 in 2012.

Chairpersons also receive an additional telephone allowance of €1,100 annually, although the Chair of the PAC receives €1,700. The estimated total payment in respect of Committee Chairs telephone allowance is €13,800.

*NOTE: The Committee entertainment allowance not included, but spend as of October 2012 was €5,565.30. The total amount spent in 2011 was €8,616.98. The estimated expenditure for both years was significantly higher (€40k for 2011 and €25k for 2012). It is a matter for each Committee to decide how much is spent in relation to this and the amounts vary considerably.*

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Question 3 – Number of members who have claimed a grant for a Constituency Office

Of the 166 members in the current Dáil, the number of Members who have claimed a grant for a constituency office (commonly known as COG) is 121 (70 of whom claimed the grant prior to the 31<sup>st</sup> Dáil. These Offices may or may not still be in use). The cost of these claims is **€341,406.90**.

The number of Members who have claimed COG and also are recorded as having staff based in Leinster House is 57. It should be noted, however, that some of these TDs may be using the same staff in both their constituency and in Leinster House and the staff member's working weeks may be split between each location.





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19 November 2012

Mr Ted McEnery  
Clerk  
Committee of Public Accounts  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2



Dear Ted

In response to your email dated 15 November, 2012 requesting additional information in respect of PRA, TAA and the Secretarial Allowance, the following table outlines the total amounts for 2011 and the estimated cost for 2012 in respect of vouched and unvouched allowances:

<b>Table 1</b>				
<b>Allowance</b>	<b>Vouched Cost in 2011</b>	<b>Unvouched cost in 2011</b>	<b>Estimated Vouched Cost 2012</b>	<b>Estimated Unvouched Cost in 2012</b>
Travel and Accommodation	N/A	€4,650,164.00	N/A	€5,008,104.00
Public Representation Allowance	€2,490,935.30	€1,141,162.00	€3,037,200.00	€1,136,000.00
Designated posts in Dáil Eireann	N/A	€56,447.00	N/A	€63,000.00
Designated posts in Seanad Eireann	N/A	€45,801.00	N/A	€55,000.00
Oireachtas Committees	N/A	€83,692.00	N/A	€117,100.00
Members of the Oireachtas Commission	N/A	€60,529.00	N/A	€76,000.00
Secretarial Assistance Allowance	€711,872.00	€247,751.00	€958,296.00	€228,886.00
Additional Telephone Allowances	N/A	€13,430.00	N/A	€15,698.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>€3,202,807.30</b>	<b>€6,298,976.00</b>	<b>€3,995,496.00</b>	<b>€6,699,788.00</b>

If the Committee requires any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Kieran Coughlan  
Clerk of the Dáil and Secretary General