

Joint Statement of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards and the Compliance Officer for IPSA

Purpose of the Joint Statement

1. This Joint Statement, prepared in accordance with section 10A of the Parliamentary Standards Act 2009 (as amended by the Constitutional Reform & Governance Act 2010), sets out how the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA), the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards (the Commissioner) and the Compliance Officer for IPSA (the Compliance Officer) will work collaboratively.
2. IPSA is a statutory body, independent from Parliament, Government or Political Parties, created by the Parliamentary Standards Act in order to establish and administer an expenses scheme for MPs. The first edition of the MPs' Scheme of Business Costs and Expenses came into effect on 7 May 2010.
3. The Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards is appointed by the House of Commons to advise the Committee on Standards and Privileges and individual Members of Parliament on the interpretation of the Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament, and on questions of propriety. The Commissioner's responsibilities include the registration of financial interests held by MPs and the investigation of allegations that MPs might have breached the Code of Conduct or related Rules.
4. The Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010, amending the Parliamentary Standards Act 2009, created the role of the Compliance Officer. The duties of the office holder are to investigate allegations that an expense claim has been wrongly paid to an MP and, on request, to review a decision by IPSA not to pay, in whole or in part, an expense claim.

Working with the Commissioner

5. In accordance with section 9B of the Parliamentary Standards Act 2009, where either IPSA or the Compliance Office considers that an MP's conduct justifies it, they shall refer that MP, with all relevant evidence, to the Commissioner to decide whether to inquire into a potential breach of the Code of Conduct or related rules.
6. The Commissioner will decide whether the information submitted is sufficient to justify an inquiry into whether the Member has breached the Code of Conduct or related Rules and if necessary submit a report to the Committee on Standards, which will decide what action, if any, to recommend to the House.

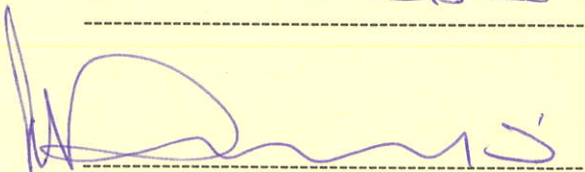
7. The Commissioner would not consider any reference until after any avenue of appeal available to the member under IPSA's statutory procedures had been exhausted. The Commissioner would not expect to reopen the Compliance Officer's investigation or its final outcome but may investigate matters falling outside IPSA's remit or drawn to his or her attention in the reference from IPSA or the Compliance Officer.
8. The Commissioner will show the Member all the material submitted by IPSA or the Compliance Officer.
9. Where, in the course of the Commissioner's duties, a request for information is made to IPSA, that information shall be provided as soon as practicable in accordance with IPSA's duties as a public body.
10. Where, in the course of the Commissioner's duties, a request for information is made to the Compliance Officer, that information shall be provided as soon as practicable in accordance with the Compliance Officer's duties as a statutory office holder.
11. The Compliance Officer shall inform the Commissioner when an investigation is initiated in respect of any MP.
12. Where the Compliance Officer receives a complaint that, in his/her judgement may be a matter for the Commissioner, the Compliance Officer shall either, with the permission of the complainant, pass the complaint to the Commissioner for consideration or suggest to the complainant that they redirect their complaint to the Commissioner.
13. Where the Commissioner receives a complaint that, in his/her judgement may be a matter for the Compliance Officer, the Commissioner shall either, with the permission of the complainant pass the complaint to the Compliance Officer for consideration or suggest to the complainant that they redirect their complaint to the Compliance Officer.
14. The Compliance Officer and the Commissioner will endeavour to meet periodically in order to discuss matters of common concern.



Kathryn Hudson, Parliamentary Commissioner
for Standards



Marcial Boo, Chief Executive, IPSA



Peter Davis, Compliance Officer for IPSA

Dated the 20 January 2015