

UNITE THE UNION YOUR VOICE IN HSBC



Review of allowances... Unite agrees increases

Unite's long standing claim for increases to various allowances has been debated at a number of meetings with the Bank recently and has now resulted in agreement to increase a small number of allowances as detailed by the Bank in recent communications.

We concentrated our efforts in gaining agreement on the key allowances that are frequently raised with us as problem areas by our members. The discussions were held with the Head of Performance Management & Reward in HSBC who clearly has taken on board not only the level of the allowances but also how the policies around them are applied.

RELIEF ALLOWANCE

The increases to the Relief allowances are very welcome and it has been agreed we will debate later, a method of fixing the allowances so that they are increased

regularly in line with the agreed method of fixing without the need to consult about them specifically each year.

Furthermore, we have been made aware of some anomalies in the application of the current policy and members should contact us if they believe the current policy is not being applied correctly in their case.

LUNCH DUTY ALLOWANCE

This allowance is paid to staff in branches where staffing levels dictate staff cannot leave the branch during their lunch break.

The Bank were not able to identify where the current figure had initially come from and, in agreeing the 25 per cent increase, we have agreed to work further with the Bank about fixing it in the future to a specific rate of pay so that it increases without the need for regular consultation. We are aware that from time to time staff in small branches where the allowance applies do end up working during their lunch break. The Bank policy in this respect is clear in as much that if lunch breaks are worked then overtime should apply. In addition the legal right to a break of 20 minutes after six hours working MUST be

adhered to. Again any members concerned the policy is not being correctly applied to them should contact us.

Both these increases would be effective from the 1st July 2009. Regrettably the Bank could not be persuaded to back date these payments in any way.

OTHER ALLOWANCES

We also debated several other allowances in detail.

For First Aiders the current allowance is £180 per annum and whilst the Bank declined to propose an increase to this, they have agreed to refer the issue to HSBC Occupational Health with a request they look at the allowance as part of a wider First Aider Review with a view to them making a recommendation for further discussion with Unite.

The Bank has looked into **Deputisation Payments** amounts and has confirmed that the current differentials in allowances do match the salary grade differentials. They have declined to increase the allowances but they have agreed with us, however, that the rules and guidance surrounding the application of the Deputising policy requires revision. This matter has been passed to the Bank's policy team for Immediate action and the revised HR Procedures Manual text has been updated.

We also raised the issue of **Standby and Call out payments**. The Bank has

researched this and believe their payments are in line with market comparators and we were unable to persuade them to move on this particular allowance at this time. We will continue to research this ourselves and go back to the Bank at a future date.

In conclusion, discussions will continue about

- the application of the current policies on Allowances
- the revision of some policies on allowances
- how to "fix" the amounts for automatic increasing in future

In addition Unite is able to revert to the Bank at any time with further claims for increases to any specific allowance and these would be discussed at the appropriate time.

Members' feedback on this subject is welcome, particularly if you have examples of incorrect or inconsistent application of current policies. Members should contact the Unite HSBC helpline on 0207 253 9642 or email HSBC@unitetheunion.com

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Working with you in HSBC

Unite the Union