

Our Ref: FOI2014-081

Date: November 2014

Subject: Staff absence, workplace assessments and adjustments

This request asked a number of questions which are shown in italics below.

How many FTE (full time equivalent) work days of staff absence were there in your department in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013?

We hold information about the number of sick days taken by staff in each financial year, which is as follows:

2009/10 – 2947.5 days
2010/11 – 3411 days
2011/12 – 2713 days
2012/13 – 2135.5 days
2013/14 – 1533 days

No centrally maintained records are available for other absences.

How many of these staff absence days are recorded as being due to a form of either long-term or short-term disability?

The SFO does not record staff absence days in this way. Staff within the SFO complete self-certificated reports for any absences due to an illness lasting up to 5 working days or less.

How many workplace adjustment cases has your department received in each of the following years, and what has the total cost been to the department for workplace adjustments in each year for 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013?

The SFO carries out workplace adjustment assessments as required. The most common form of assessment is a desk-based online session about display screen equipment. We hold information about the frequency with which such assessments have been completed and this is given below.

Other assessments may take place through our HR team, for instance involving occupational health professionals. However, this takes place on a case by case basis and no data about the number of such assessments or any adjustments resulting is collated. Similarly, no formal central record of adjustments is kept. However, it is worth noting that adjustments can be made in a number of ways, and are usually made locally in discussion with line managers.

There is information below about how the budget for this type of cost is managed. Although costs relating to adjustments would be recorded in the health and safety budget, the finance

system and related invoices do not necessarily specify where an item of expenditure relates to an adjustment. Therefore, we are unable to provide information about expenditure.

What is the average amount of time within your department/agency that it takes to complete a workplace adjustment case?

The SFO's online assessment takes approximately twenty minutes to complete. We do not hold any further information in relation to this question.

Budgets for workplace adjustments:

- a. Does your department/agency have a centralised budget for workplace adjustment?*
- b. If your department/agency does have a centralised budget for workplace adjustments, how much was it for the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013?*
- c. If your department/agency does have a centralised budget for workplace adjustments, who is currently responsible for managing this?*

Workplace assessments and adjustments are covered by two separate budgets which cover a range of other areas and are managed by the HR and facilities management teams. For instance, the facilities management team manages a budget for 'Health and safety' which covers adjustments, but also equipment such as first aid kits, and also eye sight tests. The proposed spend for each year is not broken down to a level of detail which specifies a budget for costs relating to workplace adjustment alone.

How many workplace assessments were conducted in your department/agency in each of the following years? 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013

The numbers of Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessment records created by SFO staff for the years requested are as follows:

2010 = 95
2011 = 263
2012 = 48
2013 = 115

As described above, we do not hold information relating to any other types of assessment.

Does your department/agency have a specific written policy in place for staff and managers to follow to help staff with disabilities in the workplace?

There are a number of resources available to SFO staff. For instance, there is information on our staff intranet about disability and reasonable adjustments, and the SFO has a Dignity at work policy which includes information about protected characteristics.
