

CHAPTER 17

CABINET OFFICE

Departments included in this chapter:

1. Cabinet Office
2. Privy Council Office
3. Central Office of Information

CABINET OFFICE AND THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SERVICE

Introduction

This is the first publicised Asset Register for the Cabinet Office. Its coverage extends to cover the central Cabinet Office and the separate Ministerial department the Office of Public Service, including its executive Agencies and Non-departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs). For the purposes of this register the Cabinet Office and the Office of Public Service are treated as one department, and so any references to “the Department” or “the Cabinet Office” should be taken to include both departments unless otherwise indicated.

Below is a list of the major bodies within or controlled by the Department:

Cabinet Office

- Downing Street Offices
- Government and Chief Whips Offices
- Ceremonial Branch
- Parliamentary Counsel Office
- The Secretariats
- Establishment Officer’s Group

Office of Public Service (OPS)

- Core Department

Executive Agencies and Separate Bodies:

- Central Communications and Technology Agency (CCTA)
- Civil Service College
- Government Car and Dispatch Agency (GCDA)
- Property Advisers to the Civil Estate (PACE)
- Security and Facilities Executive (SAFE)
- The Buying Agency (TBA)

Other Bodies and NDPBs

The Central Office of Information (COI) is a separate department reporting to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and will publish its assets in a separate section of this publication.

The OPS also supports by way of a grant the Civil Service Sports Council, the Civil Service Retirement fellowship and the Civil Service Benevolent Fund. Any assets owned by these bodies fall outside the boundary of this register. All NDPBs sponsored by the department have no capital assets as such and so are immaterial to this report.

Agency Annual Reports and Accounts

The published reports and accounts of the above executive agencies can be obtained from *The Stationery Office* bookshops (former HMSO) and other good book shops.

Assets Policy

The Cabinet Office and the Office of Public Service (OPS) treat any item worth £1,000 or more which has a useful “life” of at least a year as a capital asset. The OPS’s executive agencies have their own accounting systems and asset capitalisation thresholds. As a result, asset listings of the agencies will vary in the level of detail available, but not to a material extent.

The assets listed on the following pages do not include general office furniture unless known to be of £1,000 or more in value.

Departmental Asset Register

Land and Buildings

10-12 Downing Street

Group of three terraced interconnecting buildings circa 1723 housing the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, including the Cabinet Office, the Whips Office, state reception rooms, offices and ancillary accommodation. Remaining economic life 40 - 50 years. Tenure is freehold.

- Floor area 4,066.2 sq. metres (43,770 sq. feet); site area 0.406 hectares (1.003 acres)

53 Parliament Street, London

Two interconnecting Grade II listed buildings arranged on basement, ground and four upper floors. At 1995, structural work was being carried out to strengthen main staircase. Remaining economic life 10 - 15 years. Tenure is freehold.

- Floor area 938.1 sq. metres (10,098 sq. feet); site area 0.03 hectares (0.08 acres)

36 Whitehall, London

A Grade 1 listed 1950s building. Structural defects were recorded in 1995 with remedial work in hand. Remaining economic life 5 - 10 years. Tenure is freehold.

- Floor area 2,507.7 sq. metres (26,993 sq. feet); site area 0.11 hectares (0.27 acres)

70 Whitehall, London

Substantial pre-1800 Grade I listed building on the west side of Whitehall with Downing Street immediately to the south. Remaining economic life 10 - 15 years. Tenure is freehold.

- Floor area 8,032 sq. metres (86,456 sq. feet); site area 0.33 hectares (0.82 acres)

Admiralty House, London

Admiralty House is located on the west side of Whitehall, and is a Grade I listed former town house dating from the 18th Century comprising of entertainment rooms and flats furnished to a high standard. Remaining economic life 35 - 40 years. Tenure is freehold.

- Floor area 1,486.8 sq. metres (16,004 sq. feet); site area 0.06 hectares (0.16 acres)

Alencon Link, Basingstoke

Property comprising 14 storeys circa 1960s and 1970s with underground bunker and extensive car parking. Most of the property is vacant and is currently up for sale. Remaining economic life 10 - 15 years. Tenure is freehold.

- Floor area 9,605 sq. metres (103,308 sq. feet); site area 0.825 hectares (2.036 acres)

Sovereign House, Norwich

Property is being assessed, but is expected to be of negative value.

Chequers Estate

This building is owned by the Chequers Trust and is not recorded on the Cabinet Office asset register. However, the Cabinet Office does from time to time commit capital expenditure (e.g. security and telecommunications systems) to cover the use of the property by the Prime Minister.

Chadwick Street Recreation Centre, London

On loan to the Civil Service Sports Council. Property details being assessed.

Civil Service Club, Great Scotland Yard, London.

Circa 1890, with 26 bedrooms, function rooms, dining areas, bar and games room. Leased to the Civil Service Sports Club. Remaining economic life 15 - 20 years. Tenure is freehold.

- Floor area 1,037.9 sq. metres (11,172 sq. feet); site area 0.05 hectares (0.13 acres)

Fixtures and Fittings

The Cabinet Office and OPS have the usual expected types of fixtures and fittings (storage, racking, partitioning etc).

Plant and Machinery

The Cabinet Office and OPS plant and machinery includes security and alarm systems, barrier controls and CCTV equipment; air conditioning, cooling and heating systems; fork lift truck charger unit; dump fuel tanks; cardboard crusher; kitchen equipment and machinery. Some of the Department's properties have lifts but these are not treated separately from the buildings in which they are located.

IT and Specialist Equipment***Information Technology***

The Departmental major PC network system is "CAB*NET" with approximately 850 users (host for general office applications, e-mail and networking services, and is also the platform for the Departmental accounting system CORAS and the internal Intranet). Other networks include the CAB-E-NET Ministerial network (approximately 160 terminals), PCO network and other localised networks. As well as CAB*NET and CORAS software, there is also software for administering pensions by the Principle Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). The Cabinet Office and OPS also own a document imaging system, a quantity of stand-alone PCs used for administration and Internet links, and associated equipment such as printers, scanners, etc.

Specialist Installations

Secure telecommunications and communications installations at various locations.

Furniture and Office Equipment

The Cabinet Office holds at each location a standard amount of uncapitalised general office furniture and equipment which is immaterial to this register. In addition, it also holds a collection of high value furniture and antiques, located mainly in the Downing Street and Whitehall properties.

Vehicles

Most of the vehicles available to the Department are owned and maintained by the Government Car and Despatch Agency. A fork lift truck and two pallet trucks are the only vehicles owned by the Cabinet Office.

Heritage Assets

The Cabinet Office holds a large collection of heritage assets, again mainly in the Downing Street and Whitehall properties. These include silver collections comprising candlesticks, jug, Asprey silver platter, silver box, silver ink set and cutlery; the Prime Minister's Library (approximately 750 books); the Treasury Board Table; King George II Throne and portrait of Queen Anne's Coat of Arms; the Treasury Clock; Parian ware busts (Gladstone, Disraeli, Victoria, Albert), bronze classical and bronze political busts; an oil painting by Churchill; precious photographs; George III gold salver; a brass candlestick; a set of plates; an antique mirror and antique clock; 12 meeting chairs.

Intangible Assets

The Cabinet Office is the holder of Crown Copyright. Works produced by government officials are subject to Crown Copyright protection in accordance with Section 163 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. The responsibility for administering this rests with the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO) under the terms of Royal Letters Patent. The Controller and the Copyright Unit license the reproduction of Crown copyright material, ensuring that the integrity of Crown material is maintained, and seeking a financial return for the Crown.

Debtors

The Cabinet Office currently receives a deferred consideration from the privatisation of Chessington Computer Centre.

EXECUTIVE AGENCIES

Central Computer & Telecommunications Agency (CCTA)

Plant & Machinery

Security system

Fixtures & Fittings

Racking

IT and Specialist Equipment

CCTA-Online networked system with approximately 200 linked PCs, 15 separate servers, 130 laptop PCs, video conferencing system

Civil Service College

Land and Buildings

The Civil Service College is located at a large freehold site in Sunningdale Park, Ascot, Berkshire, comprising 14 mostly purpose built operational buildings ranging in age from 19th Century to 1990s which provide accommodation for teaching facilities, office bedroom accommodation and restaurant/bar facilities. In addition, there are 7 residential properties of late 19th/early 20th Century let to private tenants, and a further residential property used as a day nursery under contract to the College, used both by the College and the private sector.

•Site area 28.3 hectares (70 acres), including landscaped grounds, recreational facilities, an ornamental garden, park and lake. Market garden (currently let) area 2.3 hectares (5.78 acres); farm tenancy - area 11.3 hectares (28 acres)

Plant & Machinery

Kitchen equipment and machinery

IT and Specialist Equipment

274 televisions, VCRs, OHPs, SUN Accounts system, Vax/TMS system , PC network and software

Office Furniture and Equipment

Various equipment and general furniture - also antique dinner sets, Regency rosewood table, Bechstein grand piano, Strohmerger upright piano.

Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA)

Government Car Service (GCS)

Plant & Machinery

Car wash, gas krypton analyser, mobile air conditioning, CCTV system, Enviroclean, Accident damage equipment, Business gas equipment

Fixtures & Fittings

Floodlighting and lighting upgrade, lagging, carpeting

IT and Specialist Equipment

PCs, Brookside IT system, Scottadam telephone system, Storacall, secure fax

Vehicles

186 cars including limousines

Interdespatch Service (IDS)

Land and Buildings

Loading bay

Plant & Machinery

Premier Tank petrol tank, 2 Bestobells

Fixtures & Fittings

Racking

IT and Specialist Equipment

Davis & Robson Tracking and Tracing, Matsu fax, 2 Datalogic systems

Vehicles

66 vans, 8 motorcycles

Property Advisers to the Civil Estate (PACE)**Land and Buildings**

28 Thistle Street, Edinburgh: Pre 1900 office building of stone construction comprising four floors. Tenure is freehold.

- Floor area 1,170.9 sq. metres (ALA)

Beaufort Court, Bristol: 1980s modern office building comprising two floors and 38 car parking spaces. Tenure is long leasehold.

- Floor area 801.3 sq. metres (ALA)

Plant & Machinery

5 boilers and piping, heating system (located at Whitehall), distribution system (located at Whitehall)

IT and Specialist Equipment

10 servers and 205 networked PCs, 42 printers, 33 laptops, 1 cable scanner

Security and Facilities Executive (SAFE)**Plant & Machinery**

Lead cutting machine, soldering machine, shredder, alarm system

Fixtures & Fittings

Partitioning

IT and Specialist Equipment

PCs and printers, network, video equipment, thermal imaging camera, interpreters consoles, audio/visual equipment, weather station, robot, oscilloscope, neural processor

The Buying Agency (TBA)

(The Buying Agency is a Trading Fund)

Fixtures & Fittings

General office furniture and equipment

IT and Specialist Equipment

PCs and printers for use by the agency

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

Introduction

The Privy Council Office is a department of less than 40 staff which is geographically located within the Cabinet Office. The purpose of the Privy Council Office is to: support the work of the President of the Council and of the Lord Privy Seal; support the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council; be responsible for the arrangements leading to the making of all Royal Proclamations and Orders in Council and for a range of other formal business including many Crown and Privy Council appointments and, through the Central Drugs Co-ordination Unit (CDCU), to co-ordinate/monitor the implementation of the Government's drugs strategy for England. Though organisationally part of the Privy Council Office the CDCU is funded separately by the contributing departments (Home Office, DFEE, Health and HM Customs & Excise).

The department owns no land or buildings.

Asset Register

IT Equipment: the department operates 22 PCS and 12 printers

Furniture and Fittings: the department has sufficient items of general office furniture and equipment to meet its operational requirements. A number of items of antique furniture are in use.

Heritage Assets: the Privy Council Office has a number of historic clocks and pieces of antique silverware. In addition the department maintains the Judicial Committee and Clerk of the Council's libraries.

CENTRAL OFFICE OF INFORMATION

Introduction

The rôle of Central Office of Information (COI) is to provide a comprehensive publicity procurement service to Government departments and agencies. It also provides departments and agencies with expertise and advice on the most cost-effective achievement of their publicity objectives.

Fixed Asset Accounting Policies

1. Items of equipment are valued at cost uprated, using an appropriate index, for the effect of inflation, less depreciation. Depreciation is charged on the straight-line method at a rate chosen to recover the cost of the asset over its anticipated useful life. Items of equipment costing less than £100 are written off in the year of acquisition.
2. On items of new technology equipment the costs of hardware and operating systems software are capitalised and depreciated over the anticipated useful life. Applications software is depreciated over 12 months.
4. Fully written down assets' lives are extended where appropriate to reflect the full remaining useful life. The resulting revaluation (written back depreciation) is credited to revaluation reserve.

Further Information

Copies of COI's 1996-97 annual report and accounts (*ISBN 0-10-265098-5, House of Commons paper 97, £6.30*) are obtainable from The Stationery Office

Departmental Asset Register

Land & Buildings

COI does not own any land or buildings.

Other Fixed Assets

COI's fixed assets are analysed under the following headings:

New Technology Equipment, comprising, primarily, approximately 350 networked PCs, together with file servers and associated peripherals.

Equipment, Fixtures and Fittings, comprising, primarily, telecommunications equipment and television/radio technical equipment.