



FIFTY-SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

of the
Foreign Compensation Commission
for the Financial Year ended
31 March 2007



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*Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of
State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
by Command of Her Majesty
June 2008*

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Functions

1. The Foreign Compensation Commission (FCC) was established in 1950 to support the consular work of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office by providing a mechanism to determine complex or numerous compensation claims through an independent and impartial quasi-judicial process. The FCC has also been engaged prior to settlement negotiations to carry out a stocktaking of British property losses overseas at the hands of foreign Governments. Where compensation is secured through diplomatic or other means, the FCC then determines the entitlement of claimants to compensation. To date there have been seven separate registration programmes to assess losses prior to negotiations and thirteen compensation programmes to distribute funds.
2. The FCC carries out administrative and advisory functions in addition to assessing losses and determining claims. These functions include facilitating and examining claims pending adjudication, investing and managing funds prior to distribution, overseeing the payment of compensation, maintaining registers and records, responding to diplomatic and other queries about claims and events giving rise to claims programmes, and ensuring compliance with regulatory and reporting requirements. It also provides advice to the FCO on legal and practical aspects of claims handling.

Creation and Status

3. The FCC was established by the Foreign Compensation Act, 1950 and is governed by that Act, as amended, and by Statutory Instruments pursuant thereto. It appears on the Cabinet Office List of Non-Departmental Public Bodies, classed as a "Tribunal NDPB".
4. The FCC is scheduled under the Tribunals and Inquiries Act, 1992. By virtue of that Act and an Order pursuant to its predecessor Act of 1971, its judicial procedures have been under the supervision of the Council on Tribunals since 1984. In 1996 the administrative practices of the Foreign Compensation Commission were brought within the jurisdiction of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Public Administration by inclusion in Schedule 4 of the Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1967. The FCC is operating on a care and maintenance basis with functions as described herein.

Personnel

5. The part-time Chairman of the Commission, Dr John Barker, and the part-time Secretary, Mr Barrie England, both appointed in 2004, continued in their posts. The Commission continued to employ a part-time staff member to carry out ongoing data-entry and other clerical duties.

Progress of Work

6. During the year the Commission continued with the electronic capture of claims data and relevant materials to enhance efficiency and as part of the preparatory work needed to carry out a strategic review of the FCC to commence in the 2007-08 financial year. The Commission has also been reviewing alternative storage arrangements for its substantial archive held at the Foreign and Commonwealth facility at Hanslope Park.
7. In preparation for the strategic review of the Commission, the Chairman has consulted colleagues and stakeholders within and outside the FCO, as well as records and archives, to take stock of past problems and impediments to efficient and cost-effective claims handling, recent technological developments, current administrative justice standards and trends indicative of future demand.
8. The National Archives consulted the Commission on a number of occasions over inquiries received under the Freedom of Information Act. The Commission also received a number of direct inquiries about claims from individuals such as researchers and descendants of claimants.

Expenses of the Commission

9. As there were no claims funds generating revenue during the period, the expenses of the Commission were met from monies provided by Parliament and were accounted for in Request for Resources 1 of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Summary of Expenses – Financial Year ended 31 March 2007

Fees and Office Expenditure	£35,912.32
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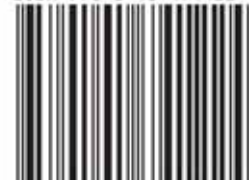
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