

**Reference: 2026-075**

Thank you for your email in which you requested the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA):

**I am writing to request information concerning the SFO's planned relocation to the government hub at Cabot Square, Canary Wharf.**

**Please provide:**

- 1. Copies of any SFO-wide or staff-wide communications, guidance, FAQs or policy documents concerning additional commuting or travel costs for staff arising from the relocation to Canary Wharf.**
- 2. Details of any policy or proposed policy under which the SFO will reimburse, subsidise or otherwise contribute towards additional commuting or travel costs incurred by staff as a result of the relocation. This should include any arrangement described as excess fares, excess travel, additional travel costs, relocation expenses or similar.**
- 3. If such an arrangement exists or is proposed, please provide:**
  - the categories or number of staff eligible;**
  - the length of time for which payments can be made;**
  - any maximum payment or other limit;**
  - the estimated total cost to the SFO.**
- 4. Copies of any SFO-wide or staff-wide communications explaining how the move to Canary Wharf will affect hybrid-working or office-attendance requirements.**

**For items 1 and 4, I am seeking only communications sent to all staff or a substantial group of staff, rather than individual correspondence.**

**Please provide information from 1 January 2025 to the date of this request.**

## **Response**

### **Question 1 & 2**

The SFO holds staff-wide communications and FAQs concerning excess fare allowance following the Canary Wharf relocation. Please see Annex A, which includes the all-staff update on the Excess Fare Allowance and the accompanying FAQ document, setting out the policy under which eligible staff can claim additional travel costs.

### **Question 3**

The categories of staff eligible and the length of time for which payments can be made are set out in Annex A. In summary, colleagues who joined the SFO by 1 April 2026 and are on delegated grades are eligible to claim the excess fare allowance for up to three years following the relocation.

The SFO does not hold a maximum payment limit for the excess fare allowance, as reimbursement is based on the actual increase in an individual's public transport travel costs following the move, rather than a fixed or capped amount. Similarly, the SFO does not hold an

estimated total cost for the scheme, as this will depend on the number of eligible staff who claim and the individual increases in their travel costs.

#### **Question 4**

In relation to question 4, the SFO's policy on hybrid working and office attendance has remained unchanged throughout the period specified in your request. Although the relevant policy document predates 1 January 2025, we have nonetheless included it in Annex B for completeness and to provide full context on the arrangements in place.

#### **Annex A**

##### Canary Wharf move update – Excess Fare Allowance confirmed

#### **Travel costs**

The Executive Committee has confirmed that colleagues who have joined the SFO by 1st April 2026 and are on delegated grades will be able to claim excess fare allowance for up to three years after we relocate. In practice this means that if your public transport travel costs increase following the move, the SFO will reimburse you for the additional amount from the date of the move for up to three years.

##### Accommodation Move to Canary Wharf – FAQ's

#### **Travel**

##### **Who is eligible for additional travel cost support?**

The Excess Fare Allowance policy has been reviewed by ExCo. As a result, it has been determined that all colleagues who have joined the SFO by 1st April 2026 and are on delegated grades will be able to claim excess fare allowance for up to three years after we relocate.

##### **Will flexible hours be permitted to avoid peak times?**

Our flexible working policy will continue to apply

##### **Will there be guidance for long-distance commuters?**

Cabot Square can be easily reached using a variety of public transport routes. This commute is likely to be affected by typical rush hour traffic

#### **Annex B**

##### Workplace attendance

The Cabinet Office has today set out its expectation that all civil service office based staff will attend their offices a minimum of 60% of their time but it is being left to departments about how they implement this and the timeframe for implementing any changes. There are a large number of things to consider for every organisation including estate capacity – we have very recently been given details of these and we are still working through the detail to understand what is possible space-wise here and in our new offices. Over the coming months, working with you and the trade unions, we need to consider carefully the implications of the announcement and what this means for the SFO.

Since the pandemic we have all worked hard to strike the right balance between maximising organisational effectiveness and providing flexible working arrangements for our staff. In the SFO we are managing our flexible attendance arrangements well and we do not want to lose the benefits we have gained from this.

Within the Cabinet Office guidance there is a recognition that exceptions to 60% office attendance will be needed where the amount of estate capacity and desk space is not sufficient to support this. This is an issue for us to consider. We reduced our space at Canada House based on 40% attendance and have also calculated our new space requirements in Canary Wharf on this basis.

Yesterday we spoke with our Trade Unions and we are committed to working with them and with all staff over the coming weeks, as we consider the implications of today's announcement. The 60% expectation does not include those who have already formally agreed alternative working arrangements or staff with carer passports, whose arrangements will remain unchanged. Until we have considered the implications of today's announcement, we would request that further applications for alternative working arrangements are put on hold, unless these are urgent for reasonable adjustments. In those cases please discuss with your head of division.

We know that having a choice about where and when you work is very important to you, and the leadership team is committed to maintaining the benefits of flexible working for everyone.

Many of you will have questions about this announcement and we will ensure there is time to provide an update and discuss at next Thursday's All Staff Meeting. In the meantime please speak to your head of division if you have any immediate concerns.