FD (DFP) 11/09

21 May 2009

Dear Finance Director

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HOSPITALITY REGISTERS

1. The purpose of this letter is to remind departments of the guidance on the acceptance and provision of gifts and hospitality issued under the cover of DAO (DFP) 10/06 on 10 August 2009. The guidance sets out good practice concerning the acceptance, or rejection, of gifts or hospitality, and details responsibilities and procedures for the authorisation and recording of such instances.

2. Permanent Secretaries discussed hospitality registers at PSG on 15 May 2009 and expressed concerns that some registers were not being completed using the common format. It is important that registers are kept on a consistent basis for monitoring purposes and to facilitate any subsequent publication. I would therefore remind you of template register provided at annex A of the guidance attached to DAO 10/06 and ask that you ensure that all registers within your departments are completed using this template.

3. I understand that a question was also raised at PSG about countersigning. The guidance sets out the arrangements for both the approval and monitoring of gifts and hospitality and specifically requires
approval at appropriate levels (para 2.24) and that the authorisation form (part 2 at annex C) has the approving officer’s signature.

4. I would also like to remind you that, whilst the guidance is entitled “Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality”, it covers all offers of hospitality and gifts, and requires that all offers are recorded on registers even though some may be rejected. The word “acceptance” was used in the title to differentiate it from hospitality provided, but we will change the title to reflect that it covers all offers.

5. My objective, since the publication of Managing Public Money, has been to place guidance documents on the DFP web site, and not necessarily issue them formally through DAO letters. This enables them to be refreshed without having to cancel and reissue a DAO every time small amendments are made. There is no plan to amend the core hospitality guidance, but I want to consult with colleagues in Central Personnel Group, (the authors of the guidance), to make a few minor changes such as amending the title of the guidance, to reflect that it covers offers of hospitality. DFP will however advise you of any changes.

[Signature]

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