Smuggling: Tobacco

Written Question

Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer

(1) how much his Department spent on its Tackling Tobacco Smuggling strategy in 2009-10;

(2) how many staff of his Department were assigned to implementing the Tackling Tobacco Smuggling strategy in 2009-10; and how many such staff were engaged in (a) detection, (b) intelligence-gathering and analysis, (c) investigations and (d) the provision of legal advice;

(3) what estimate he has made of the expenditure incurred by his Department on salaries for full-time investigation staff allocated to its Tackling Tobacco Smuggling strategy for staff (a) engaged in detection, (b) engaged in investigations, (c) working on intelligence matters and (d) in total in 2009-10;

(4) what expenditure his Department incurred on publicity campaigns intended to reduce tobacco smuggling in (a) 2008-09 and (b) 2009-10.

David Gauke (Exchequer Secretary, HM Treasury)

The full-time equivalents of staff employed on tackling tobacco smuggling in detection, intelligence gathering and investigation for 2009-10 are shown as follows.

2009-10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Detection</th>
<th>Investigation</th>
<th>Intelligence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>153</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>685</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures represent HMRC's best estimate of the way resources were used in the year specified, bearing in mind that the work of staff employed on anti-fraud and smuggling activity often covers a number of different taxes and commodities.

Expenditure incurred on salaries for full time equivalent staff allocated to tobacco smuggling is shown in the following table.

2009-10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>£</th>
<th>Detection</th>
<th>Investigation</th>
<th>Intelligence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,362,740</td>
<td>20,840,605</td>
<td>7,946,658</td>
<td>34,150,003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HMRC is unable to disaggregate time spent on the provision of legal advice on tobacco from time spent on other advisory work.

HMRC incurred no expenditure on targeted media campaigns to support their anti-tobacco
smuggling strategy in 2008-09. HMRC funded Â£170,000 for targeted media campaigns in 2009-10.

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