

Branch Briefing

REVENUE & CUSTOMS GROUP

To: **All PCS representatives**

cc: **Branch Chairs, Branch Organisers, Group Executive Committee, Equality Chairs, VOAC** (for information)

Can this Briefing be circulated via HMRC IT systems: **YES**

Website: **YES**

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Facility Time – Reporting Arrangements

- ***The GEC agree updated Facility Time Reporting Arrangements with HMRC***
- ***Branches to consider which reps within their branch will be tasked with submit their monthly return to Employee Relations from April 2022***
- ***Business Areas to contact the ER team if they require any additional information on Facility time***
- ***Branches should start making preparations now for the next 6 monthly data capture exercise***

The GEC have agreed updated Facility Time Reporting Arrangements with HMRC which will apply from 1 April. It is important to stress that for most reps there won't be significant changes in terms of what they are required to do each month to report their facility time usage. As explained in Branch Briefing 003/22 each local rep should submit their form B by the 7th of each month to relevant branch officer(s) who collate the branch facility time returns for submission to HMRC Employee Relations. A copy of the form B should also be sent at the same time by the local rep to their line manager.

Each branch should now appoint two branch officials who are responsible for submitting the branch facility time return each month to Employee Relations. It is for the Branch Executive Committee to decide who those officials are. We do recommend that branches assign two official's to undertake this task. That is because problems have arisen when a single person is assigned and that person goes off sick. With two officials assigned then hopefully absences won't lead to branches failing to submit returns to Employee Relations.

Each month the relevant branch officials will be sent by Employee Relations a link to a shared spreadsheet. They will be asked to enter on the spreadsheet the facility time usage reported by each local rep on their form B. The relevant branch official have until the 17th of each month to complete the spreadsheet after which it will be locked.

The substantive change is that if a rep is late or doesn't provide a return in a particular month then HMRC Employee Relations will be aware of that. If a rep is late with a return the facility time reported can be added to the following month's return.

The PCS Facility Time Working Group will have access to the overall total for each branch of the facility time used each month. We will not be able to access data relating to individual reps.

HMRC are arranging a series of regional upskilling sessions for managers of trade union reps to update them regarding the changes in facility time reporting arrangements. PCS declined an invitation to have joint sessions involving managers and reps together.

I together with colleagues on the PCS Facility Time Working Group are happy to arrange sessions for reps involved collating branch facility time returns. I will contact branches shortly to gauge the level of demand.

Alongside the updated facility time reporting arrangements, the guidance on Facilities for Union Representatives at HR 24020 is also being reviewed. I have had representations from fellow GEC members as well as local branch reps about concerns about how the current guidance is being applied. HMRC have assured PCS that requests for time away from official duties for union reps to be dealt with in accordance with the spirit of the ERA..

HMRC have agreed that if Business Area`s require any further data / information on Facility Time they should contact the ER team and would ask that no supplementary arrangements are implemented.

Given that we are approaching the end of the facility time year branches should be making preparations now for the next data capture exercise. All reps should therefore ensure that they are up to date with their form B returns.

HECTOR WESLEY
Deputy Group President

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