



An Roinn Airgeadais
Department of Finance

E109/30/75

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19 October 2001

Circular 47/01: Reimbursement of Professional Membership Fees

A Dhuine Uasail,

1. I am directed by the Minister for Finance to clarify the policy regarding the reimbursement of civil servants' professional membership fees. This circular is issuing to clarify the delegated sanction available to Departments/Offices on the payment of professional membership fees of staff. The circular also sets out issues which should be considered by Departments/Offices, in addition to their operational needs, on receipt of an application for the payment of such fees.
2. It is a matter for management in each Department/Office, in the light of the operational needs of the Department/Office, to determine in each individual case whether a civil servant should be reimbursed the membership fee of a particular professional body/association.
3. No civil servant has an entitlement to have the membership fee of a professional body/association paid by his or her Department/Office. Departments/Offices, in considering applications for the reimbursement of professional membership fees, should take cognisance of the independent regulatory function of certain professional bodies/associations. It would not be consistent with the independent regulatory function of such bodies or associations if they were to be primarily funded by the State through the payment of membership fees.
4. Whilst it is a matter for the management in each Department/Office to determine whether to reimburse the membership fees of a particular professional body/association the following issues should be considered by Departments/Offices in dealing with such applications:
 - (i) subscriptions to professional bodies/associations may be paid where Departments/Offices are satisfied that continued membership is necessary for the performance of an officer's official duties e.g., if there is a legal requirement that an

officer be on the register of a professional body/association, or if membership enables an officer to keep abreast of developments in a particularly relevant area of a profession;

(ii) subscriptions to professional bodies/associations may be paid where the benefits that would accrue to a Department/Office as a consequence of the membership of a civil servant of a professional body/association (e.g. access to papers or training and development) are significant;

(iii) subscriptions to professional bodies/associations should not be paid where the primary function of the professional body/association is the regulation of entry to, and membership of, a profession;

(iv) subscriptions to professional bodies/associations should not be paid where the primary function of the professional body/association is to safeguard the interests, or further the material interest, of their members.

5. Queries regarding the reimbursement of professional membership fees should be addressed to the Personnel Section in each Department/Office.

Mise le meas,

Joe McGovern
Assistant Secretary

To: All Departments, etc.