



**Dr Peter Selby**  
*President of the National Council*

DBM 08/08

*To all members of Independent Monitoring Boards*

4 August 2008

Dear colleague

**Expense allowances – Travel costs**

You will have received recently from the Secretariat the latest version of the expense allowances for IMB members, which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> August, the second increase this year. I am writing to you in connection with the implications for us of the 11.54% increase in the standard motoring allowance from 52p to 60p per mile. This increase in IMB members' allowances followed the increase given to the magistracy, with whose allowances ours have historically been linked.

As budget-holder for IMBs, Norman McLean quite rightly brought to the National Council his concern that this increase would consume almost the entire increase in our annual budget., an increase for which he and I had worked quite hard so as to safeguard the quality of our work, and our recruitment and training needs in the context of the projected increase in the prison population and number of establishments for which Boards need to be recruited.

Norman will, with the Council's full support, seek the extra resources required to cover the increased allowance, and has in any case implemented it. But none of us needs to be told that in the context of the pressure on public spending we may have difficulty in obtaining the extra amount required, and I was therefore encouraged by the Council to make you aware of this particular pressure.

We are in no doubt that as unpaid IMB members you have a right to full reimbursement of expenses, and many members had already communicated their strong feelings to that effect. There is no disagreement between the Secretariat and the Council that the increase must be implemented, but we felt it reasonable to ask that all members do all they can to share transport (for which an increased allowance is paid) wherever possible, and when it comes to long journeys, for instance to training events or the National Conference, to use public transport, taking advantage of any available advance purchase and railcard discounts where you can. Of course we understand that most establishments are in places where public transport for your normal monitoring work is impossible.

I hope you will appreciate my reason for writing in this way. The Council and the Secretariat will continue to work to maintain financial arrangements which reflect proper gratitude for the substantial amount of time that IMB members offer to this work, and ensure that they are not out of pocket as a result.

Yours ever