

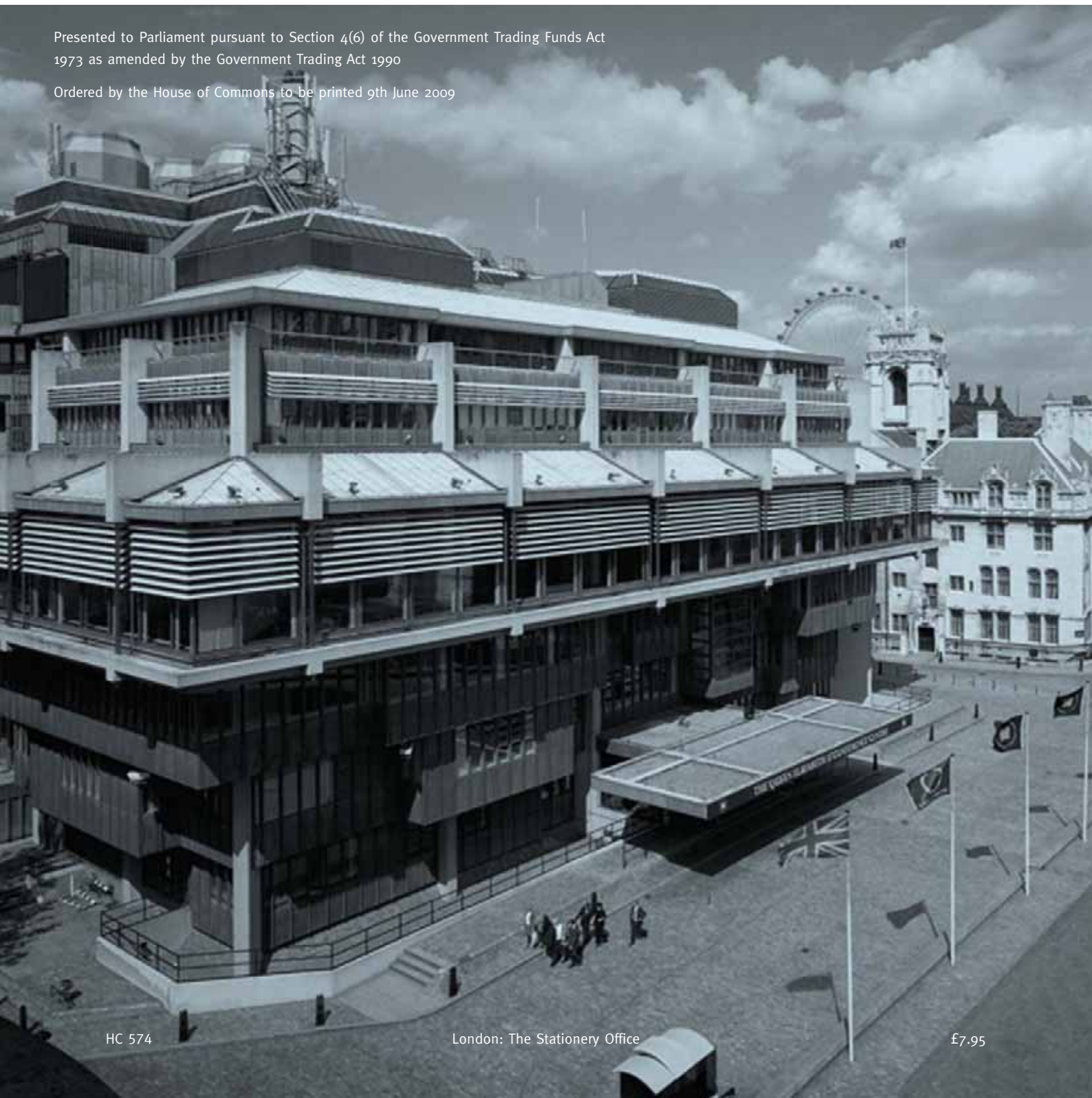
ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2008–09



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Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 4(6) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 as amended by the Government Trading Act 1990

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The QEIIICC Team – The Chief Executive with the members of his staff together with colleagues from Leith's, MITIE, GBM and ISS/Pegasus.

Photographed at the conference centre against Sir Eduardo Paolozzi's wood relief 'On This Island'.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre Executive Agency is unlikely to remain unaffected by the current economic recession. However, for 2008/09 I am able to report a busy and very profitable year and can announce that our net surplus from trading, excluding an exceptional rate rebate, is 144% above target. This was achieved by a growth in sales receipts of 7.3% and by taking action to put in place cost saving measures that controlled expenditure and increased efficiency. We also received a rates rebate in relation to prior years from Westminster City Council of £344,000. Each year the Agency pays a dividend to its sponsor, the Department of Communities and Local Government, based on 3% of the property valuation and 6% of the capital employed for trading fund activities. Dividends well in excess of this amount totalling £4.5 million for the year have been paid to the Department.

The QEIIICC hosted 384 events throughout the year. Core clients are government and public service organisations, major professional associations from both the UK and overseas and many large corporations. The conference centre is very popular and attracts a wide variety of meetings. **'The Big Bang'**, a four day educational extravaganza, filled the conference centre and thousands of school children experienced science and technology in a fun and engaging environment. **'Civil Service Live'** was another meeting that attracted a capacity audience of civil servants from around the country and the Mayor's **'London and the Black Child Conference'** also attracted a very enthusiastic capacity audience. **'Travel Agents Association of India'** doubled its delegate visitor during its first visit to London but medical based conferences continued to occupy the largest share of events, including a meeting of the **'International Association of Dental Research'** and the **'European Eye Health Conference'**.

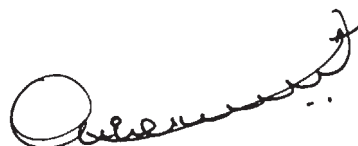
Targets regarding customer satisfaction have been exceeded and feedback from clients during the year has been very positive. Clients have specifically expressed a high level of satisfaction with the staff, many reporting that this is one of the key reasons for holding an event at the QEIIICC. Even though the Agency is exercising very strict control in respect of expenditure, the building – now in its twenty-third year – has to be maintained and kept in a condition that is fit for purpose. Comments from clients regarding the décor were carefully considered before the decision was taken to replace the ten-year old furniture and install state of the art electronic signage as part of a programme to improve the appearance of the interior and make it easier to locate the various conference rooms.

Major works have been undertaken to replace the lighting in the main conference area with a new energy efficient system. A new video conference meeting room was created on the ground floor. Also during the year all of the 120 Low Voltage Distribution Boards were replaced to obtain the Statutory Electrical Fixed Wiring Certificate. The conference centre is now able to give clients numerous choices when purchasing internet access and is capable of delivering customised welcome screens, web site redirection and zoned access throughout the building. An improved network offers faster connections and better quality of service when using the internet, telephones and video conferencing services.

Audio visual services reported a good trading year, with revenue above target and cost of sales and overheads managed to stay below budget. There has been further investment in audio visual services, notably a technical ability to provide clients with 3D visuals allowing customers to have sight of what they are specifying ahead of the event.

Catering is a very important element of the QEIIICC's business and there has been a consistent flow of positive feedback from clients regarding the excellence of the food and beverage service. Leith's, part of the Compass Group, are driving forward the importance of using quality British products in the menu selector. They continue to focus on CSR initiatives and as a result have produced their own sustainable policy statements. Once again they won the 'Gold Award for Best Food and Beverage Supplier 2009'. Leith's have also completed a £220,000 capital investment in the main kitchen.

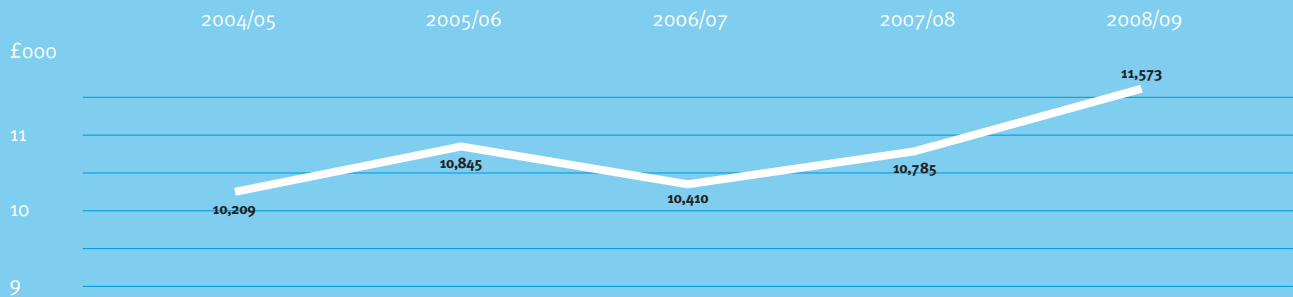
I am of course conscious of the challenges facing us. At the moment our trading remains resilient but I am alert to the probability of some impact from the current economic situation. Our business plan reflects this and I will be making appropriate adjustments to our operations during FY 2009/10. Following Budget 2009, the QEIIICC is to be managed in the knowledge that in time it will be sold. The property and the trading fund are included within the Government's Operational Efficiency Programme which identifies a number of assets that over time will no longer remain in Government ownership. In the interim, and whilst the process continues, the QEIIICC will continue to operate on a 'business as usual' basis.



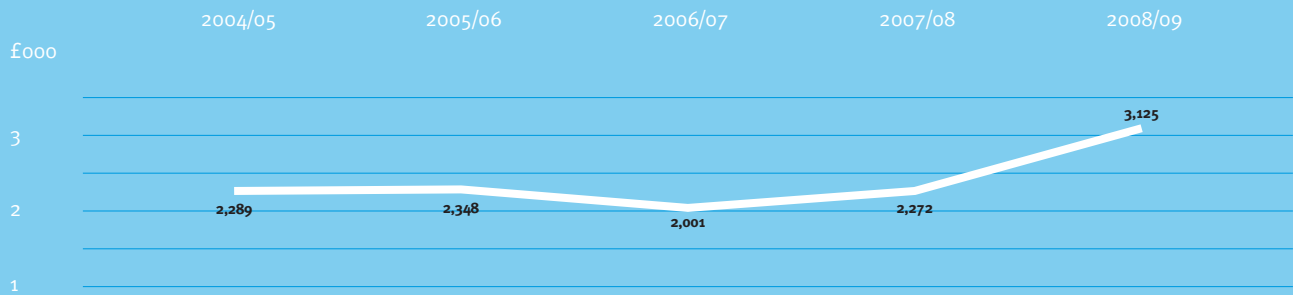
Ernest Vincent, Chief Executive

5 YEAR RECORD OF TURNOVER AND SURPLUS

TURNOVER

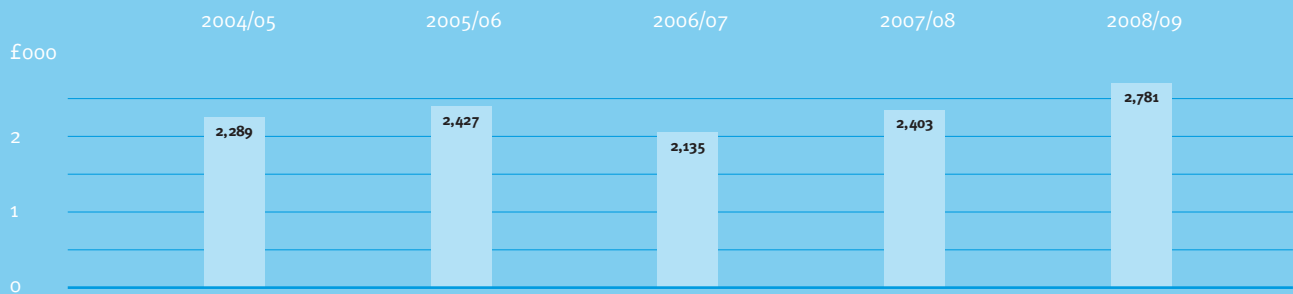


REPORTED SURPLUS ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES



PRO FORMA SURPLUS ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES

The exceptional receipt in 2008/09 of a rate rebate of £0.344 million has been allocated to the three priors years to 2005/06 to which it refers



PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGETS

METHODS OF MEASUREMENT

Capacity utilisation of the Centre is the relationship between the annual room hire revenue and a theoretical annual maximum expressed as 241 days hire of the whole Centre in a leap year and 240 days in a normal year.

The overall score for value for money in client questionnaires is the calculated average of responses to a specific question in the client questionnaire that accompanies each event. Expressions of satisfaction with value for money are scored as 100 per cent and expressions of dissatisfaction are scored as 0 per cent.

COMPARISON AGAINST TARGETS SET FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2009

Contribution to the Exchequer of £1,700,000 (*target £1,700,000*)

Capacity utilisation of the Centre of 73.5% (*target 71.0%*)

Overall score for value for money in client questionnaires of 98.9% (*target 90%*)

The number of complaints per 100 events was 0.52 (*target less than 2*)

The average response time to deal with complaints was 1.5 days (*target less than 4 days*)

3 YEAR RECORD OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGETS

		2007	2008	2009
Contribution to the Exchequer	Target	£1.50m	£1.60m	£1.70m
	Outturn	£1.55m	£1.65m	£1.70m
Capacity utilisation of the Centre	Target	70.0%	70.0%	71.00%
	Outturn	69.6%	69.3%	73.53%
Overall score for value for money	Target	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%
	Outturn	98.0%	93.8%	98.9%
The number of complaints per 100 events	Target	◀ 2.0	◀ 2.0	◀ 2.0
	Outturn	0.74	0.82	0.52
The average response time to deal with complaints	Target	◀ 4.0 days	◀ 4.0 days	◀ 4.0 days
	Outturn	2.6 days	1.0 days	1.5 days



The Beacon Awards 2009 at The QEICC



The Management Board and Board Secretary of The QEICC Trading Fund



The QEICC's Mountbatten Lounge

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2008–09

DIRECTORS' REPORT

1. History and Principal Activities

The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre (the Agency) was opened by Her Majesty the Queen in 1986. Trading Fund status was granted on 1 April 1997 under the Government Trading Funds Act 1973. Its role is to provide conference facilities for national and international meetings up to the highest level and to market its facilities commercially as a high quality venue for both Government and private sector use.

2. Management Board

The following served as members of the Management Board during the year. The catering contract with Leith's Limited entitles them to a seat on the Management Board; their nominee, Andrew Hardy is Divisional Manager of Leith's UK Leisure Division.

Ernest Vincent	Chief Executive
Kenneth Ludlam	Non-executive
Andrew Hardy	Non-executive
Chris Brown	Non-executive
John French	Finance Director
Jonathan Byrne (joined 29 April 2008)	Commercial Director
Raj Pragji	H.R. Director

3. Employee Involvement

The Agency is committed to improving the quality of service it provides to clients and delegates through the involvement and development of its staff, consistent with its Investor in People accreditation, which was renewed in September 2006 for a further three years. It maintains regular contacts with managers and staff through circulars and forums and through consultation with trade union representatives. Employees participate in a group bonus scheme based on the surplus for the financial year.

4. Policy in Relation to Employment of People with a Disability

The Agency operates a policy of full and fair consideration to applicants with a disability, having due regard to their individual aptitudes, skills and capabilities.

5. Pension Scheme

Staff are eligible to join the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme. The accounting policy on pension costs can be found in note 1.7 of the Financial Statements and information on the Scheme can be found in note 5 to the Financial Statements.

6. Value of Property

The Department for Communities and Local Government holds title to the land and building. The property was valued at £28.8 million in the accounts of the Department for Communities and Local Government at 31 March 2008.

7. Changes in Fixed Assets

Changes in fixed assets are summarised in note 9 to the Financial Statements.

8. Important Events Occurring After the Year End

The financial statements were authorised for issue by the Chief Executive on 19 May 2009.

The Government's 2009 Budget announcement included an Operational and Efficiency Programme, which identifies a number of assets that over time will no longer remain in Government ownership. The property and the trading fund are included within that programme.

9. Future Developments

The Agency has a capital expenditure programme aimed at increasing capacity, improving facilities and expanding audio-visual and technological support while continuing to offer high quality service and customer care in order to maintain its reputation as an internationally recognised location for major conferences, banquets and award ceremonies.

10. Auditor's remuneration

The Comptroller and Auditor General is appointed auditor under the provisions of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 and reports his findings to the Houses of Parliament. The cost of the audit of the accounts is £33,000 (2008 £32,500) with a further £2,750 for an audit of preparation for IFRS transition. No other services were provided.

11. Information supplied to Auditors

The Agency and its Chief Executive have taken all reasonable steps to ensure that the auditors have been made aware of all information relevant to their audit, to ensure that there is no relevant information of which the auditors are unaware and to establish that this is so.

12. Accounts Direction

This statement of accounts has been prepared in accordance with a Treasury direction, dated 18 December 2008, given in pursuance of section 4(6)(a) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973.

MANAGEMENT COMMENTARY

1. Development and performance during the financial year

1.1 Trading performance

Turnover in 2008/09 is 7.3 per cent higher than in the previous year: room hire increased by 8.7 per cent and the in-house production unit by 7.8 per cent; and the IT sales unit and rental income from non-conference space remained constant.

Costs, before an exceptional rate rebate, were 1.8 per cent higher than in the previous year. The surplus on ordinary activities of £3.125 million was 37.5 per cent higher than the figure reported for the previous year, although this reduces to 22.4 per cent excluding the exceptional rate rebate.

1.2 Innovations and improvements

The first phase of a digital signage system, incorporating large flat screen displays at strategic positions throughout the Centre, became operational in September 2008 and the programme of upgrading the Centre's lighting system has been continued.

A project was also undertaken to improve the Centre's electrical infrastructure by replacing the low voltage distribution boards which was completed in March 2009. In total £1.223 million has been spent on improvements to the building and its equipment in the financial year.

1.3 Operational performance

The average absence from work during the year due to sickness was 14.2 days per employee; however the average excluding long term sickness cases was 3.3 days.

There were no personal data related incidents during the year.

2. Position at the end of the year

2.1 Capital structure

The amount of Public Dividend Capital remains unchanged at £821,000. A special dividend payment of £2.8 million, together with a further dividend payment of £1.7 million were made to the Exchequer which resulted in a retained deficit of £1.375 million, and reduced the General Reserve at 31 March 2009 to £5.195 million.

2.2 Cash management

Cash balances reduced by £1.91 million in the year. All suppliers' invoices were paid in accordance with CBI guidelines, within 30 days from the delivery of goods or services or, if later, receipt of an agreed invoice. Credit control measures were again effective in limiting exposure to the risk of bad debts.

2.3 Fixed asset management

All fixed assets were checked in December and January to confirm that they are still in good condition and relevant to our business. Those assets not meeting these criteria have been sold or scrapped. Depreciation rates are influenced by the speed with which assets become outdated by changes in technology and fashion.

3. Performance against targets

3.1 Summary of performance against targets

A payment to the Exchequer of £1.7 million met the financial target and was supplemented by a special dividend payment of £2.8 million. The occupancy level achieved was 73.5 per cent which is above the target of 71 per cent. The three other business strategy and quality of service targets were exceeded. A more detailed report of performance against targets can be found on page 5.

4. Trends and factors affecting underlying performance during financial year

4.1 The market in which we operate

The conference and meetings market is both local and international and it is very competitive by nature. A wide range of facilities suitable for hosting conferences is available from large purpose-built conference centres in major cities to single rooms in institutions and hotels, with new and additional capacity regularly coming on stream.

The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre can accommodate the largest conferences either alone or as part of a London syndicate and small to medium sized events in rooms that can be let singly. It enjoys a prestigious location facing Westminster Abbey and close to Whitehall, the Houses of Parliament and the London Eye.

The products and services offered by The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre target sections of the market that value quality, reliability, security and the latest technology. Its competitive advantage is enhanced by its partnership with Leith's, whose reputation for quality catering and excellent service is widely recognised. The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre is an ideal venue for large conferences, with or without exhibition space, and for annual general meetings and gatherings of international organisations. It also continues to compete successfully for smaller events, award ceremonies and banquets.

4.2 Market conditions

The Centre's business has remained strong despite the economic recession but the Centre's business plan does take account of a potential downturn due to the economic situation. This environment will ensure that the market remains extremely competitive and that clients will continue to search for the best value for money. Confirmed bookings for 2009/10 at the start of the year are at the same level as confirmed bookings one year ago for 2008/09.

4.3 Management of principal risks

The corporate plan prepared for the period 2009/14 included a review of strategic risks and the means of managing them. A Risk Register of potential risks has been maintained by a Risk Management Working Group at its quarterly meetings. The Group continues to evaluate the potential impact of these risks on profitability, to determine what controls are in place to minimise each risk and to propose additional control measures where appropriate. It evaluates and adds to the Risk Register new risks identified in a Risk Report, which is presented monthly to the Directors' and Managers' Meeting. Its activity is monitored by the Audit Committee, which is chaired by a non-executive director, Kenneth Ludlam.

4.4 Agency strengths and resources

The Agency's principal strengths are its location and the quality of its product. Its principal resource is the considerable experience, expertise and professionalism of its staff and of its on-site contractors. Analysis of the client feedback questionnaires confirms that the Centre is preferred mainly because of the quality of service provided, whether it be the creativity of Leith's cuisine, the flair of the Interface in-house production team, the attentiveness of our event managers or our flexibility in dealing with changing circumstances.

5. Trends and factors affecting future performance

5.1 Strategy

The strategic aim of the Agency is to meet the financial objectives of the Trading Fund Order. To this end it aims to retain its position as a premium quality and internationally acclaimed conference venue, drawing strength from its prestigious location. Its corporate priorities anticipate a growth in clients' expectations of the quality and range of available services, the use of leading-edge technology and, in particular, value for money. Integrated commercial, operational, financial and HR strategies are updated annually in the light of past performance and perceived changes in market conditions.

The Government has issued an Operational and Efficiency Programme, which identifies a number of assets that over time will no longer remain in Government ownership. The property and the trading fund are included within that programme and accordingly the Agency will be managed in the knowledge that in time the conference centre will be sold.

5.2 Objectives

The broad operational objective of the Agency, as set out in its Framework Document, is to achieve best value for money in operating the conference centre as a high quality facility for use, on a commercial basis, by government and private sector customers for national and international events.

Its specific objectives are to further strengthen commercial performance by optimising use of the Centre, to maximise revenue from room hire and the sales of ancillary services, to maintain the interior of the building and its services consistent with a high quality venue and to ensure that all staff members are properly trained, well motivated and have opportunities to develop their full potential.

5.3 Building enhancement

The Fleming lighting was upgraded with the installation of more energy-efficient fittings, a new video conference meeting room was created on the ground floor and the first stage of a digital signage system became operational. A statutory electrical fixed wiring certificate was also obtained following the replacement of 120 low voltage distribution boards.

5.4 Staff Resources

The Agency maintains a significant pool of technical expertise in the areas of engineering, audio-visual presentation, IT and telecommunications. Further technical support continued to be provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government in respect of matters relating to the fabric of the building and by the contractors who operate building systems and facilities on the Agency's behalf.

In September 2006, the Agency renewed for a further three years its IIP accreditation and continues to apply those principles in the management and motivation of staff. Training and development remains focussed on individual improvement.

5.5 Competitive facilities

A new venue with hotel facilities is scheduled to open in 2010 in Waterloo which will increase competition in the market.

The award of the 2012 Olympic Games to London will provide the impetus for change, although to date there have been no specific developments in the conference market.

5.6 Trading outlook

Despite the current economic recession demand for space in the Centre continues to be strong. The level of confirmed bookings for 2009/10 at the start of the year is consistent with the equivalent position one year ago of bookings for 2008/09. Nevertheless management is aware that the Centre's business could be significantly affected by the recession and the business will be managed accordingly.

6. Environmental, social and community issues

6.1 Recycling success

The Agency recycled 79.9 per cent of waste in 2008/09 compared to 81.0 per cent achieved in 2007/08. In addition to paper, cardboard and bottles, which are high volume items, metal cans, wooden pallets, fluorescent tubes and toners are also being recycled and recycling bins are located in walk-through areas used by delegates.

6.2 Energy efficiency

The Agency has an active programme to reduce its consumption of electricity. During 2008/09 the programme of installing energy-efficient house light fittings was continued by upgrading the lighting in the Fleming Room. However significant increases in the unit costs of both electricity and gas have offset any cost savings from reduced consumption.

REMUNERATION REPORT

Paragraphs 1 to 5 are not audited. Paragraphs 6 to 11 have been audited.

1. Membership of Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee comprises Kenneth Ludlam, non-executive director and Chairman of the Audit Committee, the Chief Executive, Commercial Director, Finance Director and HR Director.

2. Policy on remuneration of senior managers

The remuneration of the Chief Executive, comprising salary and bonus, is determined by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Salaries of all other staff, including Directors and senior managers, are determined by a Performance Management Pay Scheme under which most receive a basic award, up to ten per cent receive an enhanced increase for high performance and non-performers receive no increase.

In addition all eligible staff, other than the Chief Executive, participate in a Corporate Bonus Scheme which is linked to the financial performance of the Centre.

3. Methods used to measure performance

Biannually staff are appraised against a set of competencies and individually targeted objectives.

4. Relationship between performance and remuneration

Apart from some small allowances, all remuneration is based on either individual performance or group performance.

5. Policy on duration of contracts

All staff contracts can be terminated by either party by giving one month's notice.

6. Details of directors' service contracts relevant to the cost of early termination

	Years of service at 31 March 2009	Over 40	Length of notice
Ernest Vincent, <i>Chief Executive</i>	5.50	Yes	6 months
John French, <i>Finance Director</i>	1.75	Yes	1 month
Jonathan Byrne, <i>Commercial Director</i>	0.92	Yes	1 month
Raj Pragji, <i>H.R. Director</i>	15.75	No	1 month

7. Awards to past senior managers

There were no awards to past senior managers.

8. Table of remuneration

Details of the remuneration of members of the Management Board and non-executive directors are set out below. None of the members received any benefits in kind. There were no expense allowances and no payments of compensation for loss of office.

Member	Function	Basic salary	Bonus	Total	Total
		2009 £000	2009 £000	2009 £000	2008 £000
Ernest Vincent	<i>Chief Executive</i>	85-90	5-10	95-100	95-100
Raj Pragji	<i>Human Resources</i>	50-55	0-5	55-60	35-40
John French	<i>Finance</i>	60-65	0-5	65-70	50-55
Jonathan Byrne	<i>Commercial</i>	55-60	0-5	55-60	n/a
Chris Brown	<i>Non-executive</i>	0-5	nil	0-5	0-5
Andrew Hardy	<i>Non-executive</i>	0-5	nil	0-5	0-5
Kenneth Ludlam	<i>Non-executive</i>	0-5	nil	0-5	0-5
Jonathan Vickers	<i>Non-executive</i>	0-5	nil	0-5	0-5

Jonathan Vickers is not a member of the management board and is the non-executive representative for the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Three directors have been appointed since 1 April 2007 and they took up their position on the following dates:

John French	21 June 2007
Raj Pragji	17 July 2007
Jonathan Byrne	29 April 2008

9. Details of non cash elements of remuneration

There were no non cash elements of remuneration given to any employee during the year.

10. Table of pension benefits

Pension benefits of members of the Management Board are set out below. The capitalised value of accrued benefits transferable to another scheme is shown under Cash Equivalent Transfer Value, (CETV). Non-executive members accrue no pension benefits from the Agency.

		Accrued pension	Accrued lump sum	CETV 2009	CETV 2008
		£000	£000	£000	£000
Ernest Vincent	<i>Chief Executive</i>	5-10	nil	161	127
Raj Pragji	<i>Human Resources</i>	5-10	25-30	110	95
John French	<i>Finance</i>	0-5	nil	33	14
Jonathan Byrne	<i>Commercial</i>	0-5	nil	14	-

The real increases during the year of pension benefits are set out below.

		Accrued pension	Accrued lump sum	CETV
		£000	£000	£000
Ernest Vincent	<i>Chief Executive</i>	0-2.5	nil	22
Raj Pragji	<i>Human Resources</i>	0-2.5	0-2.5	8
John French	<i>Finance</i>	0-2.5	nil	16
Jonathan Byrne	<i>Commercial</i>	0-2.5	nil	12

Due to certain factors being incorrect in last year's CETV calculator there may be a slight difference between the final period CETV for 2007/08 and the start of period CETV for 2008/09.

11. Amounts payable to third parties for senior manager services

There were no amounts paid during the year to third parties for senior manager services.

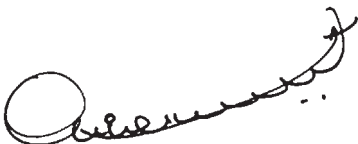
STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AGENCY AND ITS CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The functions of The Queen Elizabeth II Executive Agency are set out in Statutory Instrument 933, 1997. Primarily these are to provide conference and related services. A more detailed description of aims, objectives, responsibilities and governance arrangements are set out in a Framework Document issued by the Secretary of State.

Under Section 4(6) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973, as amended, the Treasury has directed The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year in the form and on the basis determined by the Treasury. These accounts accord with a Treasury direction dated 18 December 2008. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre at the year end and of its income and expenditure, total recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre is required to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the organisation will continue in operation; to observe the accounts direction issued by the Treasury, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements; to apply appropriate accounting policies on a consistent basis; to make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis; to follow applicable accounting standards and to disclose and explain any material departure from those standards.

The Treasury has appointed the Chief Executive of The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre as the Accounting Officer for the Trading Fund. The Framework Document defines the duties and responsibilities of the Chief Executive. Further, his relevant responsibilities as Accounting Officer, including his responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances, for the keeping of proper records and for the safeguarding of the Agency's assets are set out in the Accounting Officers' Memorandum, issued by the Treasury and published in Government Accounting.



Ernest H. Vincent, Chief Executive • 19 May 2009

STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL

1. Scope of responsibility

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the policies, aims and objectives of The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre set by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whilst safeguarding the public funds and departmental assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me as a Trading Fund Accounting Officer.

The Director General, Finance and Corporate Service Delivery, at the Department for Communities and Local Government chairs meetings of the Advisory Board, which met in July and October 2008 and in January 2009. This board assists the Permanent Secretary to advise the Secretary of State on setting appropriate performance targets for The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, agreeing its corporate and business plans and evaluating its performance.

2. The purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Centre's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised, to assess the impact should they be realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control, which accords with Treasury guidance, has been in place at The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre for the full year to March 2009 and up to the date of approval of this report.

3. Capacity to handle risk

In addition to regular advice from Directors and Managers, I receive advice on the handling of risk from a Management Board, a Directors' and Managers' Meeting and the Audit Committee. The Management Board met in July and November 2008 and in January 2009 to review and agree strategic and business plans for the Centre, to review progress against those plans and to receive reports from the Audit Committee. The Directors' and Managers' Meeting meets monthly to manage the operational and commercial matters in respect of the business of the Centre. It also manages performance against the business plan and takes action on unplanned events. The Audit Committee meets quarterly to review reports from the Internal Auditor and the National Audit Office and to review the Centre's risk management activities.

To increase the amount of expertise available to the Chief Executive, use is made of independent non-executives. Throughout the year there have been three non-executive Directors sitting on the Management Board, one of them also acting as Chairman of the Audit Committee. In line with guidance, the Audit Committee comprises three non-executive Directors only, one of whom is an independent member nominated by CLG.

Following the retirement of the CLG independent member in 2009–10, and in order to strengthen communication between the Management and Advisory Boards, it has been agreed that the Chair of the Centre's Audit Committee will in future attend meetings of the Advisory Board as a full member.

Guidance to staff is also provided on their desk-top computers in the form of a set of policies and procedures, maintained to accommodate organisational and system changes and recommendations from auditors. A Performance Management System appraises staff and identifies job-related training to enhance their performance.

4. The risk management and control framework

The risk management strategy of the Centre is to pursue those opportunities within the scope of the funded operations set out in The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre Trading Fund (Variation) Order 2002 where the risks can be managed sufficiently well to enable a financial surplus to be generated, each risk being contained at an acceptable level for an acceptable level of cost.

At the heart of the risk management process is an integrated system of long-term planning, allocation of responsibilities and budgetary control. A Corporate Plan with a five year horizon, examining the risks and opportunities facing the Centre and charting the probable course of trading income, capital investment and human and financial resources, is prepared annually. Responsibility for delivering a specific section of the Corporate Plan is allocated to a Director or the relevant senior manager. Targets are set for the coming year and a Business Plan is drawn up incorporating income expectations and acceptable levels of cost to contain risks at an acceptable level. The Business Plan is divided into monthly budgets against which each month's performance is measured. Directors carry the process further by allocating specific responsibilities, financial authority and budgets to the managers within their departments. As a result of the current economic climate and in line with a prudent approach to financial management, closer scrutiny of expenditure across all areas of the Centre's operation has been introduced during the year. Directors and managers supply regular reports on the management of risks in their areas of responsibility including progress reports on key projects. The core system is supplemented by the activities of a Risk Management Working Group and Internal Audit. All identified risks are held on a Risk Register which ranks risks by their degree of potential damage and logs current control measures.

An inter-departmental Risk Management Working Group meets quarterly to maintain the Risk Register, to assess business risks and the means of managing them and to identify possible improvements. Since September 2006 a Risk Report, identifying new risks and how they have been dealt with, has been presented monthly to the Directors' and Managers' Meeting. New permanent risks identified by the Risk Report were referred to the Risk Management Working Group for addition to the Risk Register. Guidelines regarding data handling issued by the Cabinet Office are being adhered to and the appointment of a senior information risk officer (SIRO) has taken place. An annual assessment of information risk has been completed satisfactorily and an information handling policy introduced.

During the year Internal Audit has submitted reports to the Audit Committee, prepared to Government Internal Audit Standards, covering IT Security, the Maintenance Contract, Customer Service, Strategic Planning, Performance Targets, Staff Management, Audio Visual Services and the Payment of Overtime. This year the internal auditors' overall opinion is that they are able to give me substantial assurance – an amber/green ranking – that there were no significant audit issues arising from their work.

5. Review of effectiveness

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control.

My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of Internal Audit and the Executive Managers and Directors within The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and comments made by the National Audit Office in their management letter and other reports. I have been advised on the implications of the result of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Management Board and the Audit Committee. A plan is in place to address any weaknesses and to ensure continuous improvement of the system.

The Management Board, the Audit Committee and Internal Audit all participate in the review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. During the year the Management Board received written reports from the Chair of the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee reviews all reports from internal and external auditors, which include management responses and agreed remedial action, and receives a written report on the progress of implementing the agreed remedies. It also receives regular reports from the Chair of the Risk Management Working Group.

The business and corporate plan for the next five years was submitted for ministerial approval in March 2009. This plan has been comprehensively reviewed by both the Advisory and Management Boards. The business plan for the next financial year, 2009/10, does take into account the difficulties being faced by the global economy and revenues and expenditures have been adjusted accordingly.

6. Significant internal control problems

I am pleased to report that no internal control problems of any significance were identified during the year.



Ernest H. Vincent, Chief Executive • 19 May 2009

THE CERTIFICATE AND REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre (the Agency) for the year ended 31 March 2009 under the Government Trading Funds Act 1973. These comprise the Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. I have also audited the information in the Remuneration Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

Respective responsibilities of the Agency, Chief Executive and auditor

The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre (the Agency) and Chief Executive as Accounting Officer are responsible for preparing the Annual Report, which includes the Remuneration Report, and the financial statements in accordance with the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 and HM Treasury directions made thereunder and for ensuring the regularity of financial transactions. These responsibilities are set out in the Statement of Responsibilities of the Agency and its Chief Executive.

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements and the part of the remuneration report to be audited in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements, and with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

I report to you my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and whether the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 and HM Treasury directions made thereunder. I report to you whether, in my opinion, the information, which comprises the Message from the Chief Executive, Performance against Targets, Directors' Report, Management Commentary and Remuneration Report, included in the Annual Report, is consistent with the financial statements. I also report whether, in all material respects, the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

In addition, I report to you if the Agency has not kept proper accounting records, if I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit, or if information specified by HM Treasury regarding remuneration and other transactions is not disclosed.

I review whether the Statement on Internal Control reflects the Agency's compliance with HM Treasury's guidance, and I report if it does not. I am not required to consider whether this statement covers all risks and controls, or form an opinion on the effectiveness of the Agency's corporate governance procedures or its risk and control procedures.

I read the other information contained in the Annual Report and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. This other information comprises remaining parts of the annual report and the unaudited part of the remuneration

report. I consider the implications for my report if I become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. My responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

Basis of audit opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. My audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts, disclosures and regularity of financial transactions included in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by the Agency and Chief Executive in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are most appropriate to the Agency's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error, and that in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. In forming my opinion I also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited.

Opinions

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with the Government Trading Fund Act 1973 and directions made thereunder by HM Treasury, of the state of the Agency's affairs as at 31 March 2009 and of its retained deficit for the year then ended;
- the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 and HM Treasury directions made thereunder; and
- information, which comprises the Message from the Chief Executive, Performance against Targets, Directors' Report, Management Commentary and Remuneration Report, included within the Annual Report, is consistent with the financial statements.

Opinion on Regularity

- In my opinion, in all material respects, the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

TJ Burr, Comptroller and Auditor General • 26 May 2009
National Audit Office, 151 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria, London SW1W 9SS

ACCOUNTS 2008-09



INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

for the year ended 31 March 2009

	NOTES	2009 £000	2009 £000	2008 £000	2008 £000
Income from operating activities	2		11,573		10,785
Staff costs	4	2,441		2,554	
Depreciation	9	932		863	
Other operating charges	7	5,644		5,433	
Exceptional rate rebate	8	(344)	(8,673)	–	(8,850)
Operating surplus	2		2,900		1,935
Interest receivable – bank interest			225		337
Surplus on ordinary activities			3,125		2,272
Payment to Exchequer			(1,700)		(1,600)
Special payment to Exchequer			(2,800)		–
Retained (deficit)/surplus	15		(1,375)		672

Notes to the Income and Expenditure Account:

- All activities are continuing.
- There were no other recognised gains or losses during the year.

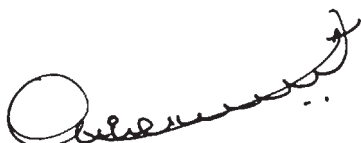
The notes on pages 17 to 20 form an integral part of these accounts.

BALANCE SHEET

as at 31 March 2009

	NOTES	2009 £000	2009 £000	2008 £000	2008 £000
Fixed assets	9		3,468		3,186
Current assets					
Debtors	10	1,641		1,408	
Cash at bank and in hand	11	4,588		6,498	
		6,229		7,906	
Current liabilities					
Creditors falling due within one year	12	(3,350)		(3,175)	
Net current assets			2,879		4,731
Total assets less current liabilities			6,347		7,917
Financed by:					
Deposits invoiced more than one year in advance	13		305		296
Provisions for liabilities and charges	14		26		230
Capital and Reserves					
Public Dividend Capital	15	821		821	
General reserve	15	5,195	6,016	6,570	7,391
			6,347		7,917

The notes on pages 17 to 20 form an integral part of these accounts.



Ernest H. Vincent, Chief Executive • 19 May 2009

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

for the year ended 31 March 2009

	NOTES	2009 £000	2008 £000
Net cash inflow from operating activities	16	3,588	3,492
Returns on investment and servicing of finance			
Interest received		225	337
Payment to Exchequer		(1,700)	(1,600)
Special payment to Exchequer		(2,800)	–
Capital expenditure			
Fixed asset purchases		(1,223)	(1,632)
Cash inflow before financing		(1,910)	597
Movement in cash and cash equivalents	17	(1,910)	597

The notes on pages 17 to 20 form an integral part of these accounts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 March 2009

NOTE 1

Accounting Policies

1.1 Accounting basis

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention modified by the inclusion of fixed assets at their value to the business by reference to current costs. Without limiting the information given, the accounts meet the accounting and disclosure requirements of the Companies Act and of accounting standards issued or adopted by the Accounting Standards Board so far as these requirements are appropriate. They also meet the requirements of the 2008/09 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FREM) issued by HM Treasury.

1.2 Fixed assets

The fixed assets are re-valued internally each year by reference to the cost of modern equivalent assets. Major structural enhancements are capitalised as building improvements. Items of furniture and equipment valued under £1,000 are written off in the year of purchase.

The cost or valuation of a fixed asset is written off on a straight-line basis over its expected useful life. Expected useful lives are as follows:

	Life in years
Building improvements	4–15
Furniture	3–10
IT & telecommunications equipment	2–10
Operational equipment	3–10

1.3 Value added tax

In the financial statements all figures are shown net of Value Added Tax. The Agency is registered for Value Added Tax.

1.4 Income recognition

Income is recognised on the day that a service is provided. Income invoiced less than one year in advance is shown as a creditor. Income invoiced more than one year in advance is shown as a deposit invoiced more than one year in advance.

1.5 Foreign currencies

Amounts paid or received in foreign currency are converted to sterling at the rate ruling on the day of the transaction. Differences on exchange are immediately written off to the Income and Expenditure Account.

1.6 Insurance

In accordance with Government policy, the Agency is self-insured. Payments in respect of insurable losses are charged to the Income & Expenditure Account as they occur.

1.7 Pensions

Pension costs are the monthly contributions by the Agency to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme, which accepts the liability for the payment of pensions after retirement.

NOTE 2

Segmental reporting

Whilst its principal source of income arises from conference activities, The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre also receives income from renting space within and on the Centre. None of the Centre's costs or net assets is identified specifically with the rental activities.

	2009 £000	2008 £000
Income from conference activities	11,268	10,448
Other rental income	305	337
Income from operating activities	11,573	10,785
Surplus on conference activities	2,595	1,598
Surplus on rental activities	305	337
Operating surplus	2,900	1,935

The 2008–09 operating surplus includes a £344,000 rate rebate relating to prior years (note 8).

NOTE 3

Staff numbers

	2009	2008
Average number of staff for the year		
Administration	9	8
Operations	15	16
Presentations	16	15
Sales and Marketing	10	11
Total average number of staff	50	50

The number of staff relates to full time equivalent individuals in post.

NOTE 4

Staff costs

	2009 £000	2008 £000
Wages and salaries	1,922	1,938
Social security costs	166	158
Pension	315	351
Redundancy and early retirement costs	10	93
Temporary agency staff	28	14
Total staff costs	2,441	2,554

NOTE 5

Pension costs

The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme. The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. The Scheme's Actuary reviews employers' contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation. A full actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2007. Details can be found in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation (www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk).

The contribution rates reflect benefits as they are accrued, not when costs are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme. Employers' contributions of £315,448 (2007/08 £350,996) were payable to the PCSPS at one of four rates in the range based on salary bands of 19.5 to 25.5 per cent of pensionable pay. Rates in 2009/10 are in the range of 18.8 to 24.3 per cent of pensionable pay.

NOTE 6

Remuneration of the Management Board

Details of the remuneration and pension benefits of members of the Management Board are given in the Remuneration Report on page 10.

NOTE 7

Other operating charges

	2009 £000	2008 £000
Advertising and marketing	197	176
Auditors' remuneration	36	32
Entertaining	9	9
Equipment hire	218	217
Self-insurable provisions	(101)	111
Maintenance and cleaning	1,703	1,458
Other costs	1,166	1,082
Provision for doubtful debts	19	–
Rates	409	511
Sub-contracted services	1,299	1,298
Travel and subsistence	44	54
Utilities	645	485
Total	5,644	5,433

Auditors' remuneration includes £2,750 relating to the audit of preparation for IFRS transition. There were no payments to the auditors for non-audit services.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 March 2009

NOTE 8

Exceptional rate rebate

During the year the Centre received a rate rebate from Westminster City Council covering the period from 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2009. The amount, less costs, relating to the period prior to 1 April 2008, £343,927, has been disclosed as an exceptional item. The rebate relating to the current financial year, £122,293, has been included in other operating charges.

NOTE 9

Fixed assets

	Building Improvements	Furniture	IT & Telecoms Equipment	Operational Equipment	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Cost or Valuation					
At 1 April 2008	4,429	1,475	435	1,434	7,773
Disposals	–	(26)	(68)	(12)	(106)
Additions	1,091	16	57	59	1,223
At 31 March 2009	5,520	1,465	424	1,481	8,890
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2008	2,014	1,212	306	1,055	4,587
Disposals	–	(18)	(67)	(12)	(97)
Charge for year	599	105	64	164	932
At 31 March 2009	2,613	1,299	303	1,207	5,422
Net book value					
At 1 April 2008	2,415	263	129	379	3,186
At 31 March 2009	2,907	166	121	274	3,468

NOTE 10

Debtors due within one year

	2009 £000	2009 £000	2008 £000	2008 £000
Trade debtor balances due from				
Central Government Bodies	177		54	
Local Authorities	2		30	
NHS Bodies	28		40	
Public Corporations & Trading Funds	6		6	
Other trade debtors	1,352	1,565	1,174	1,304
Prepayments and accrued income		53		84
Other debtors		23		20
		1,641		1,408

The 2008 analysis has been amended to reflect revised classification of certain bodies.

NOTE 11

Cash at bank and in hand

	2009 £000	2008 £000
Office of HM Paymaster General	4,402	6,437
Commercial banks and cash in hand	186	61
	4,588	6,498

NOTE 12

Creditors falling due within one year

	2009 £000	2009 £000	2008 £000	2008 £000
Deposits invoiced in advance to				
Central Government Bodies	144		241	
Local Authorities	41		5	
NHS Bodies	3		2	
Public Corporations & Trading Funds	20		48	
Other clients	1,605	1,813	1,463	1,759
Trade creditors		489		397
Value Added Tax		209		226
Other taxes and NI		86		79
Accruals & deferred income		699		661
Other creditors		54		53
		3,350		3,175

The 2008 analysis has been amended to reflect revised classification of certain bodies.

NOTE 13

Deposits invoiced more than one year in advance

	2009 £000	2008 £000
Public Corporations & Trading Funds	8	4
Other Clients	297	292
	305	296

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 March 2009

NOTE 14

Provisions for liabilities and charges

	2009 £000	2008 £000
Early Retirement Pensions (see below)	26	93
Estimated cost of claims for compensation (see below)	–	137
	<u>26</u>	<u>230</u>

There is an obligation to pay early retirement pension benefits until the sixtieth birthday of the beneficiary. The future liability is fully provided at current award levels.

	2009 £000	2008 £000
Early retirement liability at 1 April 2008	93	22
Charge to the Income & Expenditure Account	10	93
Payments made during the year	(77)	(22)
Early retirement liability at 31 March 2009	<u>26</u>	<u>93</u>
Claims for compensation at 1 April 2008	137	85
Charge to the Income & Expenditure Account	(101)	118
Payments made during the year	(36)	(66)
Claims for compensation at 31 March 2009	<u>–</u>	<u>137</u>

NOTE 15

Reconciliation of movements in capital and reserves

	Public Dividend Capital £000	General Reserve £000
Balance at 1 April 2008	821	6,570
Transfer of deficit on Income & Expenditure Account	–	(1,375)
Balance at 31 March 2009	<u>821</u>	<u>5,195</u>

NOTE 16

Reconciliation of operating surplus for the year to net cash inflow from operating activities

	2009 £000	2008 £000
Operating surplus	2,900	1,935
Depreciation	932	863
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	9	1
(Decrease)/Increase in provisions	(204)	123
(Increase)/Decrease in debtors	(233)	291
Increase in creditors due within one year	175	122
Increase in creditors due after more than one year	9	157
Net cash inflow from operating activities	<u>3,588</u>	<u>3,492</u>

NOTE 17

Analysis of changes in net funds

	1 April 2008 £000	Cash flow £000	31 March 2009 £000
Cash at bank and in hand	6,498	(1,910)	<u>4,588</u>

NOTE 18

Financial instruments

Short-term debtors and creditors have been excluded from this disclosure. The fair values of the Agency's financial assets and liabilities at 31 March 2009 are as follows

	Book value £000	Fair value £000
Financial assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	4,588	4,588
Financial liabilities		
Deposits invoiced more than one year in advance	(305)	(305)

NOTE 19

Financial risks

Liquidity risk

The levels of capital expenditure and Exchequer payment are both managed to be met from available cash balances. The Agency is reliant on the liquidity of the Department for Communities and Local Government to meet a major insurable loss.

Interest rate risk

76.3 per cent of capital and reserves is in the form of cash on deposit, earning interest at a rate that varies broadly in line with the Bank Rate.

Foreign currency risk

The Agency has no significant exposure to assets, liabilities, income or expenditure denominated in foreign currencies.

NOTE 20

Capital commitments

At 31 March 2009 the Agency had contracts for capital expenditure valued at £202,365 (2008, £281,253).

NOTE 21

Losses, special payments and gifts

Costs falling into the category of losses, special payments and gifts were below the level, currently £250,000, at which they need to be reported separately.

NOTE 22

Contingent liabilities

There were no material contingent liabilities at 31 March 2009 (2008, none).

NOTE 23

Related party transactions

The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre is an executive agency of the Department for Communities and Local Government, which is regarded as a related party. There were several transactions with the Department during the year to the total value of £108,940 (2008, £145,658). At 31 March 2009 there were no outstanding balances (2008, £7,915 trade debtors and £7,485 deposits invoiced in advance). There were many normal business transactions with other Government bodies, amounting to significant value in the cases of Department of Health, HM Treasury and the Parliamentary Estates Directorate.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 31 March 2009

Leith's Limited, part of the Compass Group, has the right to a place on the Management Board; transactions with the Compass Group totalled £1,188,525 (2008, £1,119,393). At 31 March 2009 there was a balance of £31,748 (2008, £35,220) in trade debtors and £2,423 (2008, £3,114) in trade creditors. No Director, key manager or other related party has undertaken any material transaction with the Agency during the year.

NOTE 24

Memorandum Account for the year ended 31 March 2009

The Department for Communities and Local Government incurs costs as owner of the building. The following account incorporates these costs with the results of the Agency.

	2009 £000	2008 £000
Surplus for the financial year per I & E account	3,125	2,272
Deduct expenditure incurred by owner of the building	984	866
Notional net surplus for the financial year	<u>2,141</u>	<u>1,406</u>

In addition the Department for Communities and Local Government incurred capital expenditure on the building during the financial year of £0.056 million (2008 £0.068 million).

NOTE 25

Financial performance indicators

The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre is set performance targets annually by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. The financial target and the actual outturn are given below.

	2009 Target £000	2009 Actual £000	2008 Target £000	2008 Actual £000
Contribution to Exchequer	1,700	1,700	1,600	1,600
Special contribution to Exchequer	-	2,800	-	-

RECRUITMENT POLICY

The Centre continues to ensure that equality of opportunity applies throughout the recruitment process.

Recruitment into the Civil Service is regulated by the Civil Service Order in Council 1995 (as amended) and the Diplomatic Service Order in Council 1991 (as amended). The Council requires the Civil Service Commissioners to:

- Maintain the principle of selection for appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition in recruitment to the Civil Service;
- Prescribe and Publish a recruitment code on the interpretation and application of the principle;
- Incorporate in the code restricted circumstances in which exceptions to the principle can be made;
- Approve appointments at the most Senior levels in the Civil Service; and
- Audit the recruitment systems of departments and agencies for compliance with the code.

The Centre's recruitment policy; the Centre's core competencies against which all applicants for vacancies at the Centre are assessed and the Centre's recruitment statistics can be found on our website at: www.qeicc.co.uk/corporateinformation/recruitment.



The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre

Broad Sanctuary, Westminster, London SW1P 3EE
Telephone 020 7222 5000, Facsimile 020 7798 4200
Website: www.qeicc.co.uk



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