

United Nations  Nations Unies

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REFERENCE: Informal WG on CLCS Workload/10-00149

20 January 2010

Dear Mr. Charles,

This is in response to your letter, dated 18 December 2009, by which you request assistance in acquiring budgetary implications on proposals for streamlining the workload of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) in your capacity as Coordinator of the Informal Working Group on the CLCS Workload, which was established by a decision of the nineteenth Meeting of States Parties.

In reply to your request, please note our comments on the specific items concerned, as follows:

(i) Increase in frequency of meetings of subcommissions and/or longer sessions of the Commission and (ii) Increase in the number of sessions of the Commission (due to the similar nature of the associated costs, these two items have been considered together):

A. Indicative expenses for daily subsistence allowance (DSA) and travel for CLCS members:

The Commission is composed of 21 members. Currently eight members from developing States receive funding from the Trust Fund (covering DSA and round-trip economy class travel as per UN standards). The Secretariat is unaware of the individual arrangements between members of the Commission and their nominating States. Accordingly, the information below reflects DSA and travel expenses only on the basis of UN standards. In order to calculate the costs of each additional week of work of a member of the Commission, the following elements have to be calculated:

1. DSA, as established by the International Civil Service Commission for New York, is \$378.00 for the first 30 days. Hence one week of meetings (seven days) at \$378.00 amounts to \$2,646.00 per CLCS member.
2. Travel (if the additional weeks of work are not in connection with already scheduled meetings and/or sessions): the cost of an economy class round-trip airline ticket to New York is estimated at \$3,500.00. Under the Trust Fund, the cost of such a ticket has been in the range of \$670.00 to \$3,771.00, depending on the origination.

It should be noted that there may be other consequential costs involved, such as health insurance coverage.

Mr. Eden Charles
Coordinator of the Informal Working Group
Permanent Mission of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations
New York, NY

B. Indicative expenses ensuing from servicing of the Commission by the Secretariat:

The cost of:

1. Each additional week of subcommission meetings in the currently available three GIS labs of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs (DOALOS/OLA): no costs related to conference services;
2. Each additional week of plenary sessions: ten meetings per week, with interpretation in the six official languages, costs \$146,000.00 (proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011);

NOTE: Additional staffing requirements and related costs will necessarily augment with the increase in length and number of sessions of the Commission and meetings of the subcommissions (see item iii below). The other work of DOALOS would also be affected by an increase in servicing longer and more numerous meetings of subcommissions and sessions of the Commission. In addition, prolonged presence of members of subcommissions at UNHQ will most likely entail an increase in costs related to office-space availability.

(iii) Establishment of a dedicated secretariat for the Commission at UNHQ

In accordance with Annex II, article 2.5 of the Convention, “[t]he secretariat of the Commission shall be provided by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.” DOALOS/OLA, as the unit of the United Nations Secretariat entrusted to perform the Secretary-General’s functions under the Convention, provides, inter alia, secretariat services to the Commission.

The schedule of costs is as follows:

- (a) Standard salary costs (attachment 1, table 1), including net base salary, post adjustment, staff assessment, and common staff costs, which reflect standard costs for relocation, accommodation for the first 30 days for staff members and their families, and travel costs. (The last two columns in table 1 indicate respectively the total salary costs and the common service costs, as listed in attachment 2, table 3, for the first year and for every year thereafter per person);
- (b) Standard office costs (attachment 2, table 3);
- (c) Information technology infrastructure (attachment 1, table 2), including the costs for annual maintenance of software packages for the needs of the Commission, as per current pricing and maintenance of the hardware, as per the current service level agreement with the Secretariat Office of Information and Communications Technology (OICT), amounting to \$250,000.00.

In this connection, it should be noted that DOALOS at present has 13 staff members (1 D-2, 1 D-1, 2 P-5, 2 P-4, 3 P-3, 4 OL) assigned to provide services to the Commission, in addition to other tasks they perform in the Division. Staffing requirements and related costs have grown with the increase in length and number of meetings of the subcommissions and of sessions of the Commission. Consequently, DOALOS would require additional posts (GIS officers, legal officers and support staff). Further staffing requirements and related costs will occur should the length or number of meetings of the subcommissions and sessions of the Commission increase further. Accordingly, the staffing requirements of DOALOS will need to be revisited in the light of any decisions taken by the Meeting of States Parties concerning the workload of the Commission.

(iv) Provision of appropriate hardware (laptop) for members of the Commission

Currently the three GIS laboratories present at DOALOS are fully equipped with the hardware and software necessary for the performance of the functions of the Commission members at UNHQ. GIS software licenses for the work of the Commission members outside UNHQ are also available.

As for laptops to be provided for work outside UNHQ, the price and technical support costs for the first year would amount to \$87,885.00 for 21 members (as based on OICT standards). For each subsequent year, the cost of technical support would amount to approximately \$700 per laptop.

(v) Establishment of a full-time Commission

On the assumption that the emoluments and the compensatory arrangements for the members of the Commission will be the same as those in place for United Nations staff members, the operation of the Commission on a full-time basis at UNHQ would give rise to the following budgetary implications:

- (a) Standard salary costs (attachment 1, table 1), including net base salary, post adjustment, staff assessment, and common staff costs, which reflect standard costs for relocation, accommodation for the first 30 days for staff members and their families, and travel costs. (The last two columns in table 1 indicate respectively the total salary costs and the common service costs, as listed in attachment 2, table 3, for the first year and for every year thereafter per person);
- (b) Standard office costs (attachment 2, table 3).

NOTE: Additional staffing requirements and related costs will necessarily augment with the establishment of a full-time Commission. The other work of DOALOS would also be affected by such an increase in servicing full-time Commission. In addition, the full-time presence of members of the Commission at UNHQ will most likely entail an increase in the costs related to office-space availability.

I remain at your disposal should you require further clarifications.

Yours sincerely,



Serguei Tarassenko
Director

Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the sea
Office of Legal Affairs

Attachment 1

Table 1. Staff related costs as per UN Standard Salary Costs, Version 1 (Regular Budget and Tribunals) (As used in the preparation of the 2010-2011 PPB)

Category level	Net Base Salary \$	Post Adjustment \$	Staff Assessment \$	Common Staff Cost \$	Representation Allowance \$	Total staff salary related costs \$	Total non-recurrent for the first year \$	Total recurrent annual \$
USG	\$142,800.00	\$110,400.00	\$58,400.00	\$112,800.00	\$4,000.00	\$428,400.00	\$535,900.00	\$447,700.00
ASG	\$125,400.00	\$96,900.00	\$52,000.00	\$99,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$376,300.00	\$483,800.00	\$395,600.00
D-2	\$112,100.00	\$86,700.00	\$43,300.00	\$88,600.00	\$600.00	\$331,300.00	\$414,000.00	\$350,600.00
D-1	\$103,200.00	\$79,800.00	\$39,600.00	\$81,500.00	\$0.00	\$304,100.00	\$359,800.00	\$322,800.00
P-5	\$90,900.00	\$70,300.00	\$33,700.00	\$71,800.00	\$0.00	\$266,700.00	\$301,500.00	\$285,400.00
P-4	\$77,600.00	\$60,000.00	\$27,000.00	\$61,300.00	\$0.00	\$225,900.00	\$252,000.00	\$244,300.00
P-3	\$64,500.00	\$49,900.00	\$21,300.00	\$51,000.00	\$0.00	\$186,700.00	\$212,800.00	\$205,100.00
P-2/1	\$52,500.00	\$40,600.00	\$16,200.00	\$41,500.00	\$0.00	\$150,800.00	\$176,900.00	\$169,200.00
OL	\$56,900.00	\$0.00	\$17,800.00	\$25,300.00	\$0.00	\$100,000.00	\$125,800.00	\$118,400.00

Table 2. Information technology: software, hardware and network maintenance related costs

	Recurrent
Software	\$200,000.00
Infrastructure	\$50,000.00
Total:	\$250,000.00

Attachment 2

Table 3. Operating expenses as per 2008-2009 Estimating guide for standard Common Service Cost in New York

Object of Expenditure	USG/ASG		D-2		D-1		P-5		P-1 to P-4		General Service	
	non-recurrent	recurrent	non-recurrent	recurrent	non-recurrent	recurrent	non-recurrent	recurrent	non-recurrent	recurrent	non-recurrent	recurrent
Rental of premises	\$0.00	\$14,300.00		\$14,300.00		\$14,300.00		\$14,300.00		\$14,300.00		\$14,300.00
Alterations/Improvements	\$72,500.00		\$68,100.00		\$44,500.00		\$24,600.00		\$16,600.00		\$14,700.00	
Local area network	\$300.00	\$700.00	\$300.00	\$700.00	\$300.00	\$700.00	\$300.00	\$700.00	\$300.00	\$400.00	\$300.00	\$400.00
Telephone and facimile services	\$600.00	\$2,000.00	\$600.00	\$2,000.00	\$300.00	\$1,400.00	\$300.00	\$1,400.00	\$300.00	\$1,400.00	\$300.00	\$1,400.00
Standard Level Agreement for Maintenance Services	\$0.00	\$1,800.00		\$1,800.00		\$1,800.00		\$1,800.00		\$1,800.00		\$1,800.00
Office supplies	\$0.00	\$500.00		\$500.00		\$500.00		\$500.00		\$500.00		\$500.00
Furniture	\$31,700.00		\$11,300.00		\$8,500.00		\$7,500.00		\$7,500.00		\$9,100.00	
Acquisition of office automation equipment	\$2,400.00		\$2,400.00		\$2,100.00		\$2,100.00		\$1,400.00		\$1,400.00	
Total per staff member	\$107,500.00	\$19,300.00	\$82,700.00	\$19,300.00	\$55,700.00	\$18,700.00	\$34,800.00	\$18,700.00	\$26,100.00	\$18,400.00	\$25,800.00	\$18,400.00