



Note no. A033/24

Protocol Directorate of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) presents its compliments to all diplomatic missions and has the honour to refer to debts owed in respect of parking fines, the London Congestion Charge, and National Non-Domestic Rates.

The Directorate would like to remind diplomatic missions that under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, diplomats are required to respect the UK's laws and regulations. This includes ensuring that any charges, fines or taxes for which they are liable are paid.

The Directorate therefore wishes to highlight the following:

Parking Fines

The FCDO considers diplomats liable for fines issued as Penalty Charge Notices by local authorities for vehicle parking infringements and expects them to be paid to the issuing authority. Failure to pay fines may result in the FCDO imposing restrictions on the disposal of the vehicle to which the fines refer. Diplomatic missions with a total parking fine debt attributed to its official vehicles or those of its diplomats and dependants exceeding £1,000 will be named in an annual Written Ministerial Statement to Parliament.

London Congestion Charge

The FCDO considers the London Congestion Charge to be comparable to a toll charge and therefore expects diplomats, dependants and missions to pay it when a qualifying vehicle has been driven within the congestion charge zone. Diplomatic missions with a total London Congestion Charge debt attributed to its official vehicles or those of its diplomats and dependants exceeding £100,000 will be named in an annual Written Ministerial Statement to Parliament.

National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR)

The FCDO considers diplomatic missions to be liable for the beneficial portion of the NNDR applied to their official mission premises. The beneficial portion represents 6% of the total NNDR and must be paid to the Valuation Office Agency, who will invoice diplomatic missions

directly. Diplomatic missions with a total NNDR debt exceeding £10,000 will be named in a Written Ministerial Statement to Parliament.

The Directorate requests diplomatic missions to pay all outstanding debts as soon as possible. The Directorate will issue reminders shortly to individual diplomatic missions setting out any of the above debts currently attributed to them. Further guidance on how to settle these debts will also be provided if required.

Protocol Directorate of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all diplomatic missions the assurances of its highest consideration.

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