

CONFIDENTIAL FILING

Transfer of Responsibility for the
Office of the Lord Lyon

GOVERNMENT

MACHINERY

DECEMBER 1984

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
17.12.84							
<p>PREM 19/1257</p>							



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

17 December 1984

TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE OFFICE OF THE
LORD LYON

The Prime Minister considered over the weekend the Chancellor's minute of 12 December proposing a transfer of responsibility for the Office of the Lord Lyon.

The Prime Minister is content with the proposal to transfer responsibility for this Office from the Treasury to the Secretary of State for Scotland with effect from 1 April 1985.

I am copying this letter to John Graham (Scottish Office) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

David Barclay

David Peretz, Esq.,
HM Treasury.

ds



Ref. A084/3381

PRIME MINISTER

Office of the Lord Lyon

The Chancellor of the Exchequer's minute of 12 December seeks your approval to the proposal to transfer votes accounting responsibility for the office of Lord Lyon from him to the Secretary of State for Scotland.

This office is a very small and ancient office, operating only in Scotland. It authorises the bearing of coat of arms and discharges other ceremonial and heraldic functions. The Treasury's formal supervision of the Vote is an anomaly. The few practical matters which involve a Minister are presently handled by the Secretary of State for Scotland and the office's activities are of no policy interest to the Treasury. Transfer is simply a formal recognition of where the effective responsibilities lie. It may be done administratively, and I recommend that you approve the proposal.

Approved by
ROBERT ARMSTRONG
and signed in his absence.

17 December 1984

Handwritten initials



Prime Minister

100 / 1

Agree to

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG
01-233 3000

transfer of responsibility?

PRIME MINISTER

**TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE
OFFICE OF THE LORD LYON**

Yes not Dr 14/12

The Office of the Lord Lyon is at present provided for from the Treasury Vote, and as such its expenditure is accounted for by the Treasury. I am writing to seek your agreement to its transfer to the Scottish Court Administration Vote.

2. The Office of the Lyon King of Arms is the oldest active office in Scotland, dating from 1318. The main statute is the Lyon King of Arms Act 1867. The main functions are:

(i) considering petitions for the grant of new arms or the matriculation of existing armorial bearings; deciding on disputes about the right to bear arms (with appeal to the Court of Session and the House of Lords);

(ii) appointing and controlling Heralds, Pursuivants and Bearers of the Royal Banner and Scottish National Flag, as well as Messengers-at-Arms which enforce Supreme Court decrees;

(iii) directing Scottish royal and public ceremonial and advising the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Sovereign on all related questions; and the Office is Chancery of the Order of the Thistle and Lord Lyon is Secretary of the Order.

3. It is an historical anomaly that the Treasury should be responsible for these Scottish functions. They are more



appropriate to the Secretary of State for Scotland as he is already responsible for recommending the appointment of persons to fill the posts of Lord Lyon and Lyon Clerk and for setting the fees of the Lyon Office. He is content with my proposal.

4. No legislative change is required to effect this transfer; it can be done by administrative action. Parliament would be informed in the appropriate chapter of the 1985-86 Estimates.

5. I should be grateful for your authority to proceed with this transfer with effect from 1 April 1985. I am sending a copy of this minute to the Secretary of State for Scotland and Sir Robert Armstrong.

N.L.

12 December 1984

