

# Inside the civil service: a blogger reveals all

 [blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2008/02/11/inside-the-civil-service-a-blogger-reveals-all/](http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2008/02/11/inside-the-civil-service-a-blogger-reveals-all/)

2008-2-11

Thanks to political blogger [Dizzy](#) for pointing out the excellent anonymous civil servant blogger “[Civil Serf](#)”. She appears to be a middle-ranking civil servant in an anonymous Whitehall Department who gives a fascinating and detailed portrait of everyday life in the Rolls Royce machine that powers the UK:

She makes some very incisive political points such as:

*Then there’s the Gus O’Donnell effect – currently criticising the leadership in the Treasury? Hummmm I think we are forgetting something Gus – you were the Permanent Secretary of the Treasury until 2 years ago? Most of your decisions contribute directly to this current crisis. Hummmmm would you like to resign? Nope, didn’t think so..*

And some rather insightful organisational points:

*(1) We don’t employ enough lawyers, accountants and other specialist staff which are all required to run ‘cottage-industries’ in collecting and reporting data to make it all work.*

*(2) We have appalling IT systems (I would swear my desk top is powered by a hamster setting fire to jaffa cakes...the incessant squeaking is driving me crazy!)*

*(3) We can’t penalise anyone for their poor performance because that’s seen as cruel, especially when we are contracting with charities and do-gooders that complain to journalists “Ooooo the DWP are reducing funding to a project supporting 50 unemployed disabled people in Cornwall.... how terrible” Tough choices are impossible...*

And sometimes she is just cross:

*Only a week ago I was trapped in a conference in Brighton (being chased about by some bloke from the Foreign Office who wouldn’t listen to me saying i’m engaged – YUK!) and watching the HMRC’s Finance Director stand up and give a speech about “getting it right first time”! Ho bloody Ho....*

“She” is either going to get sacked, leave the civil service or publish a book very soon.

- Copyright © 2014 London School of Economics and Political Science