

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE - ADDENDUM

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 30 & 31 May and 1 June 2012

Question: Addendum to E12-121

OUTCOME 0: Whole of Portfolio

Topic: Travel Costs

Type of Question: Written

Number of pages: 5

Senator: Senator McKenzie

Question:

- a) For the financial year to date, please detail all travel for Departmental officers that accompanied the Minister and/or Parliamentary Secretary on their travel. Please include a total cost plus a breakdown that include airfares (and type of airfare), accommodation, meals and other travel expenses (such as incidentals).
- b) For the financial year to date, please detail all travel for Departmental officers. Please include a total cost plus a breakdown that include airfares (and type of airfare), accommodation, meals and other travel expenses (such as incidentals).
- c) Are the Government's Lowest Practical Fare travel policy for Domestic Air Travel (Finance Circular No. 2009/10) and Best Fare of the Day for International Air Travel (Finance Circular No. 2009/11) guidelines being followed? How is this monitored? If the guidelines are not being followed, please explain why.
- d) Are lounge memberships provided to any employees? If yes, what lounge memberships, to how many employees and their classification, the reason for the provision of lounge membership and the total costs of the lounge memberships.
- e) When SES employees travel, do any support or administrative staff (such as an Executive Assistant) travel with them? If yes, provide details of why such a staff member is needed and the costs of the support staff travel.

Answer:

Addendum to original answer

- a) Please refer to **Table A** for a summary of travel and related costs for the reporting period. Please note that it is not possible to individually report on all the separate items requested in the question as costs are met by individual travelers from domestic travelling allowances paid as a daily rate. All flights are booked in economy class. All travel taken was to accompany the Minister to a meeting or an event in order to undertake portfolio related business.

Table A:

1 July 2011 to 14 Dec 2011						14 Dec 2011 to 31 May 2012					
Minister / Parliamentary Secretary	Total cost incl. GST	Flights	Travel Allowance	Accommodation	Additional Expenses	Minister / Parliamentary Secretary	Total cost incl. GST	Flights	Travel Allowance	Accommodation	Additional Expenses
Minister for Health & Ageing ¹	Nil					Minister for Health ²	Nil				
1 July 2011 to 31 May 2012											
Minister / Parliamentary Secretary	Total cost incl. GST	Flights	Travel Allowance	Accommodation	Additional Expenses						
Minister for Mental Health & Ageing	Nil										
Minister for Indigenous Health	\$6,407.39	\$4,748.44	\$805.70	\$734.00	\$119.69						
Parliamentary Secretary for Health & Ageing	Nil										

b) Please refer to **Table B** for a summary of travel and related costs for the Department during the period 1 July 2011 to 31 May 2012.

Table B:

	Domestic 2011-12 YTD May '12 \$	International 2011-12 YTD May '12 \$
Travel Expenditure		
First Class airfares	\$0	\$1,838,869
Business Class airfares	\$2,779,546	
Economy airfares	\$4,351,532	
Sub-total – Airfares	\$7,131,078	\$1,838,869
Travel Allowance, Accommodation, Meals & Incidentals	3,864,849	
Other Travel Expenses	420,708	
Total Travel Expenditure	13,255,504	

Table includes Therapeutic Goods Administration, Office of the Gene Technology Regulator, Office of the Aged Care Commissioner and National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment.
Note: International Airfares may include domestic airfares, booked as part of an international trip.

Due to an administrative error some travel expenditure was incorrectly classified and reported in the original response. As a result travel costs were overstated by \$82,422.

It has been identified that, due to industry reporting standards and different airline class structures, it is not possible to reliably report international airfares by class of travel. As such, international airfares have been aggregated, so as not to incorrectly reflect international travel by class.

¹ Minister for Health & Ageing: Prior to Ministerial reshuffle on 14 December 2011.

² Minister for Health: Following Ministerial reshuffle on 14 December 2011.

- c) Yes, staff within the Department of Health and Ageing adhere to the Government's Lowest Practical Fare and International Best Fare of the Day policies when booking flights. The Department receives a quarterly report from its Travel Management Company.
- d) Lounge memberships are provided to SES staff and frequent travellers. SES staff are entitled to receive lounge membership, as part of their remuneration package. Frequent Travellers may apply to their Branch Heads for lounge memberships

Classification	No.
NON-SES STAFF	14
SES STAFF	38
TOTAL	52

During the period 1 July 2011 to 31 May 2012 the Department spent \$19,653.25, for the purchase of 52 lounge memberships. It should be noted that a significant number of staff receive complimentary access to airport lounges, in accordance with airline frequent flyer programs.

- e) No, administrative support staff or Executive Assistants do not travel with SES staff.

Original answer:

- a) Please refer to **Table A** for a summary of travel and related costs for the reporting period. Please note that it is not possible to individually report on all the separate items requested in the question as costs are met by individual travelers from domestic travelling allowances paid as a daily rate. All flights are booked in economy class. All travel taken was to accompany the Minister to a meeting or an event in order to undertake portfolio related business.

Table A:

1 July 2011 to 14 Dec 2011						14 Dec 2011 to 31 May 2012					
Minister / Parliamentary Secretary	Total cost incl. GST	Flights	Travel Allowance	Accommodation	Additional Expenses	Minister / Parliamentary Secretary	Total cost incl. GST	Flights	Travel Allowance	Accommodation	Additional Expenses
Minister for Health & Ageing ¹	Nil					Minister for Health ²	Nil				
1 July 2011 to 31 May 2012											
Minister / Parliamentary Secretary	Total cost incl. GST	Flights	Travel Allowance	Accommodation	Additional Expenses						
Minister for Mental Health & Ageing	Nil										
Minister for Indigenous Health	\$6,407.39	\$4,748.44	\$805.70	\$734.00	\$119.69						
Parliamentary Secretary for Health & Ageing	Nil										

¹ Minister for Health & Ageing: Prior to Ministerial reshuffle on 14 December 2011.

² Minister for Health: Following Ministerial reshuffle on 14 December 2011.

- b) Please refer to **Table B** for a summary of travel and related costs for the Department during the period 1 July 2011 to 31 May 2012.

Table B:

	Domestic 2011-12 YTD May '12 \$	International 2011-12 YTD May '12 \$
Travel Expenditure		
First Class airfares	\$0	\$182,362
Business Class airfares	\$2,862,159	\$1,033,952
Economy airfares	\$4,445,157	\$617,226
Sub total – Airfares	\$7,307,316	\$1,833,540
Travel Allowance (meals & incidentals)	1,692,754	382,349
Accommodation	1,752,393	
Other Travel Expenses	369,574	
Total Travel Expenditure	13,337,926	

Table includes Therapeutic Goods Administration, Office of the Gene Technology Regulator, Office of the Aged Care Commissioner and National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment.

- c) Yes, staff within the Department adhere to the Government's Lowest Practical Fare and International Best Fare of the Day policies when booking flights. The Department receives a quarterly report from its Travel Management Company, outlining its performance against these policies.
- d) Lounge memberships are provided to SES staff and frequent travellers. SES staff are entitled to receive lounge membership, as part of their remuneration package. Frequent Travellers may apply to their Branch Heads for lounge memberships

Classification	No.
EL1	61
EL2	137
LEGAL OFFICER	3
MEDICAL OFFICER	43
SES 1	68
SES 2	13
SES 3	12
SECRETARY	1
TOTAL	338

The total cost of airline lounge memberships paid by the Department during the period 1 July 2011 to 31 May 2012 was \$19,653.25.

- e) No, administrative support staff or Executive Assistants do not travel with SES staff.