

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates

13 – 14 February 2013

Question: AET 501

Topic: Making the Public Service More Efficient

Written: Received from Committee – 22 February 2013

Senator BUSHBY asked:

501. Please provide an update of the savings achieved through pursuing further efficiencies in the way the public service operates (see media release by the Minister for Finance and Deregulation and the Special Minister of State of 25 September 2012 at: http://www.financeminister.gov.au/media/2012/mr_1982012.html).

In addition, please provide the following details:

- a. Can you quantify the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates for reductions in air travel?
- b. Has there been a reduction in business flights? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
- c. Has there been a reduction in the use of external consultants and contractors? Has this impacted on the Department/Agency, and how? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
- d. Provide an update of moving recruitment advertising online. Is any recruitment still in printed materials, and if yes, why? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
- e. Has the Department/Agency reduced its printing costs? If not, why not? Have printing costs increased, and if yes why and by how much? Has the five per cent savings target been achieved – if yes, how, and if no, why not? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?

Answer:

501. The AOFM has not initiated additional savings measures pursuant to the above mentioned press release, as either the expenditure on the items mentioned is relatively minor or there is an existing policy in place to reduce expenditure as explained below.

- a. The AOFM's policy is to restrict travel to circumstances where it fulfils a legitimate business need. The AOFM also requires that travel be completed in a single day where possible to reduce costs.
- b. The AOFM's policy is for all domestic travel to be economy class unless it is undertaken as part of an overseas trip. This policy is applied to all staff including SES.
- c. Expenditure on consultants and contractors is only undertaken in limited circumstances. The AOFM only engages consultants where it lacks specialist expertise or when independent research, review or assessment is required (see questions AET 524-525 and AET 535-544).

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- d. All recruitment advertising has been exclusively on-line since the Government released the first Non-Campaign Recruitment Advertising Policy in July 2009.
- e. The AOFM has been reducing its expenditure on printing of publications over a number of years. It is a relatively minor expense and there are no significant efficiency gains in reducing it further.