

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Treasury Portfolio**

Additional Estimates

13 – 14 February 2013

**Question: AET 986**

**Topic: Making the Public Service More Efficient**

**Written: Received from Committee – 22 February 2013**

**Senator BUSHBY asked:**

986. 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](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 no, 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:**

986. Targeted savings have been embedded in the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority's (APRA's) current year budget and forward estimates. Overall budget expense target is being met through careful expense management by APRA.

- a. Increased use of video conferencing and lower levels of international representation are expected to reduce overall travel costs by \$100,000 per year over the forward estimates.
- b. International and domestic travel costs are forecast to be lower in 2012-13 than the previous year. Refer a. for estimated savings over the forward estimates.

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- c. Consultants and contractors are only used when needed for business purposes. Appropriate approval processes are in place for the engagement of consultants and contractors and regard is given to APRA's available budget. No estimates of savings over the forward estimates are or can be made.
- d. All roles externally advertised are currently advertised on line; press advertising may be used for certain senior and specialist roles.
- e. As with other areas of discretionary expenditure, printing costs are monitored at various levels through APRA. The targeted savings are expected to be achieved through existing procurement practices, reduced volumes and a recent change in supplier arrangements for multi-function printing devices.