

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates

4 – 6 June 2013

Question: BET 468-473

Topic: Public Service Efficiencies

Written: 17 June 2013

Senator BUSHBY asked:

468. Please provide details of the amended operational efficiencies your agency will make as per the 2013-14 Budget Measure 'Public Service efficiencies' (see 2013-14 Budget Paper No. 2, page 108).
469. In addition, please provide the following detail:
- a. Can you quantify the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates for savings achieved by implementing more efficient management structures, through a reduction in expenditure on staff across the Executive Level (EL) 1 and 2, and Senior Executive Service (SES) levels?
 - b. Can you quantify the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates for savings achieved by revising down the occupational density target for all new leases, buildings and major fit-outs undertaken by agencies from 16 square metres per occupied workpoint down to 14 square metres?
470. Has there been a reduction in business flights?
- a. What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
471. Has there been a reduction in the use of external consultants and contractors?
- a. Has this impacted on the department/agency, and how?
 - b. What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
472. Provide an update of moving recruitment advertising online.
- a. Is any recruitment still in printed materials, and if yes, why?
 - b. What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
473. Has the department/agency reduced its printing costs?
- a. If not, why not?
 - b. Have printing costs increased, and if yes, why and by how much?
 - c. Has the five per cent savings target been achieved – if yes, how, or if it will not be achieved, why not?
 - d. What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?

Answer:

468. ASIC continues to primarily pursue and secure efficiencies in the current budget year and over the forward estimates through the review of its goods and services expenditure. Specifically, savings are arising from the sub-leasing of surplus office space and leveraging WoAG arrangements around telecommunications, accommodation and air travel. In addition, short term absorption of demand driven client activity in ASIC call centres and registry teams has been met by judiciously managing ASIC-wide discretionary expenditures.

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- 469.
- a. Please refer to Finance's response to question F10 from the Finance and Public Administration Committee.
 - b. As the Government has only recently revised the occupational density target down to 14 square metres from 16 square metres, ASIC has not yet had the opportunity to assess the savings impact on expected new leases and major fit-outs over the forward estimates.
470. ASIC manages its business travel policy in line with WoAG procurement rules and with reference to specific conditions associated with certain staff members' employment terms. As per the response to BET 529, the ASIC Domestic Travel Policy states that Senior Executives may travel business class when their flight is in excess of 2 hours. All other staff must travel economy class domestically unless there is a business case approved by their Senior Executive to travel at a higher fare class. Commission members are entitled under the Remuneration Tribunal Decision to fly Business for domestic flights. For travel outside Australia, staff are entitled to travel business class for international travel. Commissioners are entitled to fly first class for international travel as per the Remuneration Tribunal Determinations, however first class travel is undertaken only in exceptional circumstances.
- 470.
- a. ASIC does not specifically target business travel related savings over the forward estimates.
471. Yes.
- a. External consultants are generally used, as required, to provide specialist skills not available in ASIC, or when large new programs (both government mandated and internally generated) are to be delivered. The reduced use of contractors and consultants has not been such as to have an impact on ASIC meeting its strategic priorities.
 - b. Associated costs are dependent upon the delivery of future programs, including NPP programs; therefore savings are difficult to estimate.
472. ASIC has moved to online as the primary method of recruitment advertising.
- a. There is still a very small amount of print advertising undertaken (total value of \$2,726.56 in the 2012-13 financial year). Print advertising is considered only when necessary to target appropriate candidates for particular roles, for example, when we need to recruit significant numbers of staff in Traralgon (La Trobe Valley) and in seeking staff to work in Indigenous outreach roles.
 - b. It is estimated that the cost of print advertising for recruitment purposes will remain at very low levels. This expense has been reducing over time, with the total cost having reduced from \$12,395.25 in 2011-12 and \$17,123.71 in 2010-11.
473. For the 2012/13 financial year, ASIC's total printing costs are expected to reduce by approximately 10% compared to 2011/12. ASIC encourages customers and consumers to use our online services; however, a very small subset of publications continues to be printed for those without access to online services, such as some retirees, the indigenous community

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and those in remote areas. ASIC does not specifically target printing related savings over the forward estimates.