

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Treasury Portfolio**

Supplementary Budget Estimates

17 October – 18 October 2012

**Question: SBT 303-308**

**Topic: Public Service Efficiency (PC)**

**Written: Received from Committee – 26 October 2012**

**Senator BUSHBY asked:**

303. Please detail how the department/agency will achieve savings over the forward estimates 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 [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 detail:

304. How will reductions in air travel spending be achieved? What is the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
305. What restrictions will be implemented for business flights? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
306. How will the use of external consultants and contractors be reduced? How will this impact on the Department/agency? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
307. How will the department/agency manage moving recruitment advertising online? Will all future recruitment advertisement be online only? If not, explain why. What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
308. How will printing costs be reduced? Explain if and how the department/agency will reduce its printing costs by five per cent, or if it will not, why not? How will it be determined what documents will no longer be printed? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?

**Answer:**

303. The Commission manages its outlays, including travel, printing, recruitment and external consultants within its appropriation budget and will continue to do so as that appropriation is adjusted over time. It does this through flexible deployment of the available resources against the Commission's needs which vary over time as the nature and content of the work program changes. It is not practical for the Commission to attribute specific savings to disaggregated expenditure categories at this level of detail.

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304. See response to SBT 303. The Commission uses discounts available under whole-of-government travel contracts, and has implemented the lowest practical fare policy.
305. See response to SBT 303. Staff of the Commission exercise practical judgement in booking travel based on value for money considerations, which in many cases will be economy class despite an entitlement to business class travel.
306. See response to SBT 303. External consultants and contractors are a very small component of the Commission's budget.
307. See response to SBT 303. All future recruitment advertising will be on-line, unless an exemption is granted in particular circumstances (eg SES positions) in accordance with the whole-of-government Non-Campaign Recruitment Advertising Policy.
308. See response to SBT 303. The Commission already has a number of publications that are on-line only, and considers publication requirements on a project by project basis. As the provision of public information is an important function of the Commission we would not compromise on meeting this responsibility and seek savings in other areas if necessary.