

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Supplementary Budget Estimates

17 October – 18 October 2012

Question: SBT 345-350

Topic: Public Service Efficiency (IGT)

Written: Received from Committee – 26 October 2012

Senator BUSHBY asked:

345. 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).

In addition, please provide the following detail:

346. How will reductions in air travel spending be achieved? What is the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates
347. What restrictions will be implemented for business flights? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
348. 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?
349. 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?
350. 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:

345. Management of agency expenditure is consistent with Government policies and the financial framework. The Inspector-General of Taxation (IGT) is a micro agency with national responsibility and as such this expenditure is a necessary operational requirement. In conducting reviews, fieldwork involves meetings with taxpayers and Australian Taxation Office staff throughout Australia. However, consistent with Government policies and the financial framework, savings are sought through effective scheduling of multiple interstate meetings and teleconferencing. Estimated savings cannot be quantified.

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346. See response to question 345. Estimated savings cannot be quantified.
347. The Chief Executive's Instructions place restrictions on business travel. See response to question 345. Estimated savings cannot be quantified.
348. The use of external consultants or contractors is currently very limited and only used where the agency does not have the expertise or resource. Estimated savings cannot be quantified.
349. The IGT will continue to advertise employment opportunities online through commercial jobs boards (e.g. Seek) and APSjobs.gov.au. In accordance with the Australian Government's advertising guidelines, some specific positions may be advertised in the major daily papers. Recruitment advertising is highly variable as between years and managed through the IGT's general advertising budget.
350. Review reports are only made available on the agency website. Limited copies are printed internally on specific request. Only the annual report is externally printed for the Parliament, the Commonwealth Library Deposit Distribution Scheme and for external stakeholders.