

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 2013

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Australian Public Service Commission

Outcome/Program: Cross Portfolio

Topic: Travel costs

Senator: Ludwig

Question reference number: 170

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 17 January 2014

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) For the financial year to date, please detail all travel for Departmental officers that accompanied the Minister and/or Parliamentary Secretary on their travel. Please include a total cost plus a breakdown that include airfares (and type of airfare), accommodation, meals and other travel expenses (such as incidentals).
- b) For the financial year to date, please detail all travel for Departmental officers. Please include a total cost plus a breakdown that include airfares (and type of airfare), accommodation, meals and other travel expenses (such as incidentals). Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
- c) What travel is planned for the rest of the financial year from 7 September 2013? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
- d) What travel is planned for the rest of this calendar year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
- e) What is the policy for business class airfare tickets?
- f) Are lounge memberships provided to any employees? If yes, what lounge memberships, to how many employees and their classification, the reason for the provision of lounge membership and the total costs of the lounge memberships.
- g) When SES employees travel, do any support or administrative staff (such as an Executive Assistant) travel with them? If yes, provide details of why such a staff member is needed and the costs of the support staff travel.
- h) Does the department/agency elect to offset emissions for employees work related travel? If yes, what is the cost?

Answer:

- a) For this financial year to date to 30 November 2013 no Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) official accompanied the Minister and/or Parliamentary Secretary on their travel.
- b) For the financial year to date as at 30 November 2013, \$749,284 (excluding GST) has been spent on travel as detailed below:

APSC staff airfare	\$130,584
Leading Australia's Future in the Asia-Pacific (LAFIA)	\$56,854
Travel allowance	\$97,464

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International assistance recipient airfare and travel allowance	\$331,878
Indigenous recruitment candidate airfare costs	\$22,824
Non-APSC reviewers and contractors	\$17,021
Taxi and parking	\$76,553
Motor vehicle	\$16,106
Total travel cost	\$749,284

The APSC does not record travel data in a way that would readily allow the detailed breakdown of costs and itemised information requested to be provided to this question. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of the APSC's resources.

- c) The APSC does not record detailed information regarding travel plans. It is not expected that the travel activity would increase in comparison to historical trends. Business as usual activities include travel associated with representational responsibilities, international assistance, Indigenous recruitment and learning and leadership activities such as Leading Australia's Future in the Asia-Pacific (LAFIA).
- d) Please refer to the answer above.
- e) The APSC's travel policy limits business class air travel to international travel or by Senior Executives on long haul domestic travel.
- f) The APSC's travel policy specifies that lounge membership is available via individual agreements. Other officials may put a business case to access the lounge membership where there is a demonstrated business need. As at November 2013, there are 30 employees (8 Senior Executive Service and 22 Executive Level employees) who have Qantas club membership and 1 Senior Executive Service employee who has Velocity club membership. Each Qantas membership cost \$290 (inclusive of GST) to renew on an annual basis and Velocity costs \$249 (inclusive of GST). The total cost of lounge memberships is estimated to be \$8,949 (inclusive of GST) per annum.
- g) The APSC SES officers travel without personal support staff.
- h) The APSC does not elect to offset emissions for employees work related travel.