

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 132

Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates

Outcome: Corporate

Programme: Corporate Strategies Division

Topic: Portfolio Wide – Meeting costs

Hansard Page: N/A

Question Date: 27 November 2013

Question Type: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

- a) What is the Department/Agency's meeting spend from 7 September 2013 to date? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events, including any catering and drinks costs.
- b) For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, please detail total meeting spend from 7 September 2013 to date. Detail date, location, purpose and cost of each event including any catering and drinks costs.
- c) What meeting spend is the Department/Agency's planning on spending? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
- d) For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, what meeting spend is currently being planned for? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of each event including any catering and drinks costs.

Answer:

a) The Department and majority of Agencies do not track meeting expenditure separately so this information is not readily available. To determine the amount spent on meetings would require a manual review of individual invoices which would be a substantial and unreasonable diversion of resources for the Department and Agencies.

The National Water Commission has spent \$758.94 (GST exclusive) on meeting costs from 7 September 2013 to date (31 October 2013). Details of date, location, purpose and cost of all events are listed below.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
18/09/2013	Quest, Albury	Commission meeting	\$758.94

b) The Department did not meet the cost of meetings for the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary in relation to their portfolio responsibilities during the period from 7 September to date (31 October 2013).

Details of expenditure on entitlements is compiled every six months in a report titled Parliamentarians' Expenditure on Entitlements paid by the Department of Finance. The reports and supporting information are published on the Finance website.

While Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries may attend meetings in relation to their portfolio responsibilities, the Department does not track meeting expenditure separately so this information is not readily available.

c) The Department and majority of Agencies do not track planned meeting expenditure within their budgetary and finance systems therefore this information is not available.

Please see planned hospitality spend below for the National Water Commission. Details of date, location, purpose and cost of all events are listed below.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
18/11/2013	Canberra (NWC Office)	Meeting with SRG representatives as an additional channel for consultation on Commission work program.	\$600.00
19/11/2013	Canberra (NWC Office)	Commission meeting as required under the <i>National Water Commission Act 2004</i>	\$250.00
6 & 7/02/2014	Melbourne	Commission meeting as required under the <i>National Water Commission Act 2004</i>	\$500.00
1/04/2014	Canberra (NWC Office)	Commission meeting as required under the <i>National Water Commission Act 2004</i>	\$250.00
5/06/2014	Canberra (NWC Office)	Commission meeting as required under the <i>National Water Commission Act 2004</i>	\$250.00

d) See answer to question b, above.