

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio

Budget Estimates

28 May 2012

**Question:**                    **BR51**  
**Topic:**                        **Travel Costs**  
**Proof Hansard Page:** **Written**

**Senator Bushby asked:**

1. 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).
2. 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).
3. Are the Governments Lowest Practical Fare travel policy for Domestic Air Travel (Finance Circular No. 2009/10) and Best Fare of the Day for International Air Travel (Finance Circular No. 2009/11) guidelines being followed? How is this monitored? If the guidelines are not being followed, please explain why.
4. 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.
5. 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.

**Answer:**1-2. *Department*

Breakdown of total travel costs for all departmental officers:

<b>Expense</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Airfares	\$2,732,857.28
Accommodation	\$632,751.59
Meals	\$223,755.18
Other	\$44,506.91
<b>Total*</b>	<b>\$3,633,870.96</b>

\* Of this total approximately \$155,000 relates to travel undertaken by departmental officers travelling with the Minister. The Department is unable to break this amount down any further.

## Breakdown of airfare type:

<b>Domestic</b>	
Airfare Class	Percentage Use
Dom A	11%
Dom B	16%
Dom C	40%
Dom D	16%
Dom E	16%
Other	1%

<b>International</b>	
Airfare Class	Percentage Use
Economy	12%
Business	84%
First	4%

2. *Tourism Australia*

Total Staff Travel costs for the 2011-12 financial year was \$2,593,799. This includes the following components:

<b>Component</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Accommodation and Meals – Intra-continental	\$342,236
Accommodation and Meals – Intercontinental	\$186,246
Air Fares/Trains – Intra-continental	\$618,326
Air Fares – Intercontinental	\$886,067
Taxi Fares/Transportation – Intra-continental	\$286,730
Taxi Fares/Transportation – Intercontinental	\$31,854
Mileage Claims	\$4,693
Other Staff Travel Expenses - In Region	\$37,687
Other Staff Travel Expenses - Out of Region	\$18,751
Staff Travel – unallocated	\$181,209
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,593,799</b>

*Geoscience Australia*

Total Staff Travel costs for the 2011-12 financial year was \$4,500,708 excluding GST. This includes the following components:

<b>Component</b>	<b>GST Exclusive Amount</b>
Airfares – Domestic	\$744,697
Airfares – International	\$1,671,049
Travel Allowances – Domestic	\$1,220,532
Travel Allowances – International	\$682,997
Other Expenses	\$181,433
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,500,708</b>

3. *Department*

All officers that travel on behalf of the Department are required to follow the Government's Lowest Practical Fare and Best Fare of the Day travel policies. The Department is able to monitor this through its Travel Management Company.

***Tourism Australia***

Under Tourism Australia's (TA) travel policy, staff are required to purchase the cheapest flight available for the class of travel permitted under the policy.

***Geoscience Australia***

Geoscience Australia (GA) procures its travel under the Whole of Government Travel Arrangements. This is in accordance with the Government's Lowest Practical Fare travel policy for Domestic Air Travel and Best Fare of the Day for International Air Travel. It is monitored through monthly reporting against the requirements of these Finance circulars.

**4. *Department***

The Department provides Qantas and Virgin lounge membership to some employees in limited circumstances. The Department has provided the following number of lounge memberships to employees:

<b>Employment Classification</b>	<b>Number</b>
SES3	0
SES2	0
SES1	5
EL2	8
EL1	10
APS6	1
APS5	1
APS4	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>

A delegate may approve lounge membership for a staff member where it is anticipated that the officer will be undertaking eight or more trips within a twelve month period. The total cost of lounge memberships incurred by the Department as at 30 June 2012 was \$11,460.46.

***Tourism Australia***

As domestic and international travel is a key requirement for relevant TA staff, lounge membership expenses are reimbursed for frequent travellers under TA's travel policy. Lounge membership costs are included in TA's travel costs.

***Geoscience Australia***

Lounge memberships are provided to the following employees at a total cost of \$1,413.63:

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Number of Staff</b>	<b>Cost (GST Exclusive)</b>
CEO	Qantas Chairman's Lounge	Frequent work related travel	1	Complimentary
APS6 – EL2	Qantas Club	Reduction of excess baggage costs for routine field trips	5	\$1413.63
<b>Total</b>			<b>6</b>	<b>\$1413.63</b>

5. ***Department***

When Senior Executive Staff (SES) officers travel on behalf of the Department they do not generally take support or administrative staff with them.

***Tourism Australia***

No support or administrative staff travelled with SES equivalent employees for the 2011-12 financial year.

***Geoscience Australia***

No support or administrative staff (such as an Executive Assistant) travelled with SES employees for the 2011-12 financial year.