

Question on notice no. 109

Portfolio question number: 109

2024-25 Additional estimates

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, Foreign Affairs and Trade Portfolio

Senator Ralph Babet: asked the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on 27 February 2025—

- (1. Can the department please breakdown the cost of producing an Australian Passport. Please break down every individual step and the associated cost that goes into the production of a passport for Australian citizens?
2. How is the fee of \$412 determined for an Australian Passport?
3. Is there any profit margin included in the price of an Australian Passport?
4. It has been reported that Australian passports (\$412) are currently the most expensive in the world* by a significant margin, followed by Mexico (\$353.90) the USA (\$252.72) and New Zealand (\$193.72) . What is it that makes Australian passports so much more expensive than any other passport in the world?
5. What annual revenue do passports generate for the Federal Government?
6. Please provide a breakdown by financial year since 2000, for the following data points:
 - Number of passports issued/renewed
 - Total revenue received by the federal government for passport renewal/issuance
 - Total number of unexpired Australian passports
- * <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-01-01/passport-changes-coming-into-effect-january-increase/104773836>
- Total number of expired Australian passports.
7. Please advise of projected passport revenue for the coming 5 financial years.
8. Please advise what elements of passport production have been outsourced to private companies. Please advise what company/companies are performing these roles and the payment they receive per passport for their services.

Answer —

Please see the attached answer.

QUESTION ON NOTICE/Written

109 – Additional Estimates

Topic: 109 - Passport Services

Senator Ralph Babet

Question:

1. Can the department please breakdown the cost of producing an Australian Passport. Please break down every individual step and the associated cost that goes into the production of a passport for Australian citizens?
2. How is the fee of \$412 determined for an Australian Passport?
3. Is there any profit margin included in the price of an Australian Passport?
4. It has been reported that Australian passports (\$412) are currently the most expensive in the world* by a significant margin, followed by Mexico (\$353.90) the USA (\$252.72) and New Zealand (\$193.72). What is it that makes Australian passports so much more expensive than any other passport in the world?
5. What annual revenue do passports generate for the Federal Government?
6. Please provide a breakdown by financial year since 2000, for the following data points:
 - a. Number of passports issued/renewed
 - b. Total revenue received by the federal government for passport renewal/issuance
 - c. Total number of unexpired Australian passports
- * <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-01-01/passport-changes-coming-into-effect-january-increase/104773836>
- d. Total number of expired Australian passports.
7. Please advise of projected passport revenue for the coming 5 financial years.
8. Please advise what elements of passport production have been outsourced to private companies. Please advise what company/companies are performing these roles and the payment they receive per passport for their services.

Answer:

Answer text

1. The cost of producing an R-Series Australian travel document is \$157. Funding provided to the department captures all elements needed for provision of passport services in Australia and overseas, including but not limited to the production costs.
2. Australian travel document fees are subject to annual indexation on 1 January each year. Indexation is calculated on an average of the consumer price index (CPI) over four quarters compared to the same period from the previous year. This calculation is added to the fee of the previous year. Indexation has applied since 2011.
3. All revenue from Australian travel documents is paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Revenue received is not considered departmental appropriation and is not available for the department to use as operational funding.
4. The department does not undertake comparison studies of the cost of travel documents.

Senate Standing Committees on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Additional Estimates 2024-2025

5. Revenue varies according to the level of demand for travel documents. The revenue for each financial year is recorded in the department's annual reports.
- 6.
- a. Refer to Table A. Data has been provided for 2015–16 to 2023–24. Data for the remaining periods will require a significant amount of departmental resources to obtain.
 - b. Refer to Table A.
 - c. Refer to Table A. Data has been provided for 2016–17 to 2023–24. Data for the remaining periods will require a significant amount of departmental resources to obtain.
 - d. A travel document expires in line with its validity date, when cancelled or reported as lost or stolen. The issuing of a new travel document does not change that expiry. Extracting these data for the requested period would require a significant amount of departmental resources to obtain.

Table A

Financial Year	a. Number of travel document issued / renewed*	b. Total revenue (\$'000)	c. Total number of unexpired Australian travel documents*
2000-01		121,943	
2001-02		114,010	
2002-03		116,400	
2003-04		145,700	
2004-05		170,800	
2005-06		187,000	
2006-07		235,500	
2007-08		272,700	
2008-09		283,900	
2009-10		324,300	
2010-11		341,000	
2011-12		349,100	
2012-13		355,404	
2013-14		367,842	
2014-15		393,564	
2015-16	1,954,039	455,680	
2016-17	2,062,474	492,039	13,864,033
2017-18	2,073,667	522,204	14,234,420
2018-19	2,109,709	542,826	14,597,927
2019-20	1,743,936	449,328	14,614,941
2020-21	603,464	171,410	13,512,755
2021-22	1,488,508	525,830	13,108,114
2022-23	3,129,962	853,905	14,270,893
2023-24	2,569,782	813,573	14,983,459

*Data are at 30 June each year.

Senate Standing Committees on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Additional Estimates 2024-2025

7. Projected revenue by financial year for 2024–25 to 2028–29 is:

Financial Year	Projected Revenue \$'000
2024-25	874,331
2025-26	755,490
2026-27	1,006,228
2027-28	1,031,840
2028-29	1,057,816

8. Australian travel documents are produced by Note Printing Australia..