

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2011-12 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: Cross

Question No: 86

Topic: Credit Cards

Hansard Page: Written

Senator McKenzie asked:

- (a) How many staff in each department and agency have a corporate credit card? What is their classification?
- (b) What action is taken if the corporate credit card is misused?
- (c) How is corporate credit card use monitored?
- (d) What happens if misuse of a corporate credit card is discovered?
- (e) Have any instances of corporate credit card misuse have been discovered? List staff classification and what the misuse was, and the action taken.
- (f) What action is taken to prevent corporate credit card misuse?

Answer:

(a) As at 31 January 2012, FaHCSIA had a total of 964 active credit cards issued to Departmental staff. Credit cards have been issued to staff at most classifications based on business needs not classification level.

(b) Corporate Credit Cards and their usage are periodically subject to Internal and External Audits in addition to the regular monitoring activities described in paragraph (c) below. All reported instances of misuse are reviewed. Following review, corrective action could take the form of repayment; reminding card holders of their obligations; cards being cancelled; and/or prosecution.

(c) Credit card usage is monitored through:

- a two-step monthly verification process;
- random spot checks of card holders' transactions;
- quarterly certificate of compliance reporting;
- regular reviews by Internal Audit; and
- quarterly monitoring using the Department's Computer Assisted Audit Tool (CAAT).

(d) Most misuse occurs by mistake and is generally fixed by the card holder as soon as the mistake is realised. Where doubts are raised, these matters are referred for further investigation by the card holder's Verifying Officer, the Credit Card Administrator or Internal Audit.

(e) In 2010-11, there were 64 instances of inadvertent personal usage involving 54 staff: 12 SES officers, 31 Executive Level Officers and 11 APS staff.

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For the period 1 July 2011 to 31 January 2012, there were 17 instances of inadvertent personal usage involving 16 staff: 5 SES Officers, 7 Executive Level Officers and 4 APS staff. In all cases debt recovery procedures were initiated.

In 2010-11, 3 matters were referred for further investigation and following assessment none of these matters required formal investigation. For the period 1 July 2011 to 31 January 2012, no matters were referred for further investigation.

(f) FaHCSIA's Credit Card Policy for the use of credit cards is promulgated on the FaHCSIA intranet site and clearly defines the approved and disallowed use of credit cards. Staff are required to undertake training on the rules and procedures associated with the use and acquittal of Departmental credit cards prior to being issued with a credit card.

Note relating to portfolio Agencies:

There are an additional 209 credit cards in use in Portfolio Agencies under contractual arrangements entered into by individual Agencies. FaHCSIA does not administer these arrangements, but has been informed that no instance of misuse of any of these cards has been identified.