

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000316

OUTCOME: 0 - Whole of Portfolio

Topic: Sussan Ley travel to USA

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Watt, Murray

Question:

- a) Who was responsible for making travel arrangements, both to and from Australia and internal travel from within the USA when Sussan Ley travelled to the US in February 2016?
- b) What support was provided by DFAT to Ms Ley with respect to this trip?
- c) Who accompanied Ms Ley to the USA in terms of staff – her own staff and/or DFAT officials?
- d) Was Ms Ley accompanied by her partner or any family members? Did DFAT provide support to those family members? What form of support was provided?
- e) How did Ms Ley transit from San Francisco to Houston?
- f) Who did Ms Ley meet with in San Francisco and Houston?
- g) Where did Ms Ley and her accompanying staff stay in San Francisco and Houston?
- h) It is reported that the purpose for this trip was for Ms Ley to attend the MedTech stream of the Australia-US Business Week to generate business. It is now 12 months since the trip. What business has actually been generated by Ms Ley's attendance?
- i) How did it occur that DFAT created duplicate invoices in its system with respect to Sussan Ley's travel?
- j) How often has DFAT experienced administrative errors of this nature?
- k) Once this error was highlighted, what action did DFAT take to ensure that a similar error had not occurred in the past? What action did DFAT take to ensure that a similar error will not occur again in future?
- l) A duplication of the ground transport bill of \$12,143 would have totalled \$24,286, not \$21,271. Further, if a duplication error had occurred, the reported cost of accommodation and meals of \$5,944 should have been \$11,888, not \$11,230 as first reported. How did these discrepancies occur?

Answer:

- a) The Minister's Office is responsible for making travel arrangements for the Minister and accompanying Ministerial staff. The Department of Health is responsible for travel arrangements of its officials.
- b) Please refer this question to the Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).
- c) Two Advisors from the Minister's office; two Department of Health officers; and one officer from the National Health and Medical Research Council. No DFAT staff travelled with the delegation from Australia, however support on the ground was provided by DFAT and Austrade. Further details on support provided on the ground should be referred to DFAT and Austrade.
- d) Minister Ley was not accompanied by her partner or any family members.
- e) Minister Ley travelled to Houston via Los Angeles by aircraft. Minister Ley then travelled by aircraft from Houston to San Francisco.
- f) **San Francisco-** Various meetings with medical officials, medical researchers and officials at the Australia United States Business Week.
Houston- Various meetings with medical officials, medical researchers and officials at the Australia United States Business Week.
- g) **San Francisco** - Grand Hyatt Hotel
Houston - Houston Marriott Medical Center
- h) Please refer this question to Austrade.
- i) Please refer this question to the Department of Finance/DFAT who manage the costs associated with Ministerial trips.
- j) Please refer this question to the Department of Finance/DFAT who manage the costs associated with Ministerial trips.
- k) Please refer this question to the Department of Finance/DFAT who manage the costs associated with Ministerial trips.
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