

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

BUDGET ESTIMATES – 5-6 JUNE 2014 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Meeting Costs

Question reference number: HS 160

Senator: Ludwig

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 25 July 2014

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) What is the department/Agency's meeting spend from Additional Estimates in February 2014 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 Additional Estimates in February 2014 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's spending on meetings is included in the combined hospitality, food and beverage expenditure as per Question on Notice on *Hospitality and Entertainment* (refer HS 153). The combined hospitality food and beverage expenditure from 1 March 2014 to 31 May 2014 was \$238,171. The majority of meetings within the department do not incur catering and drinks costs. Included within this amount is expenditure for the provision of tea, coffee and biscuits for community support services such as Financial Information Service seminars and CRS Australia customer meetings.

To attempt to provide the level of detail sought would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.

- b) This data is not readily available and to attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.

- c) Expenditure on meetings is not able to be separated from other hospitality, food and beverage expenditure. The total hospitality, food and beverage expenditure for the department for the 2013-14 financial year is tracking approximately 25 per cent less than 2012-13. Due to the large amount of information required to provide details for dates, location, purpose and cost of individual events, to attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.
- d) This data is not readily available and to attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.