

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2014-15 Supplementary Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: Cross Outcome - Across Programs

Question No: 150

Topic: Travel costs - department

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

Since Budget Estimates in June, 2014: 1. Is the Minister or their office or their delegate required to approve all departmental and agency international travel?

2. If so, under what policy?

3. Provide a copy of that policy.

4. When was this policy implemented?

5. List all occurrences of travel that this has occurred under.

6. Detail the process.

7. When is the Minister notified, when is approval provided?

8. Detail all travel (domestic and international) 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).

9. 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). Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.

10. What date was the Minister or their office was notified of the travel?

11. What date did the Minister or their office approve the travel?

12. What travel is planned for the rest of this calendar year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.

Answer:

1. No – approval is required by a Cabinet Minister for international travel where total estimated travel costs are between \$20,000 and \$50,000.

2. The policy on approval for international travel is covered in Resource Management Guide No. 405 Official International Travel issued by the Department of Finance.

3. The Resource Management Guide can be accessed [Australian Government Travel Policies Department of Finance](#)

4. The policy took effect from 1 July 2014.

5. For the period 1 June 2014 to 31 August 2014, Ministerial approval was sought for a delegation comprising 2 departmental staff and 3 non-staff to travel to New Zealand.

6. International travel is approved in accordance with the Resource Management Guide – response to question 2 refers.

7. The Minister's approval is sought and approval must be received prior to commencing travel.

8. No Departmental officers accompanied the Minister or Parliamentary Secretary on their travel during the period 1 June 2014 to 31 August 2014.

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9. For the period 1 June 2014 to 31 August 2014, Departmental expenditure on travel was \$2,060,391 (GST Exclusive):

	Airfares	Accommodation	Travelling Allowance	Other	Total
Department of Social Services	\$1,000,078	\$496,643	\$498,006	\$13,191	\$2,007,918
Social Security Appeals Tribunal	\$25,384	\$13,237	\$9,160	\$4,692	\$52,473
Total	\$1,025,462	\$509,880	\$507,166	\$17,883	\$2,060,391

Travel is undertaken where business objectives require it.

For the same period in 2013, expenditure on travel was \$4,269,059 (GST Exclusive) as detailed below:

	Airfares	Accommodation	Travelling Allowance	Other	Total
Department of Social Services	\$2,184,643	\$1,092,175	\$887,148	\$34,759	\$4,198,725
Social Security Appeals Tribunal	\$42,921	\$10,871	\$16,335	\$207	\$70,334
Total	\$2,227,564	\$1,103,046	\$903,483	\$34,966	\$4,269,059

Note: the above data is prior to Administrative Arrangements Order changes.

10. Refer to response to question 7.
11. Refer to response to question 7.
12. Travel for the rest of the calendar year is subject to business requirements.