

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Budget Estimates Hearings May 2014

Communications Portfolio

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Question No: 75

Program No. Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Hansard Ref: In writing

Topic: ABC Board

Senator Ludwig asked:

Since 25 February 2014:

1. How often has each board met, break down by board name;
2. What travel expenses are provided;
3. What is the average attendance at board meetings;
4. How does the board deal with conflict of interest;
5. What conflicts of interest have been registered;
6. What remuneration is provided to board members;
7. How does the board dismiss board members who do not meet attendance standards?
8. Have any requests been made to ministers to dismiss board members since 25 February 2014?
9. Please list board members who have attended less than 51% of meetings
10. What have catering costs been for the board meetings held this year; is alcohol served.

Answer:

The following answer relates to the period 25 February to 28 May 2014:

1. The ABC Board met on one occasion – 3 April 2014.
2. The ABC pays for the travel costs associated with each Director's attendance at an ABC Board meeting, being flights and accommodation (for Directors travelling from interstate) and taxis. Travel Allowance is paid in accordance with the *Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2004/03, Official Travel by Office Holders*.
3. There is full attendance at the majority of Board meetings. Details of attendance at Board meetings is reported in full in the ABC Annual Report.
4. The ABC Board has adopted a Board Protocol, which sets out Directors' rights and responsibilities including dealing with conflicts of interest. The ABC Board Protocol is publicly available on the ABC's website. Directors are expected to meet their statutory obligation to disclose any material personal interest in accordance with s27F of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*.
5. A register of Declarations of Interests is maintained. No interests were declared or registered between 25 February and 28 May 2014.

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6. Remuneration for ABC Board Directors is set by the Remuneration Tribunal. The rate for a Director as at 28 May 2014 was \$54,180 per annum. The rate for the Chairman as at 28 May 2014 was \$164,600.
7. A persistent failure by a Director to attend Board meetings would be managed by the Board on a case-by-case basis. Section 18 of the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983* provides for removal of a Director from office by the Governor-General if a Director is absent from three consecutive meetings of the Board (without the leave of the Chairman or acting Chairman).
8. No.
9. None.
10. \$1 537. No alcohol was served.