

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 222

Outcome: Organisational effectiveness: Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our department

Programme: Corporate Strategies Division

Topic: Portfolio wide – Meeting Costs

Hansard Page: N/A

Question Date: 26 May 2014

Question Type: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

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 and the majority of Agencies do not track meeting expenditure separately so this information is not readily available. To determine the amount spent on meetings would require a manual review of individual invoices which would be a substantial and unreasonable diversion of resources for the Department and Agencies.

The National Water Commission spent \$2,168.00 (GST inclusive) on meeting costs from 1 February to 30 April 2014. Details of date, location, purpose and cost of all events are listed below.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
20 March 2014	Brisbane, QLD	Urban Water advisory panel meeting	\$219.00
1 April 2014	Brisbane, QLD	Video conference services associated with Directors-General Roundtable meeting with Commissioners on Triennial Assessment	\$1,260.00
1 April 2014	Canberra, ACT	Directors-General Roundtable meeting with Commissioners on Triennial Assessment	\$224.00

2 April 2014	Canberra, ACT	Commissioner's meeting	\$259.00
3 April 2014	Canberra, ACT	Partnership Working Group Meeting	\$206.00

The Climate Change Authority (CCA) spent \$279.40 (GST inclusive) on meeting costs from 1 February to 30 April 2014. Details of date, location, purpose and cost of all events are listed below.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
11 February 2014	Climate Change Authority	Business catering for Authority meeting/event	\$279.40

- b) The Department did not meet the cost of meetings for the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary in relation to their portfolio responsibilities during the period from 1 February to 30 April 2014.

Details of expenditure on entitlements is compiled every six months in a report titled Parliamentarians' Expenditure on Entitlements paid by the Department of Finance. The reports and supporting information are published on the Finance website.

While Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries may attend meetings in relation to their portfolio responsibilities, the Department does not track meeting expenditure separately so this information is not available.

- c) The Department and the majority of Agencies do not track planned meeting expenditure within their budgetary and finance systems therefore this information is not available.

Planned meeting expenditure from 1 May 2014 onwards for the CCA is for up to \$300.00 for catering for each monthly CCA Board meeting.

Planned meeting expenditure from 1 May 2014 onwards for the National Water Commission is set out in the table below:

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
8 May 2014	Canberra, ACT	NWC Stakeholder Reference Group meeting	\$350.00
5 June 2014	Canberra, ACT	Commissioner's Meeting	\$250.00

- d) See answer to question b) above.