

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings November 2014
Communications Portfolio
Special Broadcasting Service

Question No: 501

Program No. Special Broadcasting Service

Hansard Ref: Hansard In writing

Topic: Boards (for Departments or agencies with Boards)

Senator Ludwig asked:

Since Budget Estimates in June, 2014 for each board in the portfolio or agencies:

1. How often has each board met, break down by board name;
2. What travel expenses have been incurred;
3. What has been the average attendance at board meetings;
4. List each member's attendance at meetings;
5. How does the board deal with conflict of interest;
6. What conflicts of interest have been registered;
7. What remuneration has been provided to board members;
8. How does the board dismiss board members who do not meet attendance standards?
9. Have any requests been made to ministers to dismiss board members?
10. Please list board members who have attended less than 51% of meetings
11. What have been the catering costs for the board meetings held during this period? Please break down the cost list.

Answers

1. The Board has met 3 times since 1 May 2014: June 12, August 22 and October 30.
2. Travel expenses are provided as per the *Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2013/16 – Official Travel by Office Holders*.
3. October 30 100% (New elected Chairman's Nihal Gupta's first board meeting and newly elected Board member Mr Peeyush Gupta's also first board meeting), August 22 100%, June 100%
4. All Board members had 100% attendance for the Board meetings.
5. Conflicts are to be declared to the Board at the beginning of a Board meeting or as soon as a conflict has arisen or becomes apparent to the person.
6. Nil.

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7. Remuneration is provided as per the *Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2013/03 – Remuneration and Allowances for Holders of Part-Time Public Office*.

8. The *Special Broadcasting Service Act 1991* (s.27) sets out the terms for removal of Board members:

S.27 Removal of non-executive Directors from office

- (1) The Governor-General may remove a non-executive Director from office for misbehaviour or physical or mental incapacity.
- (2) If:
 - (a) the Chairperson, or a non-executive Director acting as Chairperson, is absent, except with the leave of the Minister or the Board, from 3 consecutive meetings of the Board; or
 - (b) a non-executive Director (other than the Chairperson or a Director acting as Chairperson) is absent, except with the leave of the Chairperson, from 3 consecutive meetings of the Board; or
 - (c) a non-executive Director:
 - (i) becomes bankrupt, applies to take the benefit of any law for the relief of bankrupt or insolvent debtors, compounds with his or her creditors or makes an assignment of his or her remuneration for their benefit; or
 - (ii) fails, without reasonable excuse, to comply with section 27F or 27J of the Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997;the Governor-General may remove the non-executive Director concerned from office.
- (3) If:
 - (a) the Minister is of the opinion that the performance of the Board or the SBS has been unsatisfactory for a significant period of time; and
 - (b) the Minister proposes that the appointment of all non-executive Directors, or specified non-executive Directors, be terminated; the Governor-General must terminate the appointment of all non-executive Directors or the specified non-executive Directors, as the case may be.
- (4) If:
 - (a) the Minister is of the opinion that the performance of a particular non-executive Director has been unsatisfactory for a significant period of time; and
 - (b) the Minister proposes that the appointment of the non-executive Director be terminated;the Governor-General must terminate the appointment of the non-executive Director.

9. No

10. No Board Members attended less than 51% of meetings.

11. October 30: \$554.30 – sandwiches and pastries. No alcohol is served.

August 22: \$439, sandwiches and Fruit salad. \$105.00 drinks. No alcohol is served.

June 12: \$394.00 Chicken skewers and water \$63.20 coffees. No alcohol is served.