

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates 2012

30 May 2012

QUESTION: BET 19

Topic: Australian Valuation Office – video conferencing (ATO)

Hansard Page: 123

Senator BUSHBY asked:

**Senator BUSHBY:** I am aware that the ATO has extensive video conferencing facilities. Has any thought been put to using video conferencing to try to achieve some of the aims that you are talking about? Can you at least offset part of that by using the video conferencing?

**Mr King:** We have considered a number of options. I think the main issue we have is that there are workshops and extensive periods where we have the groups working together. This is very difficult to do with video conferences. When we have an environment where we are, I suppose, in a think tank arrangement, it is better to have the groups together. That is what we have found in the past. We have used video conferencing. They have been on primarily one-hour blocks. That is not sufficient for the work that we wish to achieve with the senior leadership group meetings.

**Ms Granger:** I will add to that answer. We are making a concerted effort both to improve our video conference facilities and use them as much as we can. In fact, we have a graph that I would be happy to put in on notice that shows the increase in video conferencing—

**Senator BUSHBY:** I would be very interested in that.

**Ms Granger:** and reduction in air travel and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as a result. It is about a 10 per cent reduction in travel compared to last year. It is difficult because, as I said, video conferences only work for a certain period. But we are absolutely exploring that as much as possible as a way to conduct our business.

Answer:

The graph below shows the increase in the ATO's video conference usage and the decrease in ATO air travel.

