

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates

29 May – 31 May 2012

Question: BET 988-992

Topic: Travel Costs (ASIC)

Hansard Page: Written (Received from Committee - 13 June 2012)

Senator BUSHBY asked:

988. For the financial year to date, please detail all travel 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).
989. For the financial year to date, please 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).
990. Are the Government's Lowest Practical Fare travel policy for Domestic Air Travel (Finance Circular No. 2009/10) and Best Fare of the Day for International Air Travel (Finance Circular No. 2009/11) guidelines being followed?
How is this monitored?
If the guidelines are not being followed, please explain why.
991. Are lounge memberships provided to any employees?
If yes, what lounge memberships, to how many employees and their classification, the reason for the provision of lounge membership and the total costs of the lounge memberships.
992. When SES employees travel, do any support or administrative staff (such as an Executive Assistant) travel with them?
If yes, provide details of why such a staff member is needed and the costs of the support staff travel.

Answer:

988. From 1 July 2011 until 31 May 2012, ASIC officers have not accompanied the Minister or Parliamentary Secretary on their travel.
989. Travel expenses incurred by ASIC in the financial year to 31 May 2012 are detailed below:

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	\$ excl GST
Domestic Airfares	1,320,846.87
Domestic Accommodation	738,892.00
Domestic Railfares & cab fares	538,716.57
Domestic Travel Allowance	295,733.16
Overseas Fares	283,116.89
Overseas Accommodation	48,476.35
Overseas Travel Allowance	31,712.91
Overseas Railfares & cab fares	2,117.05
Overseas Travel Expenses (Other Incidentals)	4,724.84
Total domestic and overseas related travel expenses	3,264,336.64

In relation to domestic travel, ASIC does not track expenditure against classes of flights; however, the travel policy outlines that all staff must travel Economy class for domestic travel with the exception of:

- Commissioners who are entitled to fly business class; and
- Senior Executive Leaders who are entitled to fly business class on flights where the flight duration is greater than 2 hours.

For travel outside Australia, ASIC does not track expenditure against classes of flights; however, the staff are entitled to travel business class for international travel, with the exception of Commission members who are entitled to fly first class. However, while Commissioners are entitled to first class travel as per the Remuneration Tribunal Determinations, they are no longer flying first class except in exceptional circumstances and on medical advice.

ASIC employees required to travel on official business are paid a travel allowance unless meals are provided (for example, breakfast included as part of the accommodation cost). ASIC does not record travel related food, beverage and entertainment costs in a way that would readily allow answers to be provided to these questions. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.

990. The Government's Lowest Practical Fare travel policy for Domestic Air Travel (Finance Circular No. 2009/10) and Best Fare of the Day for International Air Travel (Finance Circular No. 2009/11) guidelines are being followed by ASIC staff. This is monitored via monthly reporting provided to SES officers by ASIC's travel management provider.
991. ASIC's policy states that only SES level or SES equivalent staff are entitled to lounge memberships. The cost of these memberships are not recorded in a manner that enables us to respond fully to this question.

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992. When SES travel, administrative or support staff do not travel with them unless there is an extraordinary business requirement.