AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY

TOPIC: Travel costs - department

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Ludwig

QUESTION No.: SI-193

Since Budget Estimates in June, 2014:

1. Is the minister or their office or their delegate required to approve all departmental and agency international travel?
2. If so, under what policy?
3. Provide a copy of that policy.
4. When was this policy implemented?
5. List all occurrences of travel that this has occurred under.
6. Detail the process.
7. When is the minister notified, when is approved provided?
8. Detail all travel (domestic and international) 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).
9. 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). Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
10. What date was the minister or their office was notified of the travel?
11. What date did the minister or their office approve the travel?
12. What travel is planned for the rest of this calendar year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.

ANSWER

1. The Minister approves international travel, either individually or for a delegation or group activity where the total estimated costs is more than $20,000 and less than $50,000. The Minister consults with the Prime Minister for any travel $50,000 or more prior to approving the travel.


4. The Whole of Government Official International Travel - Approval and Use of the Best Fare of the Day policy was updated to reflect these changes on 16 December 2013. The current policy, Department of Finance’s Resource Management Guide No. 405, Official International Travel – Approval and Use of the Best Fare of the Day was implemented in July 2014.
List all occurrences of travel | Process involved | Date the Minister was notified | Date approved by the Minister
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Anti-Dumping Commission investigation into stainless steel sinks imported from China | For any international travel estimated to exceed $20,000, following Accountable Authority approval, Ministerial approval is then sought. | 15 July 2014 | 18 July 2014
Anti-Dumping Commission investigation into newsprint exported from France and Korea | For any international travel estimated to exceed $20,000, following Accountable Authority approval, Ministerial approval is then sought | 2 September 2014 | 4 September 2014
Meeting to discuss potential future G20 work on gas | For any international travel estimated to exceed $20,000, following Accountable Authority approval, Ministerial approval is then sought | 10 October 2014 | 16 October 2014
LNG Producers Consumers Conference including bilateral meetings and site visits | For any international travel estimated to exceed $20,000, following Accountable Authority approval, Ministerial approval is then sought | 17 October 2014 | 21 October 2014

8. Domestic travel by departmental officials accompanying the Minister and/or Parliamentary Secretary is not recorded separately from general domestic travel and the provision of the breakdown of this information would be an unreasonable diversion of resources. No departmental officials accompanied the Minister and/or Parliamentary Secretary on international travel between 1 July 2014 and 31 October 2014.
9. Domestic and international travel by departmental officials is undertaken to meet business requirements. A breakdown of costs is provided below for the period 1 July 2014 to 31 October 2014. *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Domestic $ (GST exclusive)</th>
<th>Overseas $ (GST exclusive)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airfares</td>
<td>1,210,741</td>
<td>400,039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation, Meals and Incidentals</td>
<td>1,096,413</td>
<td>206,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Expenses (inc taxis)</td>
<td>971,221</td>
<td>17,430</td>
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*To provide further breakdown would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

10 and 11. The Minister is only responsible for approving international travel. Refer to responses for questions 5, 6 and 7.

12 Future travel is dependent on business requirements and business areas operating budgets. Travel by departmental officials is undertaken to meet business requirements while ensuring the effective, efficient, ethical and economical use of resources.