

**Senate Committee: Education and Employment**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE  
Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016**

**Outcome: Cross Portfolio - Shared Services Centre**

**Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ16-000242**

Senator Ludwig, Joe provided in writing

*Also refer to previous hearing Question No. ED0503\_15*

***Travel costs - department***

**Question**

Since the change of Prime Minister on 14 September, 2015:

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. When is the minister notified, when is approval provided?
6. 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).
7. 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.
8. What date was the minister or their office notified of the travel?
9. What date did the minister or their office approve the travel?
10. What travel is planned for the rest of this calendar year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.

**Answer**

- 1-4. The minister is required to approve departmental international travel where the estimated cost exceeds \$20 000. This is accordance with the department's Secretary's Instructions, current as of 29 February 2016. The instruction was implemented on 1 July 2014. Please see Attachment A for Secretary Instruction 3.3 Official travel.
5. There have been no instances of international travel requiring Ministerial approval in the period 14 September 2015 to 31 January 2016.
6. The department does not record travel data in a way that would readily allow answers to be provided for this question.

7. For the period 14 September 2015 to 31 January 2016, the Department of Education and Training spent \$1,637,988.84 on travel expenses. The breakdown of the expenses is:
- \$660,525.88 for domestic airfares and \$339,110.46 for international airfares
  - \$339,005.55 for accommodation
  - \$299,346.95 on other costs.
- 8-9. There was no travel that required notification to or approval from the Minister or their office.
10. The department does not specifically budget or plan for individual travel. Travel is one cost of the department's business of national policy leadership and programme administration and is undertaken for a range of purposes.