

**Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

**Cross Portfolio**

**Department of Education Question No. ED0535\_15**

**Senator Ludwig provided in writing.**

**Question**

**Dept & All Agencies: Taxi costs**

Since Budget Estimates in June, 2014: 1. How much did each department/agency spend on taxis during the specified period? Provide a breakdown for each business group in each department/agency. 2. What are the reasons for taxi costs? 3. How much did the department spend on taxis during the specified period for their minister or minister's office?

**Answer**

**Department**

1. For the period 1 July to 31 October 2014, the Department of Education<sup>1</sup> spent \$105 711.52 on taxi costs. A breakdown by each business group is not readily available and would require an unreasonable diversion of resources to generate.
2. Taxis are used where they provide the most cost-effective transport option to deliver the outcomes of the department, including where staff are interstate on business.
3. For the period 1 July to 31 October 2014, the Department of Education incurred no expenditure on taxis for the Minister or the Minister's office.

**Agency Responses**

**Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)**

ACARA spent \$17 615 on taxi costs. Taxis are used to enable staff and contractors (mostly curriculum writers and advisors, but also assessment experts) to attend meetings regarding ACARA business.

**Australian Research Council (ARC)**

The ARC uses one account code only for taxis, car rental, hire cars and parking and cannot disaggregate this information without a significant diversion of entity resources. The total year to date spend for these items is \$25 112. The ARC uses taxis for transfers to and from airports and meeting venues as part of its ordinary course of business

**Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)**

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<sup>1</sup> The Shared Services Centre provides services to the Department of Education and the Department of Employment. The value of relevant costs associated with these functions has been included in the response of both departments.

TEQSA spent \$8 373 on taxis. The taxi costs are for business related travel such as attending meetings with stakeholders, staff training and site visits to providers as part of the regulatory processes.

**Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)**

AITSL spent \$21 766.62 on taxis. Taxis are used by AITSL staff to travel to and from work related meetings where other modes of transport are not practicable

**Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)**

AIATSIS spent \$13 812.20 on cab charge transactions only (does not include taxis paid on credit cards). Taxis are used where appropriate for travel by staff, Council and other committee members and AIATSIS stakeholders to meetings and events where AIATSIS is responsible for the cost of their travel for AIATSIS business.