

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

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

Agency – Fair Work Commission

Department of Employment Question No. EM1388_15

Senator Ludwig provided in writing.

Question

FWC - Travel costs - department

Since Budget Estimates in June, 2014:

1. 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, 2, 3 and 4. In accordance with Resource Management Guide no. 405, issued by the Department of Finance in July 2014, the Minister is required to approve departmental international travel where the estimated cost is between \$20,000 and \$50,000. The Resource Management Guide is available from the Department of Finance. The date of effect of the policy was 16 December 2013, via Finance Circular 2013/06 (which was replaced by Resource Management Guide 405).

5, 6 and 7. There have been no instances of international travel requiring the Minister's approval in the period 1 July to 31 October 2014. For travel requiring ministerial approval, a request for approval for international travel is submitted through the Fair Work Commission General Manager to the Minister.

8. Not applicable.

9. For the period 1 July to 31 October 2014, the cost of travel has been \$382,836. The breakdown of expenses is: \$253,155 for airfares and \$129,681 on travel allowance. To provide the requested level of detail would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.

10 and 11. See response to part 5.

12. No further international travel is planned for the remainder of the calendar year. Domestic travel will be determined by operational needs.