

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: Outcome 1: Prime Minister and Cabinet
Topic: Reform of the Federation White Paper

Senator: Bilyk, Catryna

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Type of question: Written

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Number of pages: 3

Question:

1. How many times has each member of the Prime Minister's Expert Advisory Panel on Reform of the Federation claimed a daily sitting fee?
2. What is the total amount that has been paid to the Prime Minister's Expert Advisory Panel on Reform of the Federation for daily sitting fees from inception to date?
3. What is the total cost of flights paid for by the Department in relation to travel by members of the Prime Minister's Expert Advisory Panel on Reform of the Federation from inception to date?
4. What are the total accommodation costs met by the Department for members of the Prime Minister's Expert Advisory Panel on Reform of the Federation from inception to date?
5. What is the total cost of meals and incidentals paid for by the Department in relation to members of the Prime Minister's Expert Advisory Panel on Reform of the Federation from inception to date?
6. What is the total cost to the Department of ground transport for the members of the Prime Minister's Expert Advisory Panel on Reform of the Federation from inception to date?
7. What administrative and policy work etc has the Department performed in relation to the Reform of the Federation White Paper? Is there a Secretariat established in the Department to support this work, or some other departmental workgroup? If so, can you please advise the number of staff and the APS level at which they are employed (eg APS6, EL1)?
8. What is the total cost of flights paid for by the Department for travel by public servants in relation to the Reform of the Federation White Paper to date?
9. What are the total accommodation costs met by the Department for public servants

working on the Reform of the Federation White Paper to date?

10. What is the total cost of meals and incidentals paid for by the Department for public servants working on the Reform of the Federation White Paper to date?

11. What is the total cost to the Department of ground transport for public servants working on the reform of the Federation White Paper to date?

12. Can you please advise what other costs have been incurred in relation to work on the Reform of the Federation White Paper?

Answer:

1. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) records all fees paid to Panel members. However, as members are paid a per hour rate for shorter meetings, without an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources, it is not possible to disaggregate how many times the full 'daily sitting fee' has been claimed.
2. Between October 2014 and 29 February 2016, the PM&C has paid \$143,000.00 in sitting fees for Panel members.
- 3, 4, 8 & 9. PM&C records the total cost associated with travel by Taskforce officials and Panel members. Without an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources, it is not possible to disaggregate between airfares and accommodation costs, or between costs incurred by Taskforce officials and Panel members. Between January 2014 and 29 February 2016, \$204,574.00 has been paid by PM&C for travel and accommodation by Taskforce officials and Panel members.
5. Between October 2014 and 29 February 2016, PM&C has paid \$3,652.00 in allowances (meals and incidentals) to Panel members.
- 6 & 11 Between January 2014 and 29 February 2016, PM&C has paid \$24,733.00 for taxi, COMCAR, and parking costs incurred by Taskforce officials and Panel members. Without an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources it is not possible to disaggregate between costs incurred by Taskforce officials and Panel members.
7. The Reform of the Federation White Paper Taskforce in PM&C provides policy advice and support to the Government. During this process, the Taskforce has led work on the development of policy advice; worked closely with officials from across the Commonwealth; and worked with the states and territories through the Federation White Paper Steering Committee (established by COAG following its 2 May 2014 meeting, to oversee the development of the Federation White Paper).

The Taskforce provides secretariat support to the Prime Minister's Expert Advisory Panel on Reform of the Federation.

As at 29 February 2016, there were 11 staff in the Taskforce, including one secondee from the Department of Human Services (DHS) and one secondee from The Treasury. The breakdown of staff is as follows:

- One official at the APS 5 level;

- Four officials at the EL1 level (including one secondee from DHS);
- Three officials at the EL2 level;
- Two officials at the SES B1 (including one secondee from The Treasury); and
- One official at the SES B2 level.

10. Between January 2014 and 29 February 2016, PM&C has paid \$10,133.00 in allowances (meals and incidentals) to Taskforce officials.

12. Between January 2014 and 29 February 2016, PM&C has expended \$4,315,348.00 as part of the Reform of the Federation process. This includes costs for staffing, travel, the Expert Advisory Panel, and other expenses (such as administrative costs).