

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
Additional Estimates – February 2016
ANSWER TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio

Department/Agency: Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General

Program 1: Support for the Governor-General and Official Activities

Outcome 1: The performance of the Governor-General's role is facilitated through the organisation and management of official duties, management and maintenance of the official household and property and administration of the Australian Honours and Awards system.

Topic: Trip to UK

Senator: Wong

Question reference number: 276

Type of Question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 1 April 2016

Number of Pages: 2

With reference to the Governor-General's visit to the UK in October last year to meet with the Queen and attend the World Rugby Cup, paid for privately by the Governor General as patron of the Australian Rugby Union.

Did he privately cover all accommodation and associated costs.

Did any staff accompany the Governor-General. If so, how were their costs met.

Was any accommodation, flights or hospitality provided without charge to the Governor-General during this trip. If so, by which organisations.

Were there any other official engagements other than those mentioned in his Program that he undertook in his capacity as Governor-General while in the UK.

Answer:

The Governor-General travelled to the United Kingdom using his own private resources.

A total of GBP 333.28 (249 for accommodation and 84.28 for meals) was paid by the Office relating to this visit, covering one nights' accommodation and meals at a Heathrow Airport hotel following official duties as Governor-General on 31 October 2015. The Governor-General stayed privately during the balance of the visit.

No staff from the Office accompanied Their Excellencies.

The Governor-General undertook private travel on this occasion, notwithstanding that he participated in a number of official duties whilst abroad. No organisation provided free flights, accommodation or sponsorship. The Governor-General utilised one of his post-retirement Qantas Board Director airfare entitlements. Some food and beverages were provided during the Rugby World Cup matches to which the Governor-General was invited as Patron of Australian Rugby Union.

Their Excellencies attended a number of other events whilst in the UK, including a courtesy call with the High Commissioner and afternoon tea with High Commission staff; a reception for Australian Rugby; an Australian Rugby finals dinner; attendance at the semi-finals World Cup match; and a media opportunity regarding the World Cup. The Australian High Commission provided some transport assistance to/from official engagements, such as the call on Her Majesty The Queen and attendance at Australia's Rugby World Cup matches.