

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2015-16

Finance Portfolio
27-28 May 2015

Department/Agency: Department of Finance

Outcome/Program: 2/2.2

Topic: Telepresence – cost to date

Senator: Ludwig

Question reference number: F51

Type of question: Hansard, F&PA Committee, Page 56, 28 May 2015

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 10 July 2015

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Mr Sheridan: We have done phase 2, but we have the ability—essentially as part of business as usual—to grow the network more as is required.

Senator LUDWIG: What is the cost to date? I am happy for you to take that on notice.

Mr Sheridan: I would need to take that on notice. I do not have a figure up to date.

Senator LUDWIG: Do you keep statistics on the rate of usage?

Mr Sheridan: We do.

Senator LUDWIG: Do you have graphs that demonstrate that or can you make those available to the committee?

Mr Sheridan: I can provide the number of meetings conducted, the amount of travel that essentially has been substituted for—

Senator LUDWIG: I was going to come to that.

Mr Sheridan: I have those statistics, so we can provide them.

Senator LUDWIG: I note that on the Finance portfolio budget statement, on page 40, it states that usage should increase 10 per cent annually. Do you have a graph or a table that shows—

Mr Sheridan: I can provide that. We are certainly meeting that requirement.

...

Senator LUDWIG: And the personal videoconferencing units—they were the phase 2 rollout, were they?

Mr Sheridan: That is right.

Senator LUDWIG: Is there a discrete cost for those?

Mr Sheridan: You mean in terms of project—

Senator LUDWIG: Yes, so phase 1, phase 2.

Mr Sheridan: Yes. We have two different project costs. I can provide that detail as well if you would like it.

Answer:

Phase 1, construction of dedicated facilities for the National Telepresence System was completed at a total cost of \$18.4M including a contribution by the States and Territories totalling \$4.6M. The system costs \$2.14M per annum to operate and maintain including a \$0.75M contribution by States and Territories.

Phase 2, addition of up to 150 additional personal video conference units for the National Telepresence was constructed at a cost of \$3.1M and costs \$3.0M per annum to operate and maintain.

From October 2009 to April 2015, the National Telepresence System has hosted more than 10,330 meetings and desktop video conferences and has avoided over \$97.5 million in travel and related costs.

Call volumes for the National Telepresence System since 2013 are shown in the table below. Calls under phase 1 involve the use of dedicated room based facilities. Calls under phase 2 represent a conference initiated from a unique personal Telepresence unit.

Quarter (Calendar Year)	NTS Phase 1 Meetings	NTS Phase 2 Personal Videoconferencing Calls
Q1 2013	319	0
Q2 2013	397	0
Q3 2013	266	0
Q4 2013	241	0
Q1 2014	181	0
Q2 2014	202	0
Q3 2014	221	1746
Q4 2014	224	1803
Q1 2015	319	2048

The National Telepresence System phase 2 commenced operation in July 2014.