

Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Department of the Senate

Supplementary Budget Estimates

18 – 21 November 2013

Question: 34

Topic: Travel costs

Written: 26 November 2013

Senator LUDWIG asked:

1. For the financial year to date, please detail all travel 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).
2. For the financial year to date, please 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.
3. What travel is planned for the rest of the financial year from 7 September 2013? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
4. What travel is planned for the rest of this calendar year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
5. What is the policy for business class airfare tickets?
6. Are lounge memberships provided to any employees? If yes, what lounge memberships, to how many employees and their classification, the reason for the provision of lounge membership and the total costs of the lounge memberships.
7. When SES employees travel, do any support or administrative staff (such as an Executive Assistant) travel with them? If yes, provide details of why such a staff member is needed and the costs of the support staff travel.
8. Does the department/agency elect to offset emissions for employees work related travel? If yes, what is the cost?

Answer:

As a parliamentary department, the department does not report to a Minister.

Travel expenditure details are tabled annually in the Senate. Details for 2012-13 were tabled on 14 November 2013.

The department has spent \$62,761 on travel since 1 July 2013. The majority of the department's travel relates to the support of Senate Committees and support to Parliamentary delegations.

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Commercial Air Fares	\$	39,831
Charter Flights	\$	4,690
Car Hire/Taxis	\$	8,743
Accommodation/Meals	\$	7,828
Incidental Travel Expenses	\$	577
Other travel expenses	\$	1,092
Total	\$	62,761

Departmental employees are entitled to travel business class within Australia if the actual continuous flight time (excluding connecting flights) is in excess of three hours, and the employee is expected to perform duty immediately following the completion of the flight.

An employee required to travel overseas on official business will be entitled to business class travel. Where business class travel is not offered, the employee will travel economy class.

Lounge memberships are not provided to any departmental employees by the department. However, in line with the department enterprise agreement employees are paid a taxable Health and Wellbeing subsidy in August each year, to assist with costs associated with, but not limited to: influenza vaccinations; corrective lenses for screen-based equipment; health and fitness activities; professional memberships or subscriptions; and airline lounge memberships.

No support or administrative staff accompany SES employees on their travel.

The whole of Australian Government travel arrangements, under which the department makes its bookings, does not include a component for the purchase of Carbon Offsets / Carbon Credits when purchasing flights.