

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 2013-2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Australian National Audit Office

Outcome/Program:

Topic: Public Service Efficiencies

Senator: Ludwig

Question reference number: 176

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 17 January 2014

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- 1) Has there been a reduction in business flights? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
- 2) Has there been a reduction in the use of external consultants and contractors? Has this impacted on the Department/agency, and how? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
- 3) Provide an update of moving recruitment advertising online. Is any recruitment still in printed materials, and if yes, why? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
- 4) Has the department/agency reduced its printing costs? If no, why not? Have printing costs increased, and if yes why and how much? Has the five per cent savings target been achieved – if yes, how, or if it will not, why not? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?

Answer:

Q1. The ANAO's internal travel policy requires the delegate to be satisfied that there is demonstrated business need for travel. Air travel is only undertaken where other communication tools are ineffective. The majority of business flights is undertaken to deliver our audit program including attendance at client audit committee meetings. It is not possible to estimate the extent of savings over the forward estimates as the requirement for travel has to be considered in the context of each audit.

Q2. The ANAO continues to actively monitor and limit the use of consultants and contractors where practicable, noting that a substantial portion relates to contract audit arrangements to assist with workload peaks and the need for specific audit skills. Contract audit arrangements are reviewed prior to contract expiration to identify whether internal capacity and appropriate skills are available to undertake future audits using existing ANAO resources. While it is not

possible to estimate the extent of savings over the forward estimates of these initiatives, the ANAO expects to contain contract expenditure at levels similar to the previous financial year.

Q3. All recruitment advertising has been placed through the Media Placement Agency (Adcorp) in line with the Department of Finance and Deregulation's Guidelines on Non-Campaign recruitment advertising. The majority of recruitment advertising is placed online and is not supplemented with print media. The ANAO will continue to utilise print advertising where there is a demonstrated need, such as advertising in specialist media to attract Indigenous applicants.

Q4. During the 2011-12 financial year the ANAO used competitive tendering processes to establish more favourable rates under a printing contract. This contributed to the ANAO reducing printing costs from \$0.77 million in 2011-12 to \$0.61 million in 2012-13, and will continue to assist the ANAO in achieving savings targets over the forward estimates. The ANAO is also undertaking measures to assess the quantitative demand for our publications to reduce excess printing. We are further actively adopting electronic distribution methods where possible while maintaining the accessibility of ANAO reports for key constituents. At this stage, it is not possible to estimate savings until the extent of online distribution is known.