

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
Supplementary Budget Estimates – October 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: Functions

Senator: Bilyk

Question reference number: 129

Type of Question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 2 December 2016

Number of Pages: 3

In relation to any functions or official receptions hosted by His Excellency the Governor-General since 1 January 2016, can the following please be provided:

1. List of functions;
2. List of attendees;
3. Function venue;
4. Itemised list of costs;
5. Details of any food served;
6. Details of any wines or champagnes served including brand and vintage;
7. Details of any floral arrangements or other decorations; and
8. Details of any entertainment provided.

Answer:

1) The Governor-General and Lady Cosgrove have hosted 82 official functions between 1 January 2016 and 31 October 2016. The details of each function are listed on the Governor-General's website at www.gg.gov.au.

Each year, around 40,000 guests visit Government House and Admiralty House. Guests include visiting Heads of State, foreign officials, community leaders, representatives of the many organisations of which the Governor-General and Lady Cosgrove are Patrons, school students and members of the public during scheduled Open Days.

The format of hospitality offered by the Governor-General varies depending on the nature of the event. One of the overriding considerations in planning is to ensure that the arrangements for a function best meet the business and operational needs with the most efficient and effective use of resources.

2) It would be an unreasonable diversion of resources to list the names of the 5,740 attendees at official functions, but names for guests at lunches and dinners are listed on the Governor-General's website at www.gg.gov.au.

3) The official functions were hosted at either Government House, Canberra or Admiralty House, Sydney.

4) The Office does not generally record details of the cost of hospitality on a function-by-function basis, and it would be an unreasonable diversion of resources to collate such. However, the table below provides an estimate of the food and beverage costs, per function type, for functions hosted by the Governor-General at Government House and Admiralty House, based on an average cost per head for each function type.

1 January 2016 – 31 October 2016

Function type	Number of functions	Number of guests	Average estimated cost per head	Estimated total cost per function type (based on average cost per head)
Breakfasts	2	4	\$8.50	\$34.00
Lunches	21	432	\$45.00	\$19,440.00
Dinners	13	224	\$59.50	\$13,328.00
Receptions	39	4,197	\$29.50	\$123,811.50
Investitures	7	883	\$28.00	\$24,724.00
Ceremonies	0	0	\$22.50	\$0.00
School Visits	356	18,905	Not applicable	Not applicable
Open days and Other Groups	12	8,760	Not applicable	Not applicable
Total	450	33,401		\$181,337.50

5) The Office does not maintain records of food served on a function-by-function basis.

6) It would be an unreasonable diversion of resources to list the details of all wines or champagnes served during the 82 official functions. However, since 1 January 2016, a total of 623 bottles of wine and champagne have been purchased, at an average cost of \$14.01 per bottle. Wines are selected to showcase a variety of Australian wines and regions.

7) Floral arrangements for official functions are generally sourced from flowers and foliage from the gardens of Government House, and supplemented where necessary by purchased flowers. Floral decorations are modest, economical and appropriate to each occasion.

8) Any entertainment for official functions is generally provided by military bands and soloists, and occasionally by local student musicians.