

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

Group: Written

Program: Whole-of-Portfolio

Question: BE14/154

Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 26-29 May 2014:

1. What is the Department/Agency's hospitality spend from Supplementary Budget Estimates in November 2013 to date including any catering and drinks costs.
2. For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, please detail total hospitality spend from Supplementary Budget Estimates in November 2013 to date. Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
3. What is the Department/Agency's entertainment spend from Supplementary Budget Estimates in November 2013 to date? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
4. For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, please detail total entertainment spend from Supplementary Budget Estimates in November 2013 to date. Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
5. What hospitality spend is the Department/Agency's planning on spending? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
6. For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, what hospitality spend is currently being planned for? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
7. What entertainment spend is the Department/Agency's planning on spending? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
 - a) For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, what entertainment spend is currently being planned for? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
8. Is the Department/Agency planning on reducing any of its spending on these items? If so, how will reductions be achieved?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

1. The Attorney-General's portfolio comprises the Attorney-General's Department and thirty one agencies. Due to size of the portfolio, to attempt to provide the level of detail requested for the portfolio would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources.

The Attorney-General's Department and applicable portfolio agencies manage hospitality expenditure in accordance with obligations under the Commonwealth's financial framework, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

2. There were eight instances of hospitality and entertainment expenditure on behalf of the ministers during the reporting period, which are detailed below.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost (GST ex)
9/10/2013	Sydney	Official dinner with the New Zealand Minister for Justice, the Hon Judith Collins.	\$682
18/11/2013	Canberra	Hosting senior members of Creative Partnerships Australia prior to 2013 Creative Partnerships Australia National Awards	\$295
4/4/2014	London, United Kingdom	Official dinner with Sir Peter Bazalgette and Sir Jonathan Mills AO	\$1,125
8/4/2014	Washington DC, United States of America	Official breakfast meeting with The Hon John Bellinger	\$87
15/4/2014	Canberra	Meeting with the Vietnamese Minister for Justice	\$101
4/6/2014	Canberra	Function with the Police Federation of Australia	\$250
16/7/2014	Canberra	Official farewell drinks and food for the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity Commissioner, Mr Philip Moss	\$271
17/7/2014	Canberra	Launch of the new Australian Federal Police Association software platform	\$129

3. To attempt to provide the level of detail requested for the portfolio would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources.
4. Please see answer to question 2.
5. To attempt to provide the level of detail requested for the portfolio would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources.
6. Any expenditure will occur as required during the normal course of the minister's activities.
7. To attempt to provide the level of detail requested for the portfolio would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources.
 - a) Please see answer to question 6
8. Decisions to incur expenditure of this type are based on an assessment of expenditure being modest, within budget, and appropriate to the circumstances. There is no plan to change this approach.