

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Additional Estimates Hearing 2011-12
15 February 2012

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: AGENCY NAME OR DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

TOPIC: Travel Costs

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Bushby

QUESTION No.: AI-241

1. For the financial year to date, please detail all travel (itemised separately,) undertaken by your portfolio Minister and Parliamentary Secretaries. Include details of what the travel was for, what cost was spent on travel (including travel type – i.e. business airfare), accommodation, security, food, beverages (alcohol listed separately), gifts, entertainment, and all other expenses.
2. For the financial year to date, please provide the same information (itemised separately) for any Minister and Parliamentary staff that accompanied the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary on their travel and include a similar breakdown of the costs incurred by or on behalf of those staff.
3. For the financial year to date, please provide the same information (itemised separately) for Departmental officers that accompanied the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary on their travel and include a similar breakdown of the costs incurred by or on behalf of those staff.
4. For the financial year to date, please detail all travel (itemised separately) undertaken by employees of each department and agency within each portfolio. Include details of what the travel was for, what cost was spent on travel (including travel type – i.e. business airfare), accommodation, security, food, beverages (alcohol listed separately), gifts, entertainment, and all other expenses.
5. Are employees taking the most direct route when travelling? If not, please explain why.
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 cost per employee.
7. When SES employees travel, do any support or administrative staff (such as their 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.

ANSWER

1. Cost of official travel by Ministers is paid by the Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance). Questions regarding Ministerial travel should be referred to Finance. The Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education does not cover costs associated with domestic travel for Ministers.
2. See response to question 1.

3. The following Departmental officers accompanied the Minister on official overseas travel:

Minister Carr - United States of America and Canada (24 June – 9 July 2011)

Purpose: To attend the annual Biotechnology Industry Organisation (BIO) Conference in Washington and the International Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Forum in Banff, Canada.

Accompanied by: Deputy Chief of Staff, Mr Joe Burke and Portfolio Secretary, Dr Don Russell

Travel (airfares)	Accommodation	Travel Allowance (meals, incidentals, other and official hospitality)	Passport and visa fees	Total
\$26275	\$4036	\$3597	\$375	\$34285

Minister Carr - India, China and Thailand (24 July – 6 August 2011)

Purpose: Promote further collaboration in science and research, and to meet with key senior automotive executives.

Accompanied by: Deputy Chief of Staff, Mr Joe Burke and Portfolio Secretary, Dr Don Russell.

Travel (airfares)	Accommodation	Travel Allowance (meals, incidentals, other and official hospitality)	Passport and visa fees	Total
\$15,676	\$3,043	\$1,596	\$133	\$20,450

Minister Carr - United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia (24 - 28 October 2011)

Purpose: Attend condolences services for His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia as the representative of the Australian Government. In addition, meetings were held in the UAE with key automotive officials.

Accompanied by: Deputy Chief of Staff, Mr Joe Burke and Portfolio Secretary, Dr Don Russell.

Travel (airfares)	Accommodation	Travel Allowance (meals, incidentals other and official hospitality)	Passport and visa fees	Total
\$14,470	\$486	\$420	nil	\$15,376

Minister Carr - USA (8 – 12 January 2012)

Purpose: Meet with key senior automotive executives from General Motors and Ford at the 2012 North American International Auto Show in Detroit.

Accompanied by: Deputy Chief of Staff, Mr Joe Burke and General Manager, Automotive Branch, Mr Mark Durrant.

Travel (airfares)	Accommodation	Travel Allowance (meals, incidentals, and other official hospitality)	Passport and visa fees	Total
\$19,801	\$980	\$1546	\$49	\$22,377

Minister Evans - China and Italy (18 – 24 February 2012)

Purpose: High level meetings with Ministerial counterparts and to promote the Australian-New Zealand bid for the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) project.

Accompanied by: Chief of Staff, Ms Karen Brown and Deputy Secretary, Ms Patricia Kelly, and Dr Brian Boyle, CSIRO.

Travel (airfares)	Accommodation	Travel Allowance (meals, incidentals, and other official hospitality)	Passport and visa fees	Total
\$24,848	\$3,026	\$1,124	\$34	\$29,034

4. The travel costs for the financial year to date are:

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

	Domestic	Overseas
Airfares	\$2,448,070	\$1,235,707
Ground Transport (including taxi)	\$1,479,475	\$20,784
Accommodation	\$1,261,841	\$281,948
Travel Allowance	\$608,782	\$304,714

IP AUSTRALIA

	Domestic	Overseas
Airfares	\$187,970	\$297,150
Incidentals	\$18,303	\$3,025
Accommodation	\$86,041	
Travel Allowance	\$29,832	
Meals & Accommodation		\$158,064

AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL (ARC)

The year to date cost of travel for ARC employees and committee members is \$140,284. The Australian Research Council does not record travel data in a way that would readily allow answers to be provided to this question. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of agency resources.

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDIES (AIATSIS)

AIATSIS does not record travel data in a way that would readily allow answers to be provided to these questions. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources'

COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION (CSIRO)

CSIRO's total cost of domestic and international travel for the period July 2011 to February 2012 is \$25,097,131. This includes fares and similar transport costs such as taxis and rental cars, and travel expenses such as accommodation and meals.

It is CSIRO policy that employees on official CSIRO business travel book their domestic and international airfares through CSIRO's contracted travel managements company, QBT. It is not mandatory for CSIRO employees to book travel expenses through QBT. Travel arrangements should be the most economical to CSIRO given the nature and purpose of the trip. The class of fare should be the lowest practical fare in economy class unless there is a business case or an entitlement to travel business class. Staff should only use flexible fares where there is a possibility that a scheduled meeting will not go ahead, or where there is uncertainty surrounding the time that meetings may conclude.

The effective management of travel is the responsibility of each unit within the Organisation and as such the detailed data is not readily available. The Organisation can obtain the information at this level of detail however it would involve a very significant application of the Organisation's resources which mitigate against providing the level of detail sought.

AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION (ANSTO)

	Domestic	Overseas
Airfares	\$57,535	\$1,527,051
Incidentals	\$183,035	
Meals & Accommodation	\$42,573	\$245,884

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE (AIMS)

Air travel	Meals	Accommodation
\$417,587	30,419	102,819

5. Where possible employees of the Department and Portfolio agencies are required to take the lowest practical fare when travelling in line with the Finance Circulars 2009-10 and 2009-11 principles.

6. The Department and the Portfolio Agencies provide lounge memberships to their employees ranging from the APS 6 to SES Band 2 Level and on the basis that it provide effective and efficient use of the traveller's time.

For the financial year to date there has been 556 Qantas and 100 Virgin Australian memberships purchased. Membership cost range from \$249 to \$665 depending on the length of the membership.

7. No.

Please note – as this information is as at 29 February 2012 this does not include Outcome 3 and associated Agencies which is transferring from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations due to the recent Machinery of Government.