

Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of Climate Change

Additional Budget Estimates Hearing–February 2009

Written question reference: CC10(a)-(e)

Outcome/Output: Response to climate change

Topic: Costs associated with Ministerial attendance at Community Cabinet meetings

Hansard Page: Not relevant for a written QoN

Question: (Senator Birmingham)

- (a) What was the cost of Ministers travel and expenses for the Community Cabinet meetings held since (Supplementary) Budget Estimates?
- (b) How many Ministerial Staff and Department of Climate Change officers travelled with the Minister for each Cabinet meeting?
- (c) What was the total cost of this travel?
- (d) What was the total cost to the Department of the Community Cabinet?
- (e) In relation to all Community Cabinet meetings for the calendar year 2008, please detail attendance records – Ministerial and Departmental staff – together with travel, accommodation and any other costs arising.

Answers:

- (a) As at 30 March 2009, the Department of Finance and Deregulation had paid the following costs for the Minister's travel to Community Cabinet meetings held between Supplementary Budget Estimates and the date of the Question:
 - Launceston Community Cabinet Meeting on 5 November 2008 - \$1939.61
 - Corio (Victoria) Community Cabinet Meeting on 7 December 2008 – NIL (Senator Wong did not attend)
 - Campbelltown Community Cabinet Meeting on 17 February 2009 - \$2144.98
- (b) The Minister was accompanied by two ministerial staff and one Departmental officer to each of the Launceston and Campbelltown Community Cabinet Meetings. One Departmental officer accompanied the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts, the Hon Peter Garrett AM MP, who represented the Minister, to the Corio Community Cabinet meeting.
- (c) The total cost of travel for the Minister's ministerial staff and accompanying Departmental officers to attend the Launceston, Corio, and Campbelltown Community Cabinet meetings covered by the first part of this Question was \$8,840.37.
- (d) The total cost to the Department of officers' attendance at the Launceston, Corio, and Campbelltown Community Cabinet meetings held between Supplementary Budget Estimates and the date of the Question was \$4,582.92.

(e) In relation to all Community Cabinet meetings for the 2008 calendar year, Ministerial and Departmental attendance records and costs are detailed in the following table.

*Noting that:

- The figures include airfares and travelling allowance (including Motor Vehicle Allowance) claims. They do not include travel by taxis (due to the difficulties determining exact destinations using the electronic information as provided by Cabcharge) or travel on Special Purpose Aircraft (which is administered by the Department of Defence). Details regarding the cost of flights and passenger manifests can be found in the *Schedule of Special Purpose Flights* which is tabled every six months. The schedule for 1 July to 31 December 2008 will be tabled in June 2009.
- The Secretary undertook multiple activities beyond Community Cabinet in both Perth and Penrith. As it is difficult to apportion costs to individual aspects, all costings for the Secretary have been ascribed to Community Cabinet.
- These figures do not include costs for staff from the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts who attended to assist the Minister with queries regarding her Water Portfolio.
- Care should be taken that as the Minister's portfolio responsibilities fall into two different Departments that her travel and associated costs are not counted twice through separate reporting from both of these Departments.

1 Perth (Canning Vale), Community Cabinet Meeting of 21 January 2008	
Minister	\$2,435.73
MOP(S) Act employee	\$2,378.73
DCC Staff - Secretary	\$3,462.00
Total	\$8,276.46
2 Brisbane (Narangba), Community Cabinet Meeting of 2 March 2008	
Minister	\$2,782.12
MOP(S) Act employee	\$686.91
MOP(S) Act employee	\$1,338.82
DCC Staff - Secretary	\$1,522.00
Total	\$6,329.85
3 Penrith (NSW), Community Cabinet Meeting of 15 April 2008	
Minister	\$914.07
MOP(S) Act employee	\$767.45
MOP(S) Act employee	\$912.00
DCC Staff - Secretary	\$1,098.00
Total	\$3,691.52

4 Mackay (QLD), Community Cabinet Meeting of 29 June 2008	
Minister	\$320.00
MOP(S) Act employee	\$1,157.65
DCC Staff - First Assistant Secretary	\$2,522.00
Total	\$3,999.65
5 Yirrkala (NT), Community Cabinet Meeting of 23 July 2008	
Minister	\$670.00
MOP(S) Act employee	\$1,490.79
DCC Staff - None	
Total	\$2,160.79
6 Hallett Cove (SA), Community Cabinet Meeting of 14 August 2008	
Minister	nil
MOP(S) Act employee	\$1,085.18
MOP(S) Act employee	\$1,185.50
MOP(S) Act employee	\$803.52
MOP(S) Act employee	\$1,240.82
DCC Staff - Deputy Secretary	\$2,044.72
Total	\$6,359.74
7 Newcastle (NSW), Community Cabinet Meeting of 29 September 2008	
Minister	\$2,898.56
MOP(S) Act employee	\$2,666.96
MOP(S) Act employee	\$1,789.74
DCC Staff - Secretary	\$667.76
Total	\$8,023.02
8 Launceston (TAS), Community Cabinet Meeting of 5 November 2008	
Minister	\$1,939.61
MOP(S) Act employee	\$775.34
MOP(S) Act employee	\$1,720.62
DCC Staff - First Assistant Secretary	\$2,166.64
Total	\$6,602.21
9 Corio (VIC), Community Cabinet Meeting of 7 December 2008	
The Hon Peter Garrett AM MP in lieu of the Minister	
DCC Staff - First Assistant Secretary	\$1,428.11
Total	\$1,428.11