

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012**

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

**Department/Agency:** Department of Finance and Deregulation

**Outcome/Program:** General

**Topic:** Travel Costs

**Senator:** Ryan

**Question reference number:** F102

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Friday, 30 March 2012

**Number of pages:** 3

**Question:**

- a) 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.
- b) 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.
- c) 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.
- d) 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.
- e) Are employees taking the most direct route when travelling? If not, please explain why.
- f) 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.
- g) 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:**

- a) Information about destinations and the cost of travel undertaken by Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries is tabled in the Parliament every six months in the report *Parliamentarians' Expenditure on Entitlements paid by the Department of Finance and*

*Deregulation.* The report also includes car transport costs as advised by other departments in respect of Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries. The reports and supporting information are also published on the Finance website.

It is not possible to individually report on all items in the question as costs for domestic accommodation, food and incidental expenses are met by individual travellers from domestic travelling allowances paid at a daily rate.

In relation to travel by Parliamentary travellers (as outlined in 2010-2011 Budget Paper No 2), approximately \$8.2 per annum has been saved by the introduction of the whole-of-government coordinated travel arrangements.

b) The total amount payable by the Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance) for the cost of travel for all personal staff of Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries (employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984*) for 1 July 2011 to 31 January 2012 was \$6.339 million. This includes airfares (both domestic and overseas) and travel by taxis and hire cars.

It is not possible to individually report on all items in the question as costs for domestic accommodation, food and incidental expenses are met by individual travellers from domestic travelling allowances paid at a daily rate. The total cost of travelling allowance, including Motor Vehicle Allowance, paid to personal staff of Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries (employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984*) for 1 July 2011 to 31 January 2012 was \$3.025 million.

Without clarification with individual staff members, it is also not possible to identify if the traveller was accompanying the relevant Minister or Parliamentary Secretary or travelling alone. My Department does not record travel data in a way that would readily allow this information to be provided. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.

In relation to travel by Parliamentary travellers (as outlined in 2010-2011 Budget Paper No 2), approximately \$8.2 per annum has been saved by the introduction of the whole-of-government coordinated travel arrangements.

c) During the financial year to date, three departmental officers accompanied the Special Minister of State (SMOS). One officer travelled with the SMOS to inspect the electorate office in the electorate of Forrest in Western Australia. The officer travelled in a COMCAR with the SMOS. There were no costs incurred by or on behalf of the officer. Two officers travelled with the SMOS on 14 July 2011 to undertake an inspection, and inform the SMOS, of the issues at each of the Commonwealth-owned properties on the Cox Peninsula in the Northern Territory. The total cost for the period 1 July 2011 to 31 January 2012 was \$2,449.74. This includes airfares, accommodation, meals and other travel expenses.

d) My Department manages the whole-of-government travel arrangements. The arrangements commenced on 1 July 2010 and delivered \$160 million savings to the Budget over the period 2010-2014. Additionally, agencies retained about one-third of the total savings available.

For the period 1 July 2011 to 31 January 2012, total expenditure on air travel, at the whole of government level, was approximately \$271 million.

Reporting information at the level of detail requested would create significant additional work for my Department. There are currently over 130 agencies, including 23 Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997 bodies, participating in the arrangements. With nearly \$0.5 billion annual air travel expenditure, the collection of this

data would incur a significant resource cost. Compiling the information to the level of detail requested would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.

As for my own Department, it spent \$1.823 million on official travel from 1 July 2011 to 31 January 2012. This was comprised of fares (\$0.923 million), Travel Allowances (\$0.040 million) and accommodation and meal costs (\$0.860 million).

e) The most direct route does not underpin official travel policy. Official travel arrangements are guided by the Lowest Practical Fare travel policy for Domestic Air Travel (Finance Circular No. 2009/10) and Best Fare of the Day for International Air Travel (Finance Circular No. 2009/11), which provide guidance around the necessity of taking the most appropriate route. Under the Australian Government's devolved financial framework, responsibility for monitoring compliance with government policy is the responsibility of each Agency's Chief Executive.

f) My Department funds airline lounge memberships for a number of employees, where there is a business requirement. As at 9 March 2012, there were 145 active airline lounge memberships for departmental staff. The table below sets out the number of memberships for both Qantas Club and Virgin Lounge memberships by classification.

CLASSIFICATION	VIRGIN LOUNGE	QANTAS CLUB
APS 1—EL2	8	79
SES	0	58

The cost per employee cannot readily be calculated due to a range of pricing options applying to airline lounge memberships including, joining fees, variable membership fees depending on duration of membership and the different levels of membership offered by the airlines.

g) No.

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012**

**Finance and Deregulation Portfolio**

**Department/Agency:** Australian Electoral Commission  
**Outcome/Program:**  
**Topic:** Travel Costs

**Senator:** Ryan

**Question reference number:** F102

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Friday, 30 March 2012

**Number of pages:** 3

**Question:**

- a) 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 type – i.e. business airfare), accommodation, security, food, beverages (alcohol listed separately), gifts, entertainment, and all other expenses.
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- c) 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.
- d) 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.
- e) Are employees taking the most direct route when travelling? If not, please explain why.
- f) 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.

- g) When SES employee 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:**

- a) N/A.  
 b) N/A.  
 c) N/A.  
 d) In the financial year 2011-12 to date, the total costs for travel are shown in the table below. Total costs are shown as the AEC does not record travel data in a way that would readily allow answers to be provided in the detail requested. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.

<b>Type of travel expense</b>	<b>\$</b>
Domestic airfares	484,417
Domestic accommodation	393,678
Domestic travel allowances	335,023
International airfares	260,141
International accommodation	94,174
International travel allowances	88,543
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,655,976</b>

The AEC's SES officers and Principal Executive Offices (PEOs) are entitled to travel business class for all travel.

For part of the financial year to date (prior to introduction of a new Enterprise Agreement), all AEC non-SES staff were entitled to fly business class domestically between:

- Perth and all other States/Territories, except South Australia; and
- Darwin and all other States/Territories.

All AEC officers, SES, PEO, and non-SES are entitled to travel business class when travelling overseas.

- e) The AEC's travel management contractor provides flight options that comply with the lowest practical fare policy. Routing options offered by the travel provider may or may not be the most direct route but they will be the cheapest. In travel undertaken this financial year, AEC officers have not taken the cheapest option in 12.3 % of cases as the time routing and connections offered did not meet business requirements.
- f) All AEC SES officers and PEO holders are entitled to airline lounge memberships at the AEC's cost. For non-SES staff, memberships are granted on a case-by-case basis, approved only where a demonstrated benefit to the agency exists, or to meet OH&S responsibilities. Costs for membership are as per the corporate scheme rates provided by Qantas, and at the current private membership rates advertised by Virgin.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>Membership Period</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Executive Level 1	Qantas	1 year	\$260
Executive Level 1	Qantas and Virgin	Qantas 1 year, Virgin 1 year	\$843
Executive Level 1	Qantas and Virgin	Qantas 1 year, Virgin 1 year	\$843
Executive Level 2	Qantas	1 year	\$260
Executive Level 2	Qantas and Virgin	Qantas 1 year, Virgin 1 year	\$828
SES Band 1	Qantas	4 years	\$860
SES Band 1	Qantas	1 year	\$260
SES Band 1	Qantas	2 years	\$416.87
SES Band 1	Qantas	2 years	\$435

g) No.

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012**

**Finance and Deregulation Portfolio**

**Department/Agency:** ComSuper  
**Outcome/Program:**  
**Topic:** Travel Costs

**Senator:** Ryan  
**Question reference number:** F102  
**Type of question:** Written  
**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Friday, 30 March 2012

**Number of pages:** 1

**Question:**

- a) 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.
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- f) 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.
- g) 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:**

- a) N/A.
- b) N/A.
- c) N/A.
- d) ComSuper does not record travel data in a way that readily allows detailed travel answers to be provided. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources. As at 31 January 2012, ComSuper has spent \$138,483.76 on travel.
- e) Yes.
- f) No.
- g) No.

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012**

**Finance and Deregulation Portfolio**

**Department/Agency: Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation**

**Outcome/Program:**

**Topic: Travel costs**

**Senator: Ryan**

**Question reference number: F102**

**Type of question: Written**

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 30 March 2012**

**Number of pages: 2**

**Question:**

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- g) 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:**

In respect of public monies:

- a) Nil.
- b) Nil.
- c) Nil.
- d) The total travel costs for the financial year to date (as at 29<sup>th</sup> February 2012) are AUD \$99,918. It is not possible to individually report on all items in the question as costs for accommodation, food and incidental expenses are met by individual travellers from domestic or international travelling allowances paid at a daily rate.
- e) Yes.
- f) Yes – Qantas Club membership is offered to employees who make more than 10 trips per year, and all Directors. Currently, there are 3 employees (one analyst and two senior executives) and 1 director with memberships. In respect of public monies, the total cost of memberships is \$1070 this financial year to date.
- g) N/A.

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012**

**Finance and Deregulation Portfolio**

**Department/Agency:** Future Fund Management Agency  
**Outcome/Program:** General  
**Topic:** Travel Costs

**Senator:** Ryan

**Question reference number:** F102

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Friday, 30 March 2012

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**Answer:**

a)-c) N/A.

d) The Agency 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 agency resources. All travel is purchased on the basis of best value for money and is undertaken in connection with the management of the assets of the Future Fund and Nation-building Funds in accordance with the Fund's legislation. All staff travel economy class for flights within Australia and to New Zealand. Staff flying to destinations outside Australia and New Zealand travel business class.

<b>2011-12 Financial Year to Date (31 January 2012)</b>	<b>Total Cost:</b>
Accommodation and meals	\$186,058
Travel – flights	\$621,887
Taxis and other transport	\$54,871

- e) Yes.
- f) No.
- g) No.