

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 11-14 February 2013

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Office of National Assessments

Outcome/Program: 1

Topic: Making the Public Service more efficient

Senator: Senator Ryan

Question reference number: 46

Type of Question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 2 April 2013

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Please provide an update of the savings achieved through pursuing further efficiencies in the way the public service operates (see media release by the Minister for Finance and Deregulation and the Special Minister of State of 25 September 2012

http://www.financeminister.gov.au/media/2012/mr_1982012.html).

In addition, please provide the following detail:

Can you quantify the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates for reductions in air travel?

ONA Response:

- International and domestic travel is a key function in support of ONA business requirements as ONA is responsible for the advancement of Australia's national interest through effective coordination and elevation of Australian's foreign intelligence activities;
- ONA has successfully implemented government policy of ensuring lowest fare of the day;
- ONA relies increasingly on the use of video conferencing.

Question:

Has there been a reduction in business flights? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?

ONA Response:

- International and domestic travel is a key function in support of ONA business requirements as ONA is responsible for the advancement of Australia's national interest through effective coordination and elevation of Australian's foreign intelligence activities.
- ONA does not record travel data in a way that would readily allow a more detailed answer to be provided to this question. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.

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Question:

Has there been a reduction in the use of external consultants and contractors? Has this impacted on the Department/agency, and how? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?

ONA Response:

There was no reduction in the use of external consultants and contractors for ONA.

Question:

Provide an update of moving recruitment advertising online. Is any recruitment still in printed materials, and if yes, why? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?

ONA Response:

The majority of recruitment advertising for ONA is conducted online. However, the agency still uses printed material in limited circumstances to advertise hard to fill positions (such as the Senior Executive Service) where attracting appropriate candidates requires diverse forms of advertisement. ONA has made a saving of 57% on print media advertising in comparison with the same period last year, and will continue to look for opportunities to make savings in recruitment advertising.

Question:

Has the department/agency reduced its printing costs? If no, why not? Have printing costs increased, and if yes why and how much? Has the five per cent savings target been achieved – if yes, how, or if it will not, why not? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?

ONA Response:

The Office of National Assessments does not print any hard copies of reports/ statements/ papers for formal delivery to entities external to the APS, such as the annual report.