

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 24-28 February 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Travel approval

Senator: Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Question reference number: 70

Type of Question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 11 April 2014

Number of pages: 5

Question:

1. Has the Prime Minister approved any travel by officials in this Department valued at over \$20,000? If so, please provide details.
2. Has the Prime Minister been consulted by Ministers on proposed travel by officials valued at more than \$50,000? If so, please provide details.
3. Has the Prime Minister directed departmental secretaries and agency heads to approve all other travel by departmental officials?
4. If so, has the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet approved all travel by officials in this department since the Prime Minister issued his directive? Please explain how the process is administered.
5. Have any exemptions from the travel approval arrangements been granted? If so, can details be provided, by agency.

Answer:

1. Yes. Details of overseas travel by officials of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet valued at more than \$20,000 between 19 November 2013 and 28 February 2014 are provided at [Attachment A](#).
2. Yes. Details of overseas travel by officials valued at more than \$50,000 between 19 November 2013 and 28 February 2014 on which the Prime Minister was consulted by ministers are provided at [Attachment B](#). This does not include details relating to travel considered exempt from the approvals process, proposals that were subsequently withdrawn or travel after 28 February 2014.
3. On 18 November 2013, the Prime Minister wrote to ministers noting that overseas travel by departmental or agency officials under \$20,000 should remain a matter for secretaries and agency heads.

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4. Yes. The Secretary approves all overseas travel by officials of the department. The relevant area of the department submits a written brief to the Secretary seeking approval.
5. Exemption arrangements for overseas travel are set out in Attachment A of Finance Circular 2013/06: Official International Travel – Approval and Use of the Best Fare of the Day. The Secretary has not authorised any further exemptions.

ATTACHMENT A: DETAILS OF OVERSEAS TRAVEL BY OFFICIALS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET BETWEEN 19 NOVEMBER AND 28 FEBRUARY 2014 VALUED AT OVER \$20,000.

Event/Meeting	Dates of travel	Country/ies
World Economic Forum and other meetings.	20 January to 1 February 2014	Switzerland, Germany, France, United Kingdom.
G20 Sherpa meetings.	25 February to 7 March 2014	United States, Brazil

ATTACHMENT B: DETAILS OF CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER BY OTHER MINISTERS FOR OVERSEAS TRAVEL BY OFFICIALS BETWEEN 19 NOVEMBER AND 28 FEBRUARY 2014.

Event/Meeting	Dates of travel	Country/ies
World Trade Organisation Ministerial Meeting	3 - 6 December 2013	Indonesia
Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Ministerial Meeting.	7 - 10 December 2013	Singapore
Preparatory meeting for Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations.	19 - 24 January 2014	United States of America
Proceedings, International Court of Justice	15 - 25 January 2014	Netherlands
Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership negotiations.	20 - 24 January 2014	Malaysia
TPP negotiations and ministerial meeting.	17 - 25 February 2014	Singapore

Event/Meeting	Dates of travel	Country/ies
Procedural hearing for investor state dispute between Australia and Philip Morris Asia.	16 - 23 February 2014	Canada
Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Senior Officials' Meeting	15 - 28 February 2014	China
United States Marine Corps' Paralympic Trials	25 February - 16 March 2014	United States of America