

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 2013-14, February 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

**Department/Agency:** Office of National Assessments

**Outcome/Program:** 1

**Topic:** Travel costs (department)

**Senator:** Senator Ludwig

**Question reference number:** 174

**Type of Question:** Written

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

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question:**

1. From 7 September 2013, detail all travel for Departmental officers that accompanied the Minister and/or Parliamentary Secretary on their travel. Please include a total cost plus a breakdown that include airfares (and type of airfare), accommodation, meals and other travel expenses (such as incidentals).
2. From 7 September 2013, detail all travel for Departmental officers. Please include a total cost plus a breakdown that include airfares (and type of airfare), accommodation, meals and other travel expenses (such as incidentals). Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
3. What travel is planned for the rest of this calendar year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.

**ONA Response:**

1. No Departmental officers accompanied the Prime Minister and/or Parliamentary Secretary on their travel.
2. ONA travel is related to the provision of assessments on international developments, including political, strategic and economic developments, which are reported to the Prime Minister, Senior Ministers and Senior Officials. Travel is also related to ONA being responsible for advancement of Australia's national interest through the effective coordination and elevation of Australia's foreign intelligence activities.
  - The total cost for domestic travel expenses from 7 September 2013 to 28 February 2014 is \$19,978. This includes 42 domestic trips. ONA officials fly economy class for domestic travel. SES officers may fly business class if travelling to Darwin, Perth or a location with a similar distance.
  - The total cost for international travel expenses from 7 September 2013 to 28 February 2014 is \$246,949. This includes 26 international trips. ONA officials fly business class for international travel. There are occasions when international travel is taken in economy class due to availability and routing.
  - ONA does not record travel data in a way that would readily allow more detailed answers to be provided to these questions. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.

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3. ONA travel is related to the provision of assessments on international developments, including political, strategic and economic developments, which are reported to the Prime Minister, Senior Ministers and Senior Officials. Travel is also related to ONA being responsible for advancement of Australia's national interest through the effective coordination and elevation of Australia's foreign intelligence activities.
  - There are currently no planned domestic trips approved for the rest of the calendar year.
  - Between 1 March and 30 June 2014, 45 international trips are planned.
  - As at 1 March 2014, the balance of planned trips for the 2013/14 budget is estimated at \$808,009.
  - ONA has not finalised any travel plans from 1 July to 31 December 2014.
  - ONA does not record travel data in a way that would readily allow more detailed answers to be provided to this question. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.