

Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

**Budget Estimates Hearing – May 2008
Department of Finance and Deregulation
Finance and Deregulation Portfolio**



Outcome 3, Output 3.1

Topic: Travel by Staff Member of the Prime Minister

Question reference number: F20

Type of Question: Hansard F&PA 37, 28 May 2008

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 11 July 2008

Number of Pages: 1

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

When the travel assistant does travel with the Prime Minister, does he stay in the same place as the Prime Minister or nearby?

Answer:

In relation to domestic travel, the Department of Finance and Deregulation is generally unable to determine whether any *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* employee stays at the same location as the Prime Minister. The only exception is when an adjustment to Travelling Allowance (TA) is claimed, where it is necessary for the employee to stay in the same location as the employing member and the amount of TA is insufficient to cover the cost. On this basis, the employee referred to as the 'travel assistant' stayed at the same hotel as the Prime Minister in Adelaide on 25 March 2008, in Melbourne on 30 April 2008, in Perth on 6 May 2008 and in Melbourne on 21 May 2008.

The 'travel assistant' accompanied the Prime Minister to the USA, Belgium, Romania, the United Kingdom and China from 27 March to 13 April 2008. During this overseas visit, he stayed at the same hotel as the Prime Minister in Belgrade and Brussels. The Prime Minister and the 'travel assistant' stayed in the same non-commercial accommodation in Beijing, New York and Washington.