

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2013-2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Australian National Audit Office

Outcome/Program:

Topic: Public Service Efficiencies

Senator: Ryan

Question reference number: 73

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 12 July 2013

Number of pages: 2

Question:

1. Has there been a reduction in business flights? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
2. 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?
3. 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?
4. 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?

Answer:

Q1. Staff travel entitlements are established under the ANAO Enterprise Agreement 2011-14 and SES common law contracts. While there are no proposed changes to travel entitlements during the life of these agreements, steps have been taken to reduce the volume of travel across all travel classes where practicable. Although travel expenditure is subject to some volatility based on audit requirements, the number of business class segments travelled has reduced from 377 in 2011-12 to 217 segments in 2012-13.

Q2. The ANAO continues to actively monitor and limit the use of consultants and contractors where practicable, noting that a substantial portion relates to contract audit arrangements to assist with workload peaks and the need for specific audit skills. Contract audit arrangements are reviewed prior to contract expiration to identify whether internal capacity and appropriate skills are available to undertake future audits using existing ANAO resources. While it is not

possible to estimate the extent of savings over the forward estimates of these initiatives, the ANAO expects to contain contract expenditure at levels similar to the previous financial year.

Q3. All recruitment advertising has been placed through the Media Placement Agency (Adcorp) in line with the Department of Finance and Deregulation's Guidelines on Non-Campaign recruitment advertising. The majority of recruitment advertising is placed online and is not supplemented with print media. The ANAO will continue to utilise print advertising where there is a demonstrated need, such as advertising in specialist media to attract Indigenous applicants.

Q4. During the 2011-12 financial year the ANAO used competitive tendering processes to establish more favourable rates under a printing contract. This contributed to the ANAO reducing printing costs from \$0.85 million in 2010-11 to \$0.77 million in 2011-12, and will continue to assist the ANAO in achieving savings targets over the forward estimates. The ANAO is continuing to investigate whether investment in online distribution methods can further reduce printing costs, while maintaining accessibility of ANAO reports for key constituents. At this stage, it is not possible to estimate savings until the extent of online distribution is known.