

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

PM&C Portfolio

Department/Agency: National Mental Health Commission
Outcome/Program: National Mental Health Commission
Topic: Travel Costs

Senator: Senator Ryan

Question reference number: 96

Type of question: Written

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

Number of pages: 2

Question:

1. For the financial year to date, please 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. For the financial year to date, please 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 financial year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
4. What travel is planned for the rest of this calendar year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
5. What is the policy for business class airfare tickets? Is there still a reduction in business flights as per the media release by the Minister for Finance and Deregulation and the Special Minister of State dated 25 September 2012?
6. Are lounge memberships provided to any employees? If yes, what lounge memberships, to how many employees and their classification, the reason for the provision of lounge membership and the total costs of the lounge memberships.
7. When SES employees travel, do any support or administrative staff (such as an Executive Assistant) travel with them? If yes, provide details of why such a staff member is needed and the costs of the support staff travel.
8. Does the department/agency elect to offset emissions for employees work related travel? If yes, what is the cost?

Answer:

1. National Mental Health Commission staff do not accompany the Minister or Parliamentary Secretary on their travel.

2. Commission staff travel cost for this financial year to 28 May 2013 is \$48,161.00 (ex GST). This includes:
\$25,725 on flights; and
\$22,436 on accommodation, meals and incidentals.

The Commission does not record travel data in a way that would readily allow answers to be provided to the second part of this question. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources.

3. & 4. The Commission travel plans for the rest of the calendar year are for relevant staff to attend interstate Commission meetings, stakeholder meetings and other essential business.
5. The Commission follows Government travel policy and guidelines in respect of travel for Commission staff.
6. No lounge memberships have been provided to non-SES staff. The CEO (Agency head) and Deputy CEO (SES Band 2) have lounge memberships.
7. Support or administrative staff do not travel with SES employees for the purpose of supporting those SES employees. Where secretariat support and/or administrative staff travel with SES staff it is for legitimate business reasons.
8. No.