

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2013-14 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: Cross Outcome - Across Programs

Question No: 115

Topic: Travel Costs - Department

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

- 1) 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.
- 2) What travel is planned for the rest of this calendar year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.

Answer:

- 1) For the period 7 September 2013 to 28 February 2014, the Department of Social Services' expenditure on travel was \$4,164,260 (GST exclusive).

Airfares	Accommodation	Travel Allowance	Other	Total
\$1,892,446	\$1,116,719	\$1,112,407	\$42,688	\$4,164,260

The classification of "Other" includes officers' expenses where no travel allowance has been claimed, such as bus and vehicle hire, parking fees and venue hire.

Travel is undertaken where business objectives require it.

Note: The Department is currently transitioning the Indigenous Affairs portfolio to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and, therefore, the above expenditure figures include costs relating to the Indigenous Affairs programme. These figures also include expenditure by agencies and parts of agencies that have progressively transferred into the Department since 18 September 2013, including Ageing and Aged Care, Specialist Employment Services and Settlement Services, from the former Departments of Health and Ageing; Education Employment and Workplace Relations; and Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, respectively.

Departmental expenditure on travel for the previous three financial years for the former Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs was:

F/Y	Airfares	Accommodation	Travel Allowance	Other	Total
2012-13	\$6,070,144	\$3,022,242	\$2,926,080	\$752,354	\$12,770,820
2011-12	\$6,949,861	\$3,183,688	\$2,680,454	\$1,978,635	\$14,792,638
2010-11	\$6,847,374	\$3,363,559	\$2,860,055	\$2,228,877	\$15,299,865

- 2) For the rest of the year, travel will continue to be undertaken as and when required for the conduct of Department's business. It is worth noting in this regard that the Department makes considerable use of video conferencing where this is a feasible alternative to travel.