

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: 123

Topic: Taxi Costs

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

- a) How much did each department/agency spend on taxis from Supplementary Budget Estimates in November 2013 to date? Provide a breakdown for each business group in each department/agency.
- b) What are the reasons for taxi costs?

Answer:

Department of Social Services

- a) For the period 1 December 2013 to 28 February 2014, the Department's expenditure on taxis was \$117,723 (GST exclusive). It is not possible to provide an accurate breakdown by business groups without significant diversion of Departmental resources.

Note: The Department is currently transitioning the Indigenous Affairs portfolio to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and, therefore, the above expenditure figure includes taxi 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 Immigration, Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, respectively.

- b) Taxis are used for staff travelling on Departmental business and for travel relating to staff attendance at conferences and seminars. Taxi services are used for official purposes only.

Social Security Appeals Tribunal

- a) \$15,426.
- b) Travel between SSAT premises and airports for meetings and project related work.

Australian Institute of Family Studies

- a) The Australian Institute of Family Studies spent \$14,447.85 (ex GST) on taxi fares from the Supplementary Budget Estimates in November 2013 to date.
- b) Taxi costs were for travelling to business meetings, conferences, and research meetings.

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National Disability Insurance Agency

a) For the period from Supplementary Budget Estimates in November 2013 to 28 February 2014, the National Disability Insurance Agency's expenditure on taxis was \$74,347 (GST exclusive). The breakdown by business group is:

- \$38,748 Operational Management
- \$35,599 National Operations

b) Taxis are used for staff travelling for official purposes only.

Australian Aged Care Quality Agency

a) \$51,327

b) Over 50 per cent of the Agency staff are assessors who are required to visit all nursing home in Australia each year to conduct accreditation audits.

Aged Care Pricing Commissioner

a) The Office of the Aged Care Pricing Commissioner spent approximately \$1,449.00 on taxis in the period from Supplementary Budget Estimates in November 2013 to date.

b) These taxi costs were incurred for the purpose of meeting with Government and stakeholders.

Aged Care Commissioner

a) The Office of the Aged Care Commissioner (OACC) spent \$1,042.05 on taxis from November 2013 to date.

b) The reasons for these taxi costs are:

- The Commissioner's travel to meetings and speeches and to provide training,
- Access to training for staff,
- OACC staff travelling to conduct interviews as part of examining complaints.