

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: 161

Topic: Boards (for Departments or Agencies with boards)

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

For all boards managed within the Department/Agency, please supply the following, since 7 September 2013:

- a. How often has the board met?
- b. What travel expenses are provided?
- c. What is the average attendance at board meetings?
- d. How does the board deal with conflict of interest?
- e. What conflicts of interest have been registered?
- f. What remuneration is provided to board members?
- g. How does the board dismiss board members who do not meet attendance standards?
- h. Have any requests been made to ministers to dismiss board members since September 7, 2013?
- i. Please list board members who have attended less than 51% of meetings.
- j. What have catering costs been for the board meetings held this year; is alcohol served?

Answer:

Responses for boards in the Social Services portfolio for which the Commonwealth appoints all or the majority of members are as follows:

National Disability Insurance Agency Board

- a. The Board has met five times since 7 September 2013.
- b. Travel expenses are provided to Board members in accordance with the Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2013/16.
- c. The average attendance at Board meetings has been 91 per cent.
- d. The Board handles conflicts of interest in accordance with the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* and the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*.
- e. In accordance with the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*, Board members provide standing notice of all interests, including those which are not a material personal interest. Current registered interests include other directorships, employment and potential participant status.
- f. Board members are paid in accordance with Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2014/03.
- g. Section 134(2) of the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013* provides that a Board member can be terminated if they are absent for three consecutive meetings, without an approved leave of absence.

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- h. No.
- i. Nil.
- j. Catering costs from 7 September 2013 are \$7,153.25 including GST. Alcohol is not served at Board meetings.

Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) Board

- a. The Board has met two times since 7 September 2013.
There have been no travel expenses incurred since 7 September 2013.
- b. The average attendance for meetings held since 7 September 2013 is 95 per cent.
- c. Conflicts of interest are managed in accordance with clause 51.2 of the Company Constitution.
- d. There is a standing conflict of interest for Directors representing government departments in relation to funding decisions and for Directors representing university participants in relation to decisions regarding funding and decisions regarding the funding of research and capacity building activities.

The chairman, who is also a Director of Mission Australia's two housing companies, Mission Australia Housing and Mission Australia Housing (Victoria), has a standing conflict of interest in relation to any decisions by the AHURI Board directly related to Mission Australia Housing.

- e. The annual remuneration of Directors is as follows:
 - Chairman of the Board \$36,000;
 - Chairman of the Audit, Finance and Risk Management Committee \$16,477;
 - Independent Directors serving on the Audit, Finance and Risk Management Committee \$11,054;
 - Other Independent Directors \$6,632;
 - Directors appointed as representatives of company members and funders are not paid.
- f. Provisions relating to board members not meeting attendance requirements are in Clause 55 (d) of the Company Constitution.
- g. No.
- h. Nil.
- i. Nil. Alcohol is not served.