

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Legislation Committee**  
Answers to questions on notice  
**Environment portfolio**

**Question No:** 213

**Outcome:** Organisational effectiveness: Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our department

**Programme:** Corporate Strategies Division

**Topic:** Portfolio wide – Official Hospitality and Entertainment

**Hansard Page:** N/A

**Question Date:** 26 May 2014

**Question Type:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

- a) What is the Department/Agency's hospitality spend from Additional Estimates in February 2014 to date including any catering and drinks costs.
- b) For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, please detail total hospitality spend from Supplementary Budget Estimates in November 2013 to date. Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
- c) What is the Department/Agency's entertainment spend from Additional Estimates in February 2014 to date? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
- d) For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, please detail total entertainment spend from Additional Estimates in February 2014 to date. Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
- e) What hospitality spend is the Department/Agency's planning on spending? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
- f) For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, what hospitality spend is currently being planned for? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
- g) What entertainment spend is the Department/Agency's planning on spending? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
- h) For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, what entertainment spend is currently being planned for? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
- i) Is the Department/Agency planning on reducing any of its spending on these items? If so, how will reductions be achieved and what are the estimated savings over each year of the forward estimates?

a) The Department of the Environment (the Department) spent \$5,365.00 (GST inclusive) on hospitality for 1 February 2014 to 30 April 2014. Details of date, location, purpose and cost of all events are listed below.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
29 February 2014	Chairman and Yip, Canberra	Informal dinner for Association of South East Asian Nations Forestry and Climate Change delegation (ARKN - FCC)	\$1,850.00
20 February 2014	Bel Paese Italian Restaurant	Australian-New Zealand Environment bilateral discussions in Sydney, involving six Australian Government delegates and nine New Zealand delegates	\$860.00
26 March 2014	Adria Restaurant, Sydney	Official dinner for international workshop for technical experts and climate change negotiators in the agricultural sector	\$820.00
26 March 2014	Park Regis North Quay, Brisbane	Networking and welcome event for PNG partners and other Australian Government agencies responsible for administering the Kokoda Initiative following the first day of the Biannual Planning Meeting	\$622.50
27 March 2014	The Chelsea Restaurant, Brisbane	Dinner networking event for PNG partners and other Australian Government agencies responsible for administering the Kokoda Initiative following the first day of the Biannual Planning Meeting	\$915.50
31 March 2014	Bicicletta, Canberra	Official dinner for Australia-Kenya bilateral meeting of technical experts and climate change negotiators in the agricultural sector	\$297.00

The Director of National Parks has spent \$48.36 (GST inclusive) on hospitality for the period 1 February 2014 to 30 April 2014. Details of date, location, purpose and cost of all events are listed below.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
30 April 2014	Australian National Botanic Gardens, ACT	Lunch with Austrian Ambassador – Collaborative research on botanical collections through international cooperation.	\$48.36

The Bureau of Meteorology (the Bureau) spent \$2,116.50 (GST inclusive) on hospitality for 1 February 2014 to 30 April 2014. Details of date, location, purpose and cost of all events are listed below.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
3-4 March 2014	Melbourne	Official Hospitality for the Environment Canada – Meteorological Service of Canada delegation visit (3-4 March 2014)	\$1,659.00
19 March 2014	Sydney	Dinner function for spatial data tools – SPEDEXES	\$457.50

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) spent \$823.69 (GST inclusive) on hospitality for 1 February 2014 to 30 April 2014. Details of date, location, purpose and cost of all events are listed below.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
20 March 2014	Townsville	Meeting with Australian Maritime Authority Officials	\$151.24
11 April 2014	Townsville	Meeting with Qld Fisheries officials	\$138.33
28 April 2014	Townsville	Meeting with Queensland Seafood Industry Board	\$534.12

The National Water Commission spent \$556.70 (GST inclusive) on hospitality for 1 February 2014 to 30 April 2014. Details of date, location, purpose and cost of all events are listed below.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
6 February 2014	Melbourne, VIC	Working lunch associated with stakeholders workshop on Urban Futures	\$556.70

The Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) spent \$7,542.00 (GST inclusive) on hospitality for 1 February 2014 to 30 April 2014. Details of date, location, purpose and cost of all events are listed below.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
12 December 2013 (paid after 1 February 2014)	Mezzalira Ristorante Canberra	Advisory Committee on Social, Economic and Environmental Sciences (ACSEES) Dinner	\$1,212.50
4 February 2014	Ottoman Quisine Canberra	Basin Community Committee Dinner	\$2,074.50
14 February 2014	Narrabri Bowling Club	Northern Basin Advisory Committee Dinner	\$1,535.00
19 March 2014	Rydges Sydney	Inaugural Annual Water Planners Forum Dinner	\$2,720.00

The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust (the Trust), Clean Energy Regulator (CER) and Climate Change Authority (CCA) have not spent any funds on hospitality for 1 February 2014 to 30 April 2014.

- b) According to Departmental records, the offices of the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary spent \$940.00 (GST inclusive) on hospitality for the period 1 February 2014 to 30 April 2014 in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
9 April 2014	MIA Head Office, Hanwood NSW	At the request of his office, the Parliamentary Secretary, Senator Simon Birmingham visited communities and met with key stakeholders in the southern Murray Darling Basin from 9-11 April 2014. (Murrumbidgee Irrigation Board and Execs)	\$256.90
10 April 2014	The Crossing Cafe, Deniliquin NSW	At the request of his office, the Parliamentary Secretary, Senator Simon Birmingham visited communities and met with key stakeholders in the southern Murray Darling Basin from 9-11 April 2014 (Murray Irrigation Board and Murray stakeholders meeting)	\$683.10

- c) Departmental entertainment expenses are reported at question a), as they are incorporated in official hospitality. No agencies have reported any additional entertainment expenses for the period 1 February 2014 to 30 April 2014.
- d) According to Departmental records, there has been no expenditure on entertainment for the offices of the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary for the period 1 February 2014 to 30 April 2014 in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.
- e) Please see (below) the planned hospitality spend for the Department and portfolio agencies for the period from 1 May 2014. Details of date, location, purpose, and estimated cost are provided.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
14 May 2014	Ottoman, Canberra	Networking lunch held immediately prior to the first Expert Panel Meeting for the Statutory Review of the Water Act	\$508.00

11 June 2014	Crowne Plaza, Hunter Valley	Official dinner of the Independent Expert Scientific Committee for Coal Seam Gas and Large Coal Mining, the Mayors and General Managers of 11 local government areas in the Hunter Valley, General Manager Hunter Local Services, and two Departmental staff	\$1,300.00
29 July 2014	Port Moresby	Kokoda Track Authority strategic planning workshop	\$1,500.00
31 August 2014	Port Moresby	Workshop to discuss the KI Gender snapshot, recommendations and implementation planning	\$1,000.00

The National Water Commission has the following planned official hospitality:

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
25 June 2014	Canberra, ACT	Tenth anniversary of National Water Initiative event with stakeholders	\$2,045.00
One Commission meeting is planned, however details are not yet finalised.			

The Bureau, Director of National Parks, MDBA, CER, CCA, GBRMPA and the Trust have not reported any planned hospitality expenditure for the period from 1 May 2014.

- f) According to records of the Department there is no planned hospitality spend for the offices of the Minister or Parliamentary Secretary for the period from 1 May 2014 in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.
- g) No entertainment is being planned by the Department or Agencies.
- h) According to records of the Department there is no planned entertainment spend for the offices of the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary for the period from 1 May 2014 in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.
- i) The Department and Agencies tightly manage expenditure on official hospitality and allocate resources to areas of highest priority only.