

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Additional Estimates Hearings November 2014
Communications Portfolio
Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Question No: 614

Program No. Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Hansard Ref: In writing

Topic: Boards (for Departments or agencies with boards)

Senator Ludwig asked:

Since Budget Estimates in June, 2014 for each board in the portfolio or agencies:

1. how often has each board met, break down by board name;
2. what travel expenses have been incurred;
3. what has been the average attendance at board meetings;
4. List each member's attendance at meetings;
5. how does the board deal with conflict of interest;
6. what conflicts of interest have been registered;
7. what remuneration has been provided to board members;
8. how does the board dismiss board members who do not meet attendance standards?
9. Have any requests been made to ministers to dismiss board members?
10. Please list board members who have attended less than 51% of meetings
11. what have been the catering costs for the board meetings held during this period? Please break down the cost list.

Answer:

The following answer relates to the period 28 May 2014 to 18 November 2014:

1. The ABC Board met on five occasions – 3 June, 25 July, 6 August, 1 October and 6 November.
2. The ABC pays for the travel costs associated with each Director's attendance at an ABC Board meeting, being flights and accommodation (for Directors travelling from interstate) and taxis. Travel Allowance is paid in accordance with the *Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2004/03, Official Travel by Office Holders*. The ABC incurred \$31,537.17 in total travel costs associated with the Board meetings held on 3 June, 25 July, 6 August, 1 October and 6 November.
3. There is full attendance at the majority of Board meetings.

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4. Directors' attendance at meetings (including attendance in person and by video/phone conference):

J Spigelman (Chairman)	3 June, 25 July, 6 August, 1 October, 6 November
M Scott (Managing Director)	3 June, 25 July, 6 August, 1 October, 6 November
C Bart (Director)	3 June, 25 July, 6 August, 1 October, 6 November
J Bennett (Director)	3 June, 25 July, 6 August, 1 October, 6 November
P Lewis (Director)	6 November
<i>Appointed 2 October 2014)</i>	
S Mordant (Director)	3 June, 25 July, 6 August, 1 October, 6 November
M Peacock (Staff Elected Director)	3 June, 25 July, 6 August, 1 October, 6 November
S Skala (Director)	3 June, 25 July, 6 August, 1 October, 6 November
F Stanley (Director)	25 July, 6 August, 6 November

5. The ABC Board has adopted a Board Protocol, which sets out Directors' rights and responsibilities including dealing with conflicts of interest. The ABC Board Protocol is publicly available on the ABC's website. Directors are expected to meet their statutory obligation to disclose any material personal interest that relates to the affairs of the ABC in accordance with s29 of the *Public Governance Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.
6. A register of Declarations of Interests is maintained. No conflicts of interest were declared or registered between 28 May 2014 and 18 November 2014.
7. Remuneration for ABC Board Directors is set by the Remuneration Tribunal. The rate for a Director as at 18 November 2014 was \$54,180 per annum. The rate for the Chairman as at 18 November 2014 was \$164,600.
8. A persistent failure by a Director to attend Board meetings would be managed by the Board on a case-by-case basis. Section 18 of the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983* provides for removal of a Director from office by the Governor-General if a Director is absent from three consecutive meetings of the Board (without the leave of the Chairman or acting Chairman).
9. No.
10. None.
11. 3 June \$755.95
25 July \$10.50
6 August \$540.00
1 October \$702.00
6 November \$28.50