

## Senate Committee: Education and Employment

### QUESTION ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016

**Outcome: Agency: ACARA**

**Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ16-000445**

Senator Ludwig, Joe provided in writing

***ACARA: Boards (for Departments or agencies with boards)***

#### **Question**

Since the change of Prime Minister on 14 September, 2015:

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 Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) has provided the following response for the period 14 September 2015 to 10 February 2016.

1. The ACARA Board met twice.
2. Note that the following costs relate to all Board travel in the relevant period (14 September 2015 to 31 January 2016), they are not limited to the two meetings. For example, these costs include interstate flights for the Chair to meet key stakeholders.

<b>ACARA Board Travel Expenditure</b>	
	\$
Airfares	25,560
Accommodation	2004
Incidentals	650
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,214</b>

3. Of the 13 members, 12 members attended one meeting, 13 members attended the other.
4. Susan Bowden was the only apology (8 October 2015)
5. Conflict of interest is a standing item on Board meeting agendas. A conflict of interest register is presented at each meeting and members are asked to declare any new standing conflicts of interest, or conflicts of interest relevant to the meeting agenda. Decisions about conflicts of interest that are declared are made by the Board.

6.

Stephen Gniel	Appointment to the ACEL Board (Australian Council for Educational Leaders) as an independent director
Steven Schwartz (Chair)	Previous role as Vice-Chancellor of Macquarie University and current association as Professor Emeritus in relation to a possible collaborative research activity between Macquarie University and ACARA.
Brian Caldwell (Deputy Chair)	The Deputy Chair advised that he had become patron of two organisations: Australian Special Education Principals Association (ASEPA) and Wellbeing in Schools Australia (WISA). There are no associated pecuniary interests.
Patea Walton / Stephen Gniel	Ms Walton advised of her membership of the AESOC Schools Policy Group and the Asian Education Foundation, as well as the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority. It was noted that Stephen Gniel was also a member of the Schools Policy Group.

7. ACARA pays sitting fees as determined by the Remuneration Tribunal under the Part Time Officers determination.
8. The Board does not dismiss members on grounds of attendance. Under the ACARA Act, the Minister for Education must terminate the appointment of a member if the member is absent, except on leave of absence, from 3 consecutive meetings of the Board.
9. Nil.
10. Nil
11. Note that the following costs relate to all Board catering in the relevant period (14 September 2015 to 31 January 2016), it is not limited to catering for the two Board meetings. For example, these costs include catering for a Board sub-committee, the Audit and Risk Committee, as well as morning and/or afternoon tea for meetings with stakeholders attended by the ACARA Chair.

<b>ACARA Board Catering Expenditure</b>	
<b>Catering</b>	<b>\$1658</b>