

## **Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment**

### **QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016**

#### **Agency - Comcare**

**Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ16-000357**

**Senator Ludwig provided in writing.**

#### **Question**

##### **Comcare - Travel costs**

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

1. Is the minister or their office or their delegate required to approve all departmental and agency international travel?
2. If so, under what policy?
3. Provide a copy of that policy.
4. When was this policy implemented?
5. When is the minister notified, when is approved provided?
6. Detail all travel (domestic and international) for Departmental officers that accompanied the Minister and/or Parliamentary Secretary on their travel. Please include a total cost plus a breakdown that include airfares (and type of airfare), accommodation, meals and other travel expenses (such as incidentals).
7. Detail all travel for Departmental officers. Please include a total cost plus a breakdown that include airfares (and type of airfare), accommodation, meals and other travel expenses (such as incidentals). Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
8. What date was the minister or their office notified of the travel?
9. What date did the minister or their office approve the travel?
10. What travel is planned for the rest of this calendar year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.

#### **Answer**

1. Yes, if above \$20,000.
2. In accordance with Resource Management Guide no. 405, issued by the Department of Finance in July 2014, the Minister is required to approve departmental international travel where the estimated cost is between \$20,000 and \$50,000.
3. The Resource Management Guide is available from the Department of Finance.
4. The date of effect of the policy was 16 December 2013, via Finance Circular 2013/06 (which was replaced by Resource Management Guide 405).
5. The minister is notified with a briefing as soon as it is known that the travel will cost in excess of \$20,000.
6. No travel has been undertaken by departmental officers that accompanied the Minister and/or Parliamentary Secretary since 14 September 2015.

7. For the period 14 September 2015 to 31 January 2016, the cost of travel has been \$841,407. The breakdown of expenses is \$428,066 for airfares, \$174,088 on accommodation, \$49,239 on meals and \$190,014 on other costs.

8. Not applicable

9. Not applicable.

10. Comcare does not specifically budget or plan for individual travel. Travel is undertaken for a range of purposes including inspections, audits, meetings and training.