

## Senate Committee: Education and Employment

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016

**Outcome: Cross Portfolio - Corporate**

**Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000746**

Senator Bilyk, Catryna provided in writing.

#### ***Visit to Torres Strait***

##### **Question**

Did any of the former or current Ministers or Parliamentary Secretaries/Assistant Ministers in the portfolio, their personal staff or the Department participate in the former Prime Minister's trip to the Torres Strait? If so-

- What was the duration of the visit to Torres Strait?
- Which locations did the Minister/his Department travel to?
- Which communities did the Minister/his Department engage with?
- What type of activities did they undertake?
- What were the outcomes of the trip?
- Was an official report or communique or similar published in relation to the trip?
- Are you able to please provide an itinerary for the A Minister/his Department's trip?
- Which hotel or hotels did the Minister/his Department stay in?
- Could you please provide an itemised cost breakdown in relation to the Minister/his Department's involvement in this trip? This should be broken down into categories such as accommodation, ground transport, meals, incidentals etc.
- How many members of the Minister's staff participated in the trip?
- Could you please advise the number of staff, their title and staffing classification under the MOPS Enterprise Agreement?
- In terms of departmental officials from the Department, could you please advise the names and roles of each departmental official in attendance?
- Could you also please provide an itemised list of costs for departmental officials in terms of flights, accommodation, ground transport, meals and other incidentals? This should specify the officials which travelled in business class and those that travelled in economy, the hotels they stayed in and which businesses supplied ground transport.

##### **Answer**

Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham along with The Hon Luke Hartsuyker MP (in their previous capacities as Assistant Minister for Education and Training and Assistant Minister for Employment respectively) travelled to the Torres Strait and Cape York.

The Department of Finance is responsible for reporting on ministerial and ministerial staff travel.

In relation to departmental travel, Dr Subho Banerjee, Deputy Secretary, Skills and Training, Department of Education and Training accompanied Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham on his travel to the Torres Strait and Cape York. Dr Banerjee accompanied the Minister on his trips to schools, businesses, community groups and councils. The duration of the visit by Dr Banerjee was for three days (24-26 August). Accommodation was provided by the Army on Thursday Island and Bamaga; and Novotel Brisbane Airport in transit back to Canberra for the evening of 26 August.

Costs for Dr Banerjee included:

Airfares	\$2294.44
Hotel	\$ 288.00

All other accommodation and meals were provided by the Army or The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C).