

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 2014-15

Finance Portfolio

Department/Agency: All

Outcome/Program: General

Topic: Travel costs - department

Senator: Ludwig

Question reference number: F93

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Wednesday, 31 December 2014

Number of pages: 15

Question:

Since Budget Estimates in May 2014:

1. Is the Minister or their office or their delegate required to approve all departmental and agency international travel?
 - a) If so, under what policy?
 - b) Provide a copy of that policy.
 - c) When was this policy implemented?
 - d) List all occurrences of travel that this has occurred under.
 - e) Detail the process.
 - f) When is the Minister notified, when is approved provided?
2. 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).
3. 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.
4. What date was the Minister or their office notified of the travel?
5. What date did the Minister or their office approve the travel?
6. What travel is planned for the rest of this calendar year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.

Answer:

Department/ Agency	Response
Finance	1. Yes. a) <i>Resource Management Guide No. 405 Official International Travel – Approval and Use of the Best Fare of the Day</i> (the policy).

Department/ Agency	Response																
	<p>b) The policy can be found at the following link: http://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/resource-management-guide-no-405.pdf .</p> <p>c) 1 July 2014.</p> <p>d) Collating a list of all departmental travel would be an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.</p> <p>e) <u>Attachment A</u> details the process.</p> <p>f) <u>Attachment B</u> outlines notification guidelines.</p> <p>2. Since Additional Estimates in May 2014, the Department of Finance has spent \$17,152.64 (exclusive GST) on official domestic and international travel for departmental officers accompanying the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary; and \$6,580.96 on accommodation, meals and incidentals (exclusive GST). All travel was undertaken to conduct Finance business in accordance with Finance's Official Travel Accountable Authority Instruments.</p> <p>3. Since Additional Estimates in May 2014, the Department of Finance has spent \$613,595.15 (exclusive GST) on domestic and international official travel: airfares \$305,484.64 (exclusive GST); and \$308,110.51 on accommodation, meals and incidentals (exclusive GST). All travel was undertaken to conduct Finance business in accordance with Finance's Official Travel Accountable Authority Instruments.</p> <p>4. – 5. Collating a list of all departmental travel approvals would be an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.</p> <p>6. Collating a list of all planned departmental travel would be an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources. Travel is undertaken only as required to meet Finance business needs and in accordance with Finance AAI: 2.4 Official Travel.</p>																
Australian Electoral Commission	<p>1. No. a) - f). N/A.</p> <p>2. Nil.</p> <p>3. For the period 28 May to 31 October 2014:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="555 1317 1275 1597"> <thead> <tr> <th>Expense</th> <th>\$</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Domestic Airfares</td> <td>378,708</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Domestic Accommodation</td> <td>729,927</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Domestic Travel Allowances</td> <td>169,257</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Overseas Airfares</td> <td>513,154</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Overseas Accommodation</td> <td>300,381</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Overseas Travel Allowances</td> <td>218,111</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>2,309,538</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The AEC does not record travel data in a way that would readily allow answers to be provided to the level of detail requested. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of agency resources.</p> <p>4. – 5. N/A.</p> <p>6. Departmental travel will be in support of regular business activities (staff movements between offices) and some overseas travel to support activities where the AEC is providing electoral assistance in other countries on behalf of DFAT.</p>	Expense	\$	Domestic Airfares	378,708	Domestic Accommodation	729,927	Domestic Travel Allowances	169,257	Overseas Airfares	513,154	Overseas Accommodation	300,381	Overseas Travel Allowances	218,111	Total	2,309,538
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ComSuper	<p>1. ComSuper's CEO must approve all official overseas travel. a) ComSuper Travel Policy. b) Please refer to <u>Attachment C</u>: ComSuper Travel Policy.</p>																

Department/ Agency	Response												
	<p>c) 1 July 2014. d) Nil. e) International travel is very infrequent at ComSuper and is dealt with on a case by case basis by the Chief Executive Officer. f) N/A.</p> <p>2. Nil.</p> <p>3. Travel is undertaken on a needs basis where it represents the most efficient, effective and economic method of conducting ComSuper's business. For the period 1 June 2014 to 31 October 2014, \$76,935 (GST exclusive) was spent on travel. A breakdown is provided below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="523 658 1305 967"> <thead> <tr> <th>Nature of Expenditure</th> <th>(\$ (Excluding GST))</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Accommodation</td> <td>10,805</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Airfares</td> <td>16,227</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Travel Allowance</td> <td>17,924</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cabs, fares, rental cars and associated costs</td> <td>31,979</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>76,935</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>4. – 5. N/A.</p> <p>6. Travel for the purposes of conducting business is planned for the rest of the financial year. Travel is undertaken on a needs basis where it represents the most efficient, effective and economic method of conducting our business.</p>	Nature of Expenditure	(\$ (Excluding GST))	Accommodation	10,805	Airfares	16,227	Travel Allowance	17,924	Cabs, fares, rental cars and associated costs	31,979	Total	76,935
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Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation	<p>1. No. 2. N/A. 3. For the period 28 May to 31 October 2014 \$569,986.07 was spent on travel. It is not possible to individually report on all items in the question as costs for accommodation, food and incidental expenses are met by individual travellers from domestic or international travel allowances at a daily rate. Travel is for business purposes only. 4. – 5. N/A. 6. For the period 1 November to 31 December 2014 it is forecast that \$215,847 will be spent on travel. The purpose of the travel is for core operational activities undertaken by CSC and all travel is for business purposes only.</p>												
Future Fund Management Agency	<p>For the period 28 May 2014 to 31 October 2014</p> <p>1. No. a) – f) N/A. 2. Nil. 3.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="499 1704 1331 1814"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Accommodation and meals</td> <td>\$219,945</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Flights (domestic and international)</td> <td>\$690,257</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Taxis and other transport</td> <td>\$51,708</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>All travel on domestic flights and flights to New Zealand are in economy class. International flights (other than to New Zealand) are in business class. Travel is undertaken for official purposes for the proper and effective management of the investment portfolio.</p> <p>4. – 5. N/A.</p>	Accommodation and meals	\$219,945	Flights (domestic and international)	\$690,257	Taxis and other transport	\$51,708						
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Department/ Agency	Response
	6. For the rest of the calendar year, travel will be undertaken for official purposes and in line with the requirements for the effective management of the investment portfolio. This includes the monitoring and review of investment managers and assets, the identification of new managers and investment opportunities, due diligence work and engagement with existing and potential investment partners and peers.

Approval Requirements for Official International Travel:

Official international travel must be approved in accordance with the following requirements.

Where the total estimated cost (GST inclusive) of international travel, either individually or for a delegation or group activity, is:

- a) \$20,000 or less, the travel must be approved by the relevant Secretary or Accountable Authority
- b) more than \$20,000 and less than \$50,000, the travel must be approved by the relevant Cabinet Minister
- c) \$50,000 or more, the relevant Cabinet Minister must consult with the Prime Minister in writing before approving the travel.

If officials from more than one entity are part of the same delegation or group activity, the lead entity should obtain approval in accordance with these requirements for the total estimated cost of the travel on behalf of all entities involved.

A diagram of these approval requirements is provided at page 11.

Exemptions:

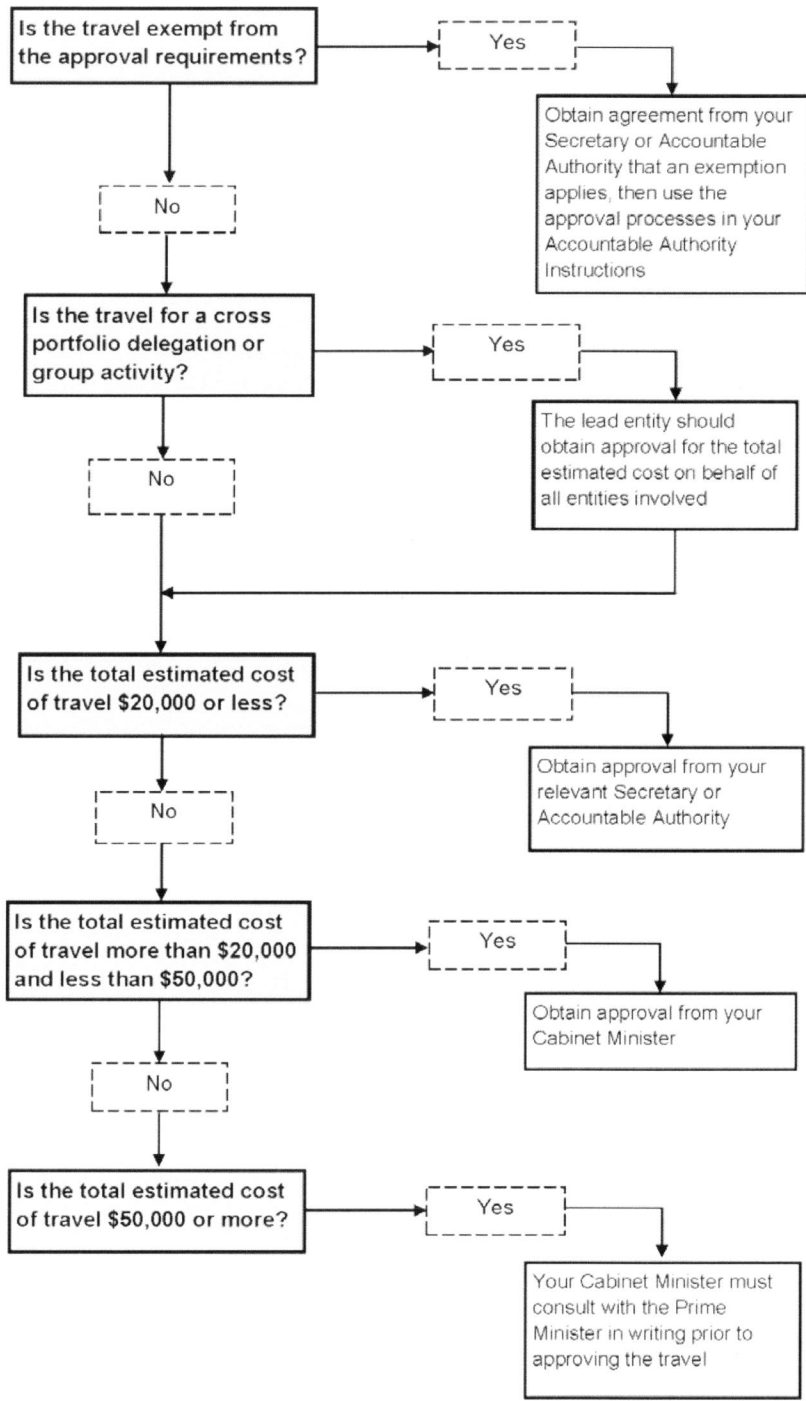
- i. The above approval requirements for international travel do not apply to the following list of essential operational activities to meet government policy objectives. The relevant Secretary or Accountable Authority must agree to the use of an exemption.

Additional exemptions to the list below, consistent with this policy, will need to be agreed by the relevant Portfolio Secretary and immediately advised to the Department of Finance.

Exemption:	Description:
National security operations and investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of essential national security interests • Personal protection
Immigration and Border Protection actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escort, repatriation and/or removal of illegal maritime arrivals and unlawful non-citizens • Biosecurity activities
Emergency and humanitarian responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign emergency aid and disaster relief, and medical evacuations
Defence, peace keeping and police deployments and operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance or restoration of international peace and security
Postings, missions and deployments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement of officials, family members or property

- ii. Where a Secretary or Accountable Authority has determined that an exemption applies, officials should continue to use relevant entity approval processes for international travel in accordance with the entity's Accountable Authority Instructions.

For All International Travel



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This policy sets out ComSuper's requirements for employees undertaking domestic and overseas official travel. This policy does not apply to contractors, sub-contractors or consultants.

This policy should be read within the context set by other relevant Commonwealth legislation, policies and ComSuper policies, including:

- *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act)*;
 - *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rules 2014 (PGPA Rules)*;
 - Commonwealth of Australia, Finance Circular No. 2012/04 – *Use of the Lowest Practical Fare for Official Domestic Air Travel*;
 - Commonwealth of Australia, Finance Circular No. 2012/05 *Use of the Best Fare of the Day for Official International Air Travel*;
 - Accountable Authority Instructions (AAIs);
 - ComSuper Enterprise Agreement 2011-2014; and
 - Australian Public Service (APS) Values and Code of Conduct as set out in Sections 10 and 13 of the *Public Service Act 1999*.
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SCOPE

This policy applies to all ComSuper employees, except where specifically stated otherwise.

ComSuper will meet reasonable costs of travel approved for official business purposes. This policy provides guidance on what constitutes reasonable costs, including the costs of meals, incidentals, transport and accommodation. Employees should neither lose nor gain financially as a result of undertaking official travel.

In accordance with the Accountable Authority Instructions, official travel must be approved, prior to booking, by an Delegate (please refer to definition). Please note that a Delegate can not approve their own travel arrangements.

Delegates approving official travel must ensure that travel:

- is necessary for the conduct of official business;
- is planned in a manner that avoids unnecessary and unreasonable costs, including employee time;
- details contained in the movement requisition are in accordance with the employee's proposed itinerary; and
- allowance and proposed class of travel are claimed in a manner consistent with this policy.

All travel for Branch Managers must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). In the CEO's absence, Branch Manager's travel may be approved by the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and in the absence of both the CEO and CFO, the Chief Governance Officer may approve Branch Manager's travel. In the absence of relevant Branch Managers, the CEO or CFO may approve any travel other than their own.

DEFINITIONS

Best Fare of the Day (BFOD): The best available international airfare that suits the practical business needs of the traveller.

Delegate: A person who has delegated authority under ComSuper's Financial Delegation Instrument to approve commitments of relevant money. For the purposes of this policy, the Delegate should be an EL2 or above, unless otherwise agreed with the relevant Branch Manager. Please note that this decision should be documented.

Lowest Practical Fare (LPF): The lowest fare available at the time the travel is booked on a regular service (not a charter flight), that suits the practical business needs of the traveller.

QBT Pty Ltd (QBT): ComSuper's contracted Travel Management Company (TMC) for all airfare bookings.

The AOT Group (AOT): ComSuper's contracted Accommodation Broker.

Europcar: ComSuper's car rental provider.

Thrifty: ComSuper's car rental provider.

Travel Coordinator: For the purpose of this policy, Executive Assistants (EAs) booking travel will be referred to as Travel Coordinators unless alternative arrangements have been made between relevant Branch Managers and the Chief Financial Officer.

POLICY

1. Assessing the need for travel

- 1.1 Delegates must be satisfied that the proposed travel represents an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of Commonwealth resources, consistent with requirements set out under Section 15 of the *PGPA Act*.
- 1.2 When considering proposals for travel, Delegates should consider whether alternate approaches such as teleconference or video conferencing offer satisfactory and more cost effective alternatives.

2. Planning considerations

2.1 Method and timing of travel

- 2.1.1 All travel must be essential for official purposes, i.e. necessary to conduct ComSuper business.
- 2.1.2 Travel arrangements should be planned in a manner that minimises the overall costs of the travel and the period of absence from duty.
- 2.1.3 Travel arrangements are to be made to accommodate a full working day at the travel destination, where practicable and cost effective. Early morning departures should be planned, wherever possible, in order to minimise the cost of travel. Employees are expected to travel in the morning between Canberra and Sydney or Melbourne unless official business requires otherwise. Night-before departures should only be approved by a Delegate after consideration of the travel circumstances. Examples include: flight duration and the start time at the destination. Branch Managers should factor in, as part of any decision making process, any additional travel allowance that may be payable.

2.2 Recognition of travel time - Flextime and Time Off In Lieu (TOIL)

- 2.2.1 Where an employee is required to undertake official travel, all time spent journeying en-route will be recorded as work hours. When approving official travel, Delegates should be mindful of Section 52 of the *ComSuper Enterprise Agreement 2011-2014*, which states that, 'where an APS1-6 employee is required to undertake official travel, the time spent travelling within the bandwidth will be recorded as work hours. Travel outside the bandwidth may be claimed as time off in lieu at single time rates. Executive Level staff who travel outside the bandwidth will receive TOIL for travel time on an hour for hour basis.
- 2.2.2 If leave or personal travel is approved in conjunction with official travel, flextime or TOIL may not be claimed for the personal time component.
- 2.2.3 Flextime and TOIL only applies to staff covered under ComSuper's Enterprise Agreement. Approval of travel related expenditure for contractors, sub-contractors or consultants, must be undertaken in accordance with terms and conditions set out in relevant contracts. At times, contracts maybe unclear regarding obligations of the parties. Where this occurs, specific arrangements, including what constitutes billable hours, must be discussed and agreed by both parties prior to approval of travel.

2.3 Insurance

- 2.3.1 ComSuper's insurance policies provide cover for ComSuper approved travel. ComSuper will not reimburse employees who elect to acquire additional travel insurance. Employees may, however, wish to obtain additional travel insurance, at their own expense, for non-work related events that may occur during personal periods or any periods of leave undertaken in

conjunction with official travel. For further information, please email the People, Strategies and Health team at whs@comsuper.gov.au.

- 2.3.2 ComSuper's insurance policies, with limitations and exclusions, also provide cover for authorised international travel. Employees travelling internationally must liaise with Corporate Governance to manage their personal risks. This may include a requirement to obtain medical clearance to travel.
- 2.3.3 ComSuper's insurance policies also provide other relevant insurance for both domestic and international travel including lost baggage and other incidents. Please refer to Corporate Governance for further details.
- 2.3.4 If an employee falls ill during official travel, they must contact their manager and email the People, Strategies and Health team at whs@comsuper.gov.au. Once the employee has returned to work, they must complete an Incident Report form.

2.4 Protective Security

- 2.4.1 During periods of official travel, employees must take particular care to protect ComSuper equipment and information from the possibility of theft or compromise.
- 2.4.2 In the event of damage and/or loss of ComSuper property and/or information whilst travelling, employees must contact the ComSuper Service Desk immediately by calling 6272 9111 and complete an Incident Report form as soon as possible after the event.

2.5 Leave or Private Travel in conjunction with official travel

- 2.5.1 For the purpose of this policy, leave or private travel in conjunction with official travel means allowing an employee to have extended time at a destination for private purposes.
- 2.5.2 The combining of leave (e.g. annual leave or flex) or personal travel with official travel should only occur in exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the relevant Branch Manager. The Branch Manager must ensure that:
 - there is no perception or suggestion that the official travel has been arranged to facilitate time at the travel destination for personal purposes;
 - the timing of the employee's extended absence does not adversely impact upon the employee's work; and
 - ComSuper does not incur any additional costs associated with approving the employee's request.
- 2.5.3 A Travel Allowance (TA) will not be paid during periods of leave or private travel taken in conjunction with official travel.
- 2.5.4 During periods of leave or private travel all accommodation, meals and other expenses are the sole responsibility of the employee.
- 2.5.5 Private travel arrangements are not to be made utilising ComSuper's accounts with any travel providers or paid for on a corporate credit card.
- 2.5.6 Please note that Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) may apply for private travel if employees wish to travel earlier than required for official business.
- 2.5.7 During periods of leave or private travel, employees are not covered by worker's compensation or general insurance provisions under ComSuper's insurance arrangements.
- 2.5.8 If an employee is granted a period of leave or private travel in conjunction with official travel, the employee will need to consider acquiring private insurance cover for the period of approved personal leave as worker's compensation coverage may cease and not extend to a resulting injury. All claims are subject to investigation by Comcare or Comcover, as appropriate.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Travellers

- 3.1.1 Employees undertaking official travel must ensure:

- they provide a detailed request for a quotation, including all necessary details for the intended trip, such as the destination and schedule, along with any special requests such as health and safety requirements to the Travel Coordinator. This request can be provided via email or verbally. Once the quote has been received, the Traveller is responsible for obtaining written approval from the Delegate and supplying the approval documentation to the Travel Coordinator so that they may proceed with booking the travel;
- private expenditure is not charged to ComSuper (e.g. on corporate credit cards);
- wherever possible, prior written approval from a Delegate has been obtained for any variations to approved travel which would have the effect of altering fares or TA entitlements. Where this is not practicable, variations must be noted on the *Movement Requisition Acquittal Form* and submitted for approval to a Delegate upon completion of the travel;
- a *Movement Requisition Acquittal Form* is completed within 7 days of returning from travel when there has been an amendment to travel costs/itinerary. Where there are no changes the original *Movement Requisition Form* stands; and
- they cancel reservations when travel is no longer required, and if a cancellation fee applies, Travellers must advise the Financial Administration Support Team for ComSuper to pay the cancellation fee.

3.2 Delegates approving official travel

3.2.1 Delegates approving official travel must ensure:

- that they thoroughly review the quote received from the Traveller before providing approval;
- the travel represents value for money in accordance with requirements of the *PGPA Act*;
- approved funds are available to meet expenditure commitments;
- the employee is not receiving a TA for meals already included (for example, a conference where lunch is included in the package); and
- decisions are defensible, objective and can withstand public scrutiny.

3.3 Travel Coordinators

3.3.1 All travel, unless otherwise agreed with the owner of this policy, must be booked only by the Travel Coordinator. Travel Coordinators are responsible for managing the preparation and submission of *Movement Requisition Forms* including the calculation of the TA.

Travel Coordinators must ensure:

- that when obtaining quotes and planning travel, they assess all available options, taking into account variables such as flight times, prices, motor vehicles, parking, Cabcharge requirements and traveller's time away from duty to obtain the best value for money from the booking;
- written approval has been obtained from an appropriate Delegate before booking any travel;
- all domestic flight bookings are made through the QBT On-line Booking Tool as this, represents value for money and complies with the *Lowest Practical Fare for Official Domestic Air Travel (LPF)* and *Best Fare of the Day for International Travel (IBF)* principles. Exceptions to this are listed at paragraph 6.1.3;
 - that either Europcar or Thrifty is used for all hire car bookings;
 - that accommodation is booked solely with the AOT Group;
 - a *Movement Requisition Form* is completed on behalf of the employee travelling and submitted to Accounts Payable within 7 days of the booking; and
 - TA is calculated using the TA calculator (available on the intranet) and attached to the *Movement Requisition Form*.

4. Travel Allowance and Incidentals

- 4.1 The payment of a TA is intended to cover reasonable living costs incurred when employees are required to travel away from their home location on official duty. TA rates vary depending upon whether the travel is based in a capital city, high cost country area or other regional/country location.
- 4.2 No TA will be paid if an employee is travelling for a continuous period of less than 10 hours.
- 4.3 If travel involves an overnight stay, the TA should be calculated using the TA calculator (available on the intranet) and attached to the *Movement Requisition Form*. This is because TA is also payable for meals and incidentals where an overnight stay is involved.
- 4.4 If an employee is travelling for a continuous period of more than 10 hours, but not overnight they are eligible for a part day TA payment of \$60. A copy of the *Movement Requisition Form* must be forwarded to Personnel in addition to Accounts Payable to facilitate this payment. Please note that a TA is taxable and will appear on payment summaries.
- 4.5 For air travel, the TA is calculated from one hour before the scheduled departure time, to allow for check-in and boarding procedures, to one hour after the scheduled return time to allow for deplaning and baggage collection. For all other means of transportation, the allowance is based on the actual time of departure and arrival. Employees undertaking official travel are paid a daily incidental allowance to cover out-of pocket expenses, such as:
- tips and gratuities;
 - laundry and dry cleaning;
 - newspapers and magazines;
 - private transport costs;
 - batteries, electrical adaptors and locks for luggage; and
 - refreshments and bottled water.
- 4.6 A TA will not be paid during periods of leave or private travel taken in conjunction with official travel.
- 4.7 Approval of travel related expenditure for contractors, sub-contractors or consultants, must be undertaken in accordance with terms and conditions set out in relevant contracts. At times, contracts maybe unclear regarding obligations of the parties. Where this occurs, specific arrangements, including what constituted billable hours, must be discussed and agreed by both parties prior to the approval of travel.

5. Variations to Planned Travel

- 5.1 Where significant changes occur to travel arrangements prior to departure, the Delegate should approve the changed circumstances before the employee commences travel. If the changes occur post departure, the employee travelling must submit an approved *Movement Requisition Acquittal Form* to Accounts Payable within 7 days of returning from travel.
- 5.2 Where changes to travel has resulted in an over (or under) payment of a TA, the Traveller must email accountspayable@comsuper.gov.au as soon as practical and they will arrange for payment or an invoice as necessary.

6. Flights

6.1 Domestic and International Flights

- 6.1.1 All flights must be booked using the QBT On-line Booking Tool (OBT). The only exception is in instances where a complex itinerary, often including multiple destinations and carriers, requires consultation with a QBT agent. Flights may be booked over the phone with a QBT consultant in such instances. Please be aware that this will attract a higher booking fee. Please contact the Contracts and Property Services (CaPS) team for more information.

6.1.2 All fares booked must represent value for money and comply with the *Use of the Lowest Practical Fare for Official Domestic Air Travel* and *Use of the Best Fare of the Day for Official International Air Travel* principles, being the lowest available fare available on the day the travel is booked, on a regular scheduled service and which suits the practical needs of the traveller.

6.1.3 There are a limited number of valid reasons for not selecting the LPF/IBF, all of which require specific endorsement from the Delegate. These reasons include:

- health and safety issues which necessitate that an employee can only be booked on flights that have certain facilities;
- absence of connecting flights;
- unsuitable flight times;
- uncertainty about the time a meeting will conclude; and
- achieving a balance between family life and work.

In the event selecting the LPF/IBF options are not feasible, the next lowest possible fare that suits the practical business needs of the traveller should be considered. Fully flexible fares should be used only in limited circumstances e.g. where a fully flexible fare is the LPF.

6.1.4 Stated preferences for particular airlines, specific airline lounge membership or upgrades are not acceptable reasons to justify an airfare.

6.1.5 The class of domestic travel is economy unless otherwise specified in individual employment contracts. Please direct any queries regarding international travel to the Financial Management Branch.

6.2 Airline Lounge Memberships

6.2.1 Branch Managers may approve airline lounge corporate membership for employees on the basis of an anticipated need for regular official travel equating to a minimum of 24 flight sectors per year unless otherwise specified in individual employment contracts. A flight sector is defined as a single flight between 2 destinations (e.g. Canberra – Sydney equates to 1 flight sector).

6.2.2 All membership costs are paid for out of the Branch's cost centre and decisions must be documented as required by the Accountable Authority Instructions (e.g. *PGPA Act* Section 23 (3) approval). The corporate membership rates are available from the CaPS team. Please email caps@comsuper.gov.au.

6.2.3 ComSuper discourages the use of corporate airline lounge memberships for private travel.

6.2.4 Airline lounge memberships at corporate rates are also available to any ComSuper employee wishing to join at their own expense. Employees wishing to take advantage of this arrangement should contact CaPS for further information.

6.2.5 Employees ceasing employment with ComSuper must relinquish their airline lounge membership to CaPS during the cessation process.

6.3 Frequent Flyer Membership

6.3.1 Qantas Frequent Flyer points do not accrue on official travel, but status credits will continue to accrue.

7. Accommodation

7.1 All accommodation must be booked through the AOT Group.

7.2 Accommodation should be sought as close as practicable to the official travel destination and represent value for money.

7.3 ComSuper will not pay for accommodation costs that exceed the ComSuper accommodation allowance rates (available on the intranet). Travellers must pay, at check-out, all costs in addition to allowance rates approved by ComSuper and must not charge the corporate credit card for amounts in excess of allowance rates approved by ComSuper.

8. Ground Transport

8.1 Public Transport

- 8.1.1 Employees are encouraged to use public transport where practical, taking into account cost effectiveness, travel time and personal safety.

8.2 Taxis

- 8.2.1 Taxis are another preferred method of travel for official business in the ACT and at official travel destinations. Vouchers are available from Branch EAs, or other nominated officers, subject to Delegate approval.
- 8.2.2 Employees who have a frequent need to use taxis may apply to their Cost Centre Manager to be issued with a Cabcharge card.
- 8.2.3 All employees with Cabcharge cards must reconcile their expenditure on a monthly basis. Receipts must be retained to verify the expenditure. Employees issued with Cabcharge vouchers must ensure that vouchers and receipts are retained and provided to the Branch EA. Where Cabcharge vouchers are lost, the employee must report the matter immediately to their Branch EA. Cabcharge cards must not be used for private purposes.
- 8.2.4 If Cabcharge vouchers or Cabcharge cards are not accepted, the employee should, in the first instance, pay for the taxi fare and ask for a receipt. Reimbursement for the fare should then be sought through the normal procedures upon completion of travel.

8.3 SES Fleet Vehicles

- 8.3.1 Currently the Chief Operations Officer, APS Schemes and the Chief Governance Officer both have an SES fleet vehicle. Employees may contact their two respective EAs to arrange for the use of these vehicles where available. It is important to note that you must return these vehicles in a timely manner as not to inconvenience the respective Executive officers.

8.4 Car Rental

- 8.4.1 Car rental is the preferred method of transport for interstate travel where a flight is impractical.
- 8.4.2 ComSuper has an agreement with Europcar and Thrifty to provide car rental to ComSuper employees. Vehicle rental should be charged to the ComSuper account. When booking a rental car, please ensure that you quote the corporate scheme numbers and provide a cost centre and movement requisition number.
- 8.4.3 When selecting a rental vehicle, the following factors should be considered:
- Number of passengers;
 - Travel distance; and
 - The destination.

Employees should book compact or economy vehicles where possible. Intermediate vehicles should only be selected where there are more than two passengers. For further guidance, please contact CaPS.

- 8.4.4 The use of rental vehicles for official transport is to be limited to the following journeys:
- for official travel in connection with the purpose of an official visit ; and/or
 - from residence, accommodation or office of an employee to the location of the car rental on the day of departure and return.
- 8.4.5 Where practicable, the rental vehicle should be collected by the driver. Delegates can nominate a ComSuper employee other than the driver to collect the vehicle. The nominee must present a valid drivers license and ComSuper ID at the point of collection and will be held liable for all matters relating to the vehicle, including traffic infringements, irrespective of whether they will be the actual driver for the journey. Please note that all drivers must hold a current driver's license.
- 8.4.6 Rental car additional costs, such as parking should be paid for with a corporate credit card where possible.

- 8.4.7 A fuel card will be provided with all rental cars. It is important that Travellers fill the car up only at the service station(s) identified on the fuel card. Travellers should not use a government or personal credit card to refuel the rental car.
- 8.4.8 Rental vehicles do not need to be returned with a full tank. Fuel cost is calculated on how many kilometres are driven. So therefore the cost will remain the same regardless of whether the vehicle is returned with half a tank or refuelled with the fuel card prior to return.
- 8.4.9 Any traffic or parking infringement incurred while driving a rental vehicle is the personal responsibility of the driver.
- 8.4.10 When a vehicle used for official travel is involved in an accident or is stolen, employees must, as appropriate, notify the police, vehicle rental company or insurance company, People, Strategies and Health team at whs@comsuper.gov.au and any other relevant authority. Under no circumstances should liability for an accident be admitted.
- 8.4.11 Misuse or abuse of a rental vehicle outside the terms or conditions of the rental agreement may result in personal liability.

8.5 Use of Private Vehicles

- 8.5.1 If travel by car is considered necessary, the use of a rental car is the preferred option.
- 8.5.2 Employees must not use a private vehicle for official travel to locations beyond a radius of 100kms from ComSuper unless value for money can be proven. In this instance, the value for money assessment should include any motor vehicle allowances versus the cost of the car hire, taxi fares to and from the location of car hire, fuel, plus any additional costs, such as overtime, that can be directly attributed to the car hire proposal and any difference in other incidental costs e.g. tolls or parking. This is designed to limit the risk-exposure of the Commonwealth from a workers compensation and general insurance perspective, and, at the same time provide reasonable flexibility for practical purposes.
- 8.5.3 For travel to locations beyond a radius of 100kms from ComSuper, employees must seek prior approval from Branch Managers or the CEO before using a private motor vehicle. Branch Managers must obtain CEO approval for their own use of private vehicle for official purposes.
- 8.5.4 Use of private vehicles for official purposes beyond a radius of 100kms from ComSuper must be approved only in circumstances where it is clearly demonstrated that the use of a private motor vehicle by an employee continues to represent value for money. In approving such requests, Delegates must also, to reasonable extent possible, satisfy themselves that:
 - the vehicle has comprehensive insurance in place to cover any accidents or mechanical failure;
 - registration is current;
 - the employee holds a current driver's license; and
 - it is an efficient, effective, ethical and economic use of relevant money.
- 8.5.5 If the use of a private motor vehicle is approved, the Traveller is entitled to a 'cents per kilometre' Motor Vehicle Allowance (MVA) that does not exceed the cost of the lowest practical airfare or total cost of the hire car option for the equivalent journey. This 'cents per kilometre' rate will be based on the most up to date tax deductible mileage rates published on the ATO website.
- 8.5.6 MVA will only be paid on the completion of the journey. The starting and ending odometer reading must be recorded on the *Movement Requisition Acquittal Form* on return from travel. This amount is processed through the payroll system so that it can be appropriately taxed.
- 8.5.7 The ATO published kilometre rate for the 2011-12 financial year:

Engine Capacity		Cents per km
Ordinary Car	Rotary Engine Car	2011-12 Rate
1600cc (1.6 litre) or less	800cc (0.8 litre) or less	63 cents

1601cc – 2600cc (1.601 litre – 2.6 litre)	801cc – 1300cc (0.801 litre – 1.3 litre)	74 cents
2601cc (2.601 litre) and over	1301cc (1.301 litre) and over	75 cents

8.5.8 Any traffic or parking infringements incurred whilst using a private vehicle approved for business purposes, is the personal responsibility of the driver.

8.5.9 MVA will not be paid for the use of Executive Vehicle Scheme (EVS) or salary sacrificed vehicles.

8.5.10 Employees in receipt of an allowance in lieu of an EVS vehicle are not entitled to claim MVA.

8.6 Vehicle Parking and Tolls

8.6.1 Any road tolls paid during official travel may be reimbursed subject to satisfactory evidence of expenditure.

8.6.2 ComSuper will reimburse parking fees incurred during official travel subject to the provision of satisfactory evidence of expenditure. Where possible, employees are required to obtain a receipt or other documentary evidence of parking fee expenses. Subject to the relevant Delegate's consideration, reimbursement without receipt may be appropriate where the employee completes a statutory declaration.

For further information, please contact the Financial Management Branch. Please note that Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are available on the intranet at <http://intranet/workplace/travel.php>.

EXCEPTIONS

Any requests for deviation from this policy should be directed to the CFO.

DRIVER

ComSuper is a non-corporate Commonwealth entity and must comply with PGPA legislation. This policy was created to ensure that ComSuper staff are aware of the important considerations when arranging and approving travel. It is not intended to discourage travel, but to provide a guide to staff.

Travel and associated expenses are contentious and often requested at Senate Estimate Hearings or through Questions on Notice. Therefore, it is critical that appropriate processes are followed.

CONSEQUENCES

If a ComSuper staff member is seen to be acting inappropriately with regards to travel as outlined in this policy, it may be considered a breach of the following:

- Public Service Act Section 15, maximum penalty: termination of employment; and
- Criminal Code s141.1 (3) and 142.1(3), maximum penalty: imprisonment for 10 years.

Breach of the *PGPA Act* is covered by the *Criminal Code Act 1995*.

The Financial Management Branch will, for due diligence, internal control and testing for compliance with the policy from time to time, review or audit all, or a sample of travel and accommodation related expenditure. Delegates will be informed of identified discrepancies, emerging trends or areas of concern.