

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S PORTFOLIO

Program: General

Question No. AE16/080

Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 9 February 2016:

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

1. What has been the Department/Agency's hospitality spend including any catering and drinks costs.
2. For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, please detail total hospitality spend. Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
3. What has been the Department/Agency's entertainment spend? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
4. For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, please detail total entertainment spend. Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
5. What hospitality spend is the Department/Agency's planning on spending? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
6. For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, what hospitality spend is currently being planned for? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
7. What entertainment spend is the Department/Agency's planning on spending? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
8. For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, what entertainment spend is currently being planned for? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
9. Is the Department/Agency planning on reducing any of its spending on these items? If so, how will reductions be achieved?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

1. To attempt to provide the level of detail requested from the portfolio would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources. The Department and applicable portfolio agencies manage hospitality expenditure in accordance with obligations under the Commonwealth's financial framework, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

2. The hospitality spend for the Attorney-General's Office for the period 14 September 2015 to 9 February 2016 was approximately \$3,200.91.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
27 October 2015	Spice Route Restaurant, New Delhi, India	Official dinner with senior legal and constitutional experts	\$2,627.40
1 December 2015	Senate Courtyard 28K, Parliament House	End of year portfolio drinks hosted by the Attorney-General. Including addresses by the Attorney, Minister Keenan and Senator Fierravanti- Wells to the group	\$573.51

The hospitality spend for the Minister for Justice's Office for the period 14 September 2015 to 9 February 2016 was approximately \$1,994.52.

Date	Location	Purpose	Cost
27 September 2015	Benjamin Steakhouse, New York, USA	Official lunch hosted by Minister with Under Secretary US Department of Homeland Security, and Australian delegation	\$1,141.43
28 September 2015	Australian Mission to the UN, New York, USA	Official lunch with Mr Peter Drennan, UN Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security	\$318.49
7 October 2015	Epocha Restaurant, Melbourne	Lunch engagement with Islamic community leaders	\$534.60

3. To attempt to provide the level of detail requested for the portfolio would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources.

4. See the response to question 2.

5. To attempt to provide the level of detail requested for the portfolio would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources.

6. Any expenditure will occur, as required, during the normal course of the minister's activities.

7. To attempt to provide the level of detail requested for the portfolio would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources.

8. See the response to question 6.

9. Decisions to incur expenditure of this type are based on an assessment of expenditure being modest, within budget, and appropriate to the circumstances. There is no plan to change this approach.