

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee**
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 108
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Corporate
Programme: Corporate Strategies Division
Topic: Portfolio wide – Travel costs department/agency officers
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 7 March 2014
Question Type: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

From 7 September 2013, detail all travel 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).

From 7 September 2013, 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.

What travel is planned for the rest of this calendar year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.

Answer:

Department of the Environment (the Department)

- a) The department does not retain separate records of departmental officers travelling with, or accompanying the Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, it is therefore not possible to provide this data.
- b) Travel is undertaken to ensure the Australian Government or the Department's domestic and international interests and obligations are met. The table below outlines travel expenditure from 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014 (GST inclusive).

Travel Expense	Amount \$
International Airfares	1,133,961
International Accommodation & Allowances	111,692
International Other Expenses	20,151
Domestic Airfares	848,517
Domestic Accommodation & Allowances	936,587
Domestic Other Expenses	82,164
Total	3,133,072

A more detailed breakdown of travel expenditure is not available as it is not recorded below the above categories within the Department's financial system.

- c) For the rest of this calendar year, 1 February to 31 December 2014, 58 international and 760 domestic trips are scheduled. Travel is undertaken to ensure the Australian Government's or the Department's domestic and international interests and obligations are met.

Director of National Parks (the Director)

- a) The Director does not retain separate records of officers travelling with, or accompanying the Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, it is therefore not possible to provide this travel data.
- b) Travel is undertaken to ensure the Australian Government or the Director's domestic and international interests and obligations are met. The table below outlines travel expenditure from 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014 (GST inclusive).

Travel Expense	Amount \$
International Airfares	38,330
International Accommodation & Allowances	7,665
International Other Expenses	1,191
Domestic Airfares	100,290
Domestic Accommodation & Allowances	65,158
Domestic Other Expenses	4,613
Total	217,247

A more detailed breakdown of travel expenditure is not available as it is not recorded below the above categories within the Department's financial system.

- c) For the rest of this calendar year, 1 February to 31 December 2014, 80 domestic trips are planned. Travel is undertaken to ensure the Australian Government or the Director's domestic and international interests and obligations are met.

Bureau of Meteorology (the Bureau)

- a) Nil for the period 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014.
- b) Travel is undertaken to ensure the Australian Government's or the Bureau's domestic and international interests and obligations are met.

The table below outlines travel expenditure from 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014 (GST inclusive).

Travel Expense	Amount \$
International Airfares	489,158
International Accommodation & Allowances	349,146
International Other Expenses	238
Domestic Airfares	905,785
Domestic Accommodation & Allowances	1,621,281
Domestic Other Expenses	349,156
Total	3,714,764

*Data sourced from GL Account for the period 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014

- c) The Bureau is unable to provide an estimate of planned travel without unreasonable diversion of resources.

Climate Change Authority (the Authority)

- a) Nil for the period 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014.
- b) Travel is undertaken to ensure the Australian Government or the Authority's domestic and international interests and obligations are met.

The table below outlines travel expenditure from 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014 (GST inclusive).

Travel Expense	Amount \$
International Airfare	4,159
International Accommodation	2,259
Domestic Airfares	17,491
Domestic Accommodation	14,501
Domestic Other Expenses	10,708
Total	49,118

- c) Not identified, however any upcoming travel will be undertaken to ensure the Australian Government or the Authority's domestic and international interests and obligations are met.

Clean Energy Regulator (the Regulator)

- a) The Regulator does not retain separate records of agency officers travelling with or accompanying the Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, therefore it is not possible to provide this travel data.
- b) Travel is undertaken to ensure the Australian Government or the Regulator's domestic and international interests and obligations are met.

The table below outlines travel expenditure for 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014.

Travel Expense	Amount \$
International Airfares	29,055
International Accommodation	5,221
International Allowances	6,573
Domestic Airfares	106,339
Domestic Accommodation	40,242
Domestic Allowances	48,674
Total	236,104

- c) Further travel is expected to be undertaken to conduct official business. Travel will be approved on an as needs basis consistent with ensuring the Australian Government or the Regulator's domestic and international interests and obligations are met.

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (the Authority)

- a) The Authority does not retain separate records of agency officers travelling with or accompanying the Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, therefore it is not possible to provide this travel data.
- b) Travel is undertaken to ensure the Australian Government or the Authority's domestic and international interests and obligations are met. The table below outlines travel expenditure from 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014 (GST inclusive).

Travel Expense	Amount \$
International Airfares	75,990
International Accommodation & Allowances	28,123
International Other Expenses	10,214
Domestic Airfares	306,680
Domestic Accommodation & Allowances	292,554
Domestic Other Expenses	2,600
Total	716,161

- c) Further travel will occur this calendar year to ensure the Australian Government or the Department's domestic and international interests and obligations are met. Since 1 February 2014, 256 trips have been booked.

Murray-Darling Basin Authority (the Authority)

- a) During the period 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014, the Authority's officers did not accompany the Minister and/or Parliamentary Secretary on their travel. Senator Birmingham however did participate in one of the Authority's Constraints Management Strategy regional meetings in Mildura on 14 October 2013.
- b) Travel is undertaken to ensure the Australian Government or the Authority's domestic and international interests and obligations are met.

The table below outlines travel expenditure from 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014 (GST inclusive).

Travel Expense	Amount \$
International Airfares	4,645
International Accommodation & Allowances	13,973
International - Other Expenses	1,561
Domestic Airfares	150,411
Domestic Accommodation & Allowances	72,198
Domestic Other Expenses	7,458
Total	250,246

- c) At 31 January 2014 there were 93 trips planned for the rest of this calendar year. Travel is undertaken to ensure the Australian Government or the Authority's domestic and international interests and obligations are met.

National Water Commission (the Commission)

- a) Nil for the period 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014.
- b) Travel is undertaken to ensure the Australian Government or the Department's domestic and international interests and obligations are met..

The table below outlines travel expenditure from 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014 (GST inclusive).

Travel Expense	Amount \$
International Airfares	-
International Accommodation & Allowances	-
International Other Expenses	-
Domestic Airfares	65,158
Domestic Accommodation & Allowances	21,312
Domestic Other Expenses	15,868
Total	102,338

A more detailed breakdown of travel expenditure is not available as it is not recorded below the above categories within the Commission's financial system. The Commission does not provide staff with travelling allowance; reasonable accommodation and meal costs are paid using a Commission credit card.

- c) Travel is currently planned for 15 business meetings with jurisdictions about progress with implementation of reform activities; attendance at seminars and conferences including where the Commission is providing speakers; formal Commission meetings; and conduct of a stakeholder engagement forum. The Commission's Chair will be travelling overseas as a key note speaker at two international conferences.

Sydney Harbour Federation Trust (the Trust)

- a) Nil for the period 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014.
- b) Travel is undertaken to ensure the Australian Government or the Trust's domestic and international interests and obligations are met. The table below outlines travel expenditure from 7 September 2013 to 31 January 2014 (GST inclusive).

Travel Expense	Amount \$
International Airfares	501
International Accommodation & Allowances	0
International Other Expenses	0
Domestic Airfares all Economy class	4,455
Domestic Accommodation & Allowances	1,827
Domestic Other Expenses	289
Total	7,072

- c) The Chair of the Trust and members of the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee will be required to travel to Sydney from Canberra to attend regular meetings in Sydney. The Manager of Volunteers is to travel to the USA to observe the volunteer program of the Presidio and Golden Gate National Park. The travel was originally booked for late 2013 but was cancelled due to closure of parks in the USA at the time.