

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

**Question No:** 114  
**Outcome:** Corporate  
**Programme:** Corporate Strategies Division  
**Topic:** Portfolio wide – Meeting Costs  
**Hansard Page:** N/A  
**Question Date:** 4 March 2014  
**Question Type:** Written

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

a) What is the Department/Agency's meeting spend from Supplementary Budget Estimates in November 2013 to date? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events, including any catering and drinks costs.

b) For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, please detail total meeting spend from Supplementary Budget Estimates in November 2013 to date. Detail date, location, purpose and cost of each event including any catering and drinks costs.

c) What meeting spend is the Department/Agency's planning on spending? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.

d) For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, what meeting spend is currently being planned for? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of each event including any catering and drinks costs.

**Answer:**

a) The Department and the majority of Agencies do not track meeting expenditure separately so this information is not readily available. To determine the amount spent on meetings would require a manual review of individual invoices which would be a substantial and unreasonable diversion of resources for the Department and Agencies.

The National Water Commission spent \$1,894.45 (GST inclusive) on meeting costs from 1 November 2013 to 31 January 2014. Details of date, location, purpose and cost of all events are listed below.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Cost</b>
08/11/2013	Perth	Stakeholder workshop to assisting in obtaining evidence for Triennial Assessment outcomes.	\$1,092.00
18/11/2013	Canberra	Meeting with Stakeholder Reference Group for consultation on Commission work program.	\$579.70
19/11/2013	Canberra	Commission meeting as required under the <i>National Water Commission Act 2004</i> .	\$222.75

The Climate Change Authority (CCA) spent \$3,719.89 (GST inclusive) on meeting costs from 1 November 2013 to 31 January 2014. Details of date, location, purpose and cost of all events are listed below.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Cost</b>
12/11/2013	CCA Offices	Authority meeting/event	\$57.00
14/11/2013	Park Hyatt, Melbourne	Stakeholder meeting	\$518.85
22/11/2013	Hyatt Hotel, Canberra	Stakeholder meeting	\$581.92
25/11/2013	Park Hyatt, Melbourne	Stakeholder meeting	\$518.85
26/11/2013	Sofitel Wentworth, Sydney	Stakeholder meeting	\$1,486.97
10/12/2013	CCA Offices	Authority meeting	\$268.20
31/01/2014	CCA Offices	Authority meeting	\$288.10

- b) The Department did not meet the cost of meetings for the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary in relation to their portfolio responsibilities during the period from 1 November 2013 to 31 January 2014.

Details of expenditure on entitlements is compiled every six months in a report titled Parliamentarians' Expenditure on Entitlements paid by the Department of Finance. The reports and supporting information are published on the Finance website.

While Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries may attend meetings in relation to their portfolio responsibilities, the Department does not track meeting expenditure separately so this information is not readily available.

- c) The Department and the majority of Agencies do not track planned meeting expenditure within their budgetary and finance systems therefore this information is not available.

Further meetings of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Board, Audit Committee, and Local Marine Advisory Committees will be held this financial year.

Planned meeting expenditure for the National Water Commission are set out in the table below:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Cost</b>
07/02/2014	Melbourne	Commission meeting as required under the <i>National Water Commission Act 2004</i> .	\$500.00
01/04/2014	Canberra	Commission meeting as required under the <i>National Water Commission Act 2004</i> .	\$250.00
08/05/2014	Canberra	Meeting with Stakeholder Reference Group for consultation on the Commission's 2014-15 work program.	\$600.00
05/06/2014	Canberra	Commission meeting as required under the <i>National Water Commission Act 2004</i> .	\$250.00

- d) See answer to question b, above.