

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates 2012

15 – 17 February 2012

Question: AET 295 - 298

Topic: Travel Costs (ASIC)

Hansard Page: Written

Senator BUSHBY asked:

295. For the financial year to date, please detail all travel (itemised separately) undertaken by employees of each department and agency within each portfolio. Include details of what the travel was for, what cost was spent on travel (including travel type – i.e. business airfare), accommodation, security, food, beverages (alcohol listed separately), gifts, entertainment, and all other expenses.
296. Are employees taking the most direct route when travelling? If not, please explain why.
297. Are lounge memberships provided to any employees? If yes, what lounge memberships, to how many employees and their classification, the reason for the provision of lounge membership and the cost per employee.
298. When SES employees travel, do any support or administrative staff (such as their Executive Assistant) travel with them? If yes, provide details of why such a staff member is needed and the costs of the support staff travel.

Answer

295. Travel expenses incurred by ASIC from 1 July 2011 to 31 January 2012 are detailed below:

	\$ excl GST
Domestic Airfares	844,454.54
Domestic Accommodation	436,682.87
Domestic Railfares & cab fares	353,288.69
Domestic Travel Allowance	191,109.50
Overseas Fares	167,979.45
Overseas Accommodation	31,884.82
Overseas Travel Allowance	21,196.25
Overseas Railfares & cab fares	1,273.58
Total domestic and overseas related travel expenses	2,047,869.70

In relation to domestic travel, ASIC does not track expenditure against classes of flights; however, the travel policy outlines that all staff must travel Economy class for domestic travel with the exception of:

- Commissioners who are entitled to fly business class; and

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- Senior Executive Leaders who are entitled to fly business class on flights where the duration is greater than 2 hours.

For travel outside Australia, ASIC does not track expenditure against classes of flights; however, the staff are entitled to travel business class for international travel, with the exception of Commission members who are entitled to fly first class.

However, while Commissioners are entitled to first class travel via the Remuneration Tribunal Determinations, they are no longer flying first class except in exceptional circumstances and on medical advice.

ASIC employees required to travel on official business are paid a travel allowance unless meals are provided (for example, breakfast included as part of the accommodation cost). ASIC does not record travel related food, beverage and entertainment costs in a way that would readily allow answers to be provided to these questions. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.

296. In line with Whole of Australian Government (WOAG) travel guidelines, employees book the Lowest Practical Fare (LPF) which in most cases is the most direct route.
297. ASIC's policy states that only SES level or SES equivalent staff are entitled to lounge memberships. The cost of these memberships are not recorded in a manner that enables us to respond fully to this question.
298. When SES travel, administrative or support staff do not travel with them unless there is an extraordinary business requirement.