

Senate Economics Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Supplementary Budget Estimates, 2 - 3 November 2005

Question: SBT 26

Topic: Treasury Staff Located in Paris, Beijing, Jakarta, Tokyo & Washington

Hansard Page: E77

Senator Sherry asked:

Can you take these questions on notice:

1. What is each of their roles, their seniority;
2. The length of their postings;
3. Financial assistance they receive for accommodation, return travel etc;
4. Where they work; &
5. The cost to Treasury

Answer:

1. The Treasury has six overseas posts, each with an Australia-based officer posted to it. The posts are in Beijing, Jakarta, Paris, Tokyo and Washington. There are two posts collocated in Paris — one is part of the Australian Delegation to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), while the other, relocated in late 2003 from the Australian High Commission in London, is the Treasury's representative to several European countries and the European Commission, with a secondary function of back-up in the OECD post. The Australia-based officer based in Jakarta is the Treasury's representative not only to Indonesia but also to Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

The Australia-based officers each have one or two locally-engaged assistants, except for the officer at the Europe post who shares the resources of the OECD post. The Australia-based officer and his or her assistants are together referred to as the post.

The role of the OECD post is to represent the Treasurer and the Treasury in the activities of the OECD, both directly and by supporting the participation of Ministers and officials in the OECD's meetings and other processes.

The roles of the other five posts are essentially similar. They play a key role in the Treasury's international engagement, and as units within their respective embassies help to support Australia's overarching diplomatic and economic objectives. They do this through combinations of:

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- policy development — identification of issues and risks, design of initiatives, and management of issues in the host and other countries;
- policy implementation — notably through engaging in policy dialogue with counterparts;
- public information and understanding — including extensive engagement with contacts to gather information, promote Australian interests and exchange views in policy discussions;
- administration of programs — for example, managing ministerial and officials' visits — and of the post.

The current seniorities of the Australia-based officers at the Treasury's overseas posts are:

Beijing	SES1 (acting)
Europe	EL2
Jakarta	EL2
OECD	SES2
Tokyo	SES1
Washington	SES1

2. The periods agreed for the current postings are:

Beijing	3 years
Europe	3 years
Jakarta	3 years
OECD	3 years
Tokyo	Initially for 3 years, extended by 5 months
Washington	Initially for 3 years, may be extended by 3 months.

3. The table below shows what financial assistance has been received by Treasury's posted officers to meet personal expenses of various kinds related to their postings. The financial assistance shown includes payments for officers' residential accommodation and return travel, as noted in the Senator's question, together with all other personal allowances and reimbursements. It includes financial assistance in the forms both of payments to officers and of payments by the Treasury on officers' behalf. It does not include remuneration — mainly salary and superannuation — which would be equally payable to the officers if they were working in the Treasury in Canberra. For each of the posts, the table shows totals of such amounts paid to the Australia-based posted officer or the officer's predecessor in the last three financial years, and annual averages for those three years. The table combines amounts for the occupants of the Europe and OECD posts, which are processed through a single cost centre.

	<i>Beijing</i>	<i>Jakarta</i>	<i>Europe & OECD</i>	<i>Tokyo</i>	<i>Washington</i>
<i>TOTAL over 3 years</i>	\$601,297	\$301,329	\$886,546	\$589,855	\$314,058
<i>Average annual amount</i>	\$200,432	\$100,443	\$295,516	\$196,618	\$104,686

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4. Each Treasury overseas post is located within an Australian embassy. The OECD post, with the rest of the Australian Delegation to the OECD, is collocated with the Australian Embassy to France. The respective embassies are located as follows.

Beijing

Australian Embassy
21 Dongzhimerwai Dajie
Sanlitun Beijing **China**

Europe and OECD

Australian Delegation to the OECD
4 Rue Jean Rey
Paris **France**

Jakarta

Australian Embassy
Jalan H.R. Rasuna Said Kay
Jakarta Selatan **Indonesia**

Tokyo

Australian Embassy
2-1-14 Mita
Minato-ku Tokyo **Japan**

Washington

Australian Embassy
1601 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington DC **USA**

5. The table below shows costs to the Treasury of the six posts in the last three financial years, and annual averages for those three years. These costs include the financial assistance described in (3) above, and in addition the costs of office accommodation, locally-engaged staff and other operating expenses of each post. In this table, costs of the Europe and OECD posts are combined, and include costs incurred in London before and during the relocation of the Europe post.

	<i>Beijing</i>	<i>Jakarta</i>	<i>Europe & OECD</i>	<i>Tokyo</i>	<i>Washington</i>
<i>Total cost over 3 years</i>	\$2,090,456	\$944,191	\$3,171,634	\$3,094,121	\$1,517,840
<i>Average annual cost</i>	\$696,819	\$314,730	\$1,057,211	\$1,031,374	\$505,947