

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing 2013-14
21 November 2013

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY

TOPIC: Travel Costs

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Ludwig

QUESTION No.: SI-168

1. For the financial year to date, please 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).
2. For the financial year to date, please 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.
3. What travel is planned for the rest of the financial year from 7 September? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
4. What travel is planned for the rest of this calendar year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
5. What is the policy for business class airfare tickets?
6. 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 total costs of the lounge memberships.
7. When SES employees travel, do any support or administrative staff (such as an 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.
8. Does the department/agency elect to offset emissions for employees work related travel? If yes, what is the cost?

ANSWER

1. Departmental officers that accompanied the Minister and/or Parliamentary Secretary from 1 July to 30 November 2013:

Minister Macfarlane – Japan and China - 29 October to 4 November

Departmental Officer	Travel (airfares including type)	Accommodation	Other travel expenses (including incidentals)	Cost (GST exclusive)
1	\$9,381 Business Class	\$1,683	\$964	\$12,028

2. Travel by departmental officials is undertaken to meet business needs while ensuring the effective, efficient, ethical and economical use of resources. Details on all travel for departmental officers for the period 1 July to 30 November 2013 is as follows:

	\$ Domestic (GST exclusive)	\$ Overseas (GST exclusive)
Airfares	2,809,870	2,272,783
Accommodation, Meals & Incidentals	1,549,911	1,067,638
Travel Expenses (including Taxis)	1,342,491	233,630

*Figures exclude the former Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism data from 1 July to 31 August 2013 as this is currently unavailable.

3. and 4.

Future travel is dependent on business requirements and business areas operating budgets. Travel by departmental officials is undertaken to meet business requirements while ensuring the effective, efficient, ethical and economical use of resources.

5. In line with Government policy, as at 1 November 2012 the Department introduced a domestic travel policy restricting the use of Business class travel by departmental officials, including SES Officers, on short haul flights between Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney. This policy has seen a reduction in Business class domestic fares.

Business Class is the approved class for overseas travel for departmental officials, unless a different class of overseas travel is a condition of the official's employment contract. However, Business class travel is not available for travel on the Canberra – Sydney and Canberra – Melbourne legs of overseas travel.

6. Lounge membership is provided annually to employees on the basis that it provides effective and efficient use of the traveller's time and is not based on classification level. As at 30 November 2013, 644 Qantas and 55 Virgin memberships are currently in use by departmental officials. These were purchased at a cost ranging from \$249 to \$900 depending on the length of the membership and pricing under Whole-of-Australian-Government travel arrangements.

7. No.

8. No.

Figures provided in question 1 do not include domestic trips. To provide this information would be a significant diversion of departmental resources.

All figures include expenses incurred by functions that have since transferred out of the Department as a result of the Machinery of Government changes.

Please note as this information is as at 30 November 2013, it does not include the Anti-Dumping Commission. The Australian Customs and Border Protection Service will report on the Commission where appropriate in their responses to 2013-14 Budget Estimates Questions on Notice.