

**SENATE EMPLOYMENT, WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND EDUCATION  
LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

**2003-2004 SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING  
19 FEBRUARY 2004**

**EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Outcome 2: Higher productivity, higher pay workplace**

**Output Group 2.1: Workplace Relations Policy and Analysis**

**Output 2.2.8: Interim Building Taskforce**

**Question Number: W405-04**

**Question:**

Senator Wong asked in writing:

- (a) Are Taskforce officers issued with Departmental mobile phones?
- (b) Are there Departmental guidelines for the use of mobile phones? If so, please provide a copy.
- (c) What is the annual cost to the Department for the provision of mobile phones to Taskforce officers, including equipment costs and call costs?

**Answer:**

- (a) Yes
- (b) Yes. An excerpt of the relevant Guidelines is attached
- (c) From 1 October 2002 to 30 June 2003, \$12,421.70 was spent on mobile phone costs and \$356.07 on phone services costs.  
From 1 July 2003 to 31 January 2004, \$13,692.06 was spent on mobile phone costs and \$782.80 on phone service costs.

## Leading Principles

The overriding principle is that Departmental assets must not be used in any way to cause embarrassment to the Department or to bring the Department into disrepute (for example, by using the asset for private commercial purposes and unlawful purposes) and that assets are used by and for the Department and the Commonwealth and are not intended for the use, or for the personal advantage of staff.

The [APS code of conduct in the Public Service Act 1999](#) outlines standards of conduct with which APS employees must comply. It states that an “APS employee must use Commonwealth resources in a proper manner”. Staff should be aware that improper use of Departmental assets may result in sanctions being applied. Staff have a duty to protect assets in their possession against theft or damage and to manage the use of the asset in accordance with Asset Management and Fraud Control principles set out by the Department.

Official assets, particularly those which form part of a pool of Group/State resources, should be available for official use at all times unless otherwise agreed with your Group/State Manager or their delegate.

## Illustrative Guidance

- **Mobile Phones** may be used to make a reasonable number of personal calls particularly when, for example, a staff member is travelling for work and needs to call home. Where the use of a mobile phone for personal calls is considered unreasonable, the Department may choose to recover part or all of the costs associated with personal calls. Personal use may be considered unreasonable, for example, where the costs of the personal calls are excessive and cannot be justified or where the personal use of the phone interfered with its availability for official purposes. Mobile phones should not be used for personal gain, for example, in connection with a staff member’s business interests.