

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARINGS

Outcome: All

Output Group: All

DEST Question No. E535_05

Senator Carr asked on 16 February 2005, EWRE Hansard page 101.

Question:

- a) Do you have a schedule for the assistance provided to Commonwealth public servants required to transfer?
- b) Can I have a copy of that?
- c) Does the assistance go to just accommodation?
- d) Does it go to anything else?
- e) Does that include their families?

Answer:

ANTA move to DEST

- a) Yes. Part L Relocation of the *Stay Here and Grow – DEST Certified Agreement 2002-2005* in conjunction with the *DEST Relocation Policy* sets out the assistance provided to non-SES employees reassigned from one locality to another within Australia.
- b) Yes. Part L Relocation of the *Stay Here and Grow – DEST Certified Agreement 2002-2005* is at Attachment A and the *DEST Relocation Policy* is at Attachment B.
- c) No.
- d) Yes. The principle is that when an employee permanently relocates for employment purposes, the Department will meet all fair and reasonable costs associated with the relocation for the individual and their dependants. Details of entitlements are set out in Attachment A and Attachment B.
- e) Yes, in accordance with the attached policy.

PART L - RELOCATION

Principle

When a person relocates for employment purposes, the move will not result in any unreasonable personal expense or monetary gain. The Department will meet all fair and reasonable costs associated with relocation for the individual and their dependants, as detailed in the *DEST Relocation Policy*. This Policy will not be changed without the agreement of the SCC.

Application

The relocation conditions and entitlements apply to all new employees and existing employees who relocate to another Australian city or town:

- a. as a result of engagement, promotion or movement to a Gazetted vacancy
- b. due to illness
- c. as a disciplinary measure
- d. for a temporary period of at least 13 weeks or more
- e. to enable the DEST Mobility Policy to apply, or
- f. where the Delegate determines that the relocation is in the interests of the Department.

Relocation Assistance

Subject to the Delegate's agreement, an appropriate amount of relocation assistance will be provided to an individual having regard to their personal circumstances.

Assistance will be provided in accordance with the *DEST Relocation Policy* for costs associated with temporary accommodation as a result of the relocation, uplift, removal and storage of furniture and effects, freight of vehicles, boats and other similar items, relocation of pets, motor vehicle and meal allowance if applicable, settling in and settling out, reimbursement of utility connections and rental bonds, education costs for secondary school children where applicable, costs associated with the sale and purchase of homes if applicable and temporary rental assistance.

Air fares to the new location will be paid where applicable. Motor Vehicle Allowance (MVA) will be paid in accordance with provisions in this Agreement.

Fares to Return Home during Temporary Relocation

Employees, but not their dependents, who are temporarily located away from their usual work locality for a period of at least 8 weeks are entitled to one economy class return fare to their home or usual work locality. The entitlement arises each 8 week period thereafter.

Disturbance Allowance

Where the household effects of an employee to whom the relocation provisions apply have been removed at Departmental expense from the employee's former locality to the new locality, the employee is entitled to be paid a flat rate of Disturbance Allowance of \$600 for an employee who relocates alone and \$1,200 for an employee who relocates with a spouse, partner or dependant.

Disturbance Allowance is a one-off payment to offset the following:

- g. connection or reconnection of a telephone service at the new locality;
- h. stamp duty and any establishment fee payable on registration of the employee's motor vehicle at the new locality;
- i. any establishment fee payable for transfer of the employee's driver's licence;
- j. connection of public utilities; and
- k. other non-reimbursable costs.

Where an employee has received Disturbance Allowance at the new locality, and subsequently relocates within the new locality, no further Disturbance Allowance is payable.

*DEST RELOCATION POLICY***Purpose**

1. The purpose of this Relocation Policy is to provide direction and procedural guidance for non-SES employees who are being reassigned (transferred) from one locality to another within Australia. This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Stay Here and Grow DEST Certified Agreement 2002-2005*, Part L, Relocation.

Definitions

2. The following definitions apply in this policy and guidelines:

dependant	In relation to an employee, dependant means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the spouse of the employee; or • a child or parent of the employee, or of the spouse of the employee, being a child or parent who ordinarily resides with the employee and who is wholly or substantially dependent upon the employee.
partner/spouse	Means a person related by marriage or a person who stands in a bona fide relationship with the employee.
family	A person who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is related by blood or marriage; • has a strong affinity, including traditional Indigenous Australian kinship ties with the employee; • stands in a bona fide domestic or household relationship with the employee; • is a child or an adopted child of the employee; or • is a child or adopted child of the person standing in a bona fide domestic or household relationship with the employee.
Department	The Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST).

Date of Effect

3. This policy takes effect from the 13 December 2002, the date of certification of the *Stay Here and Grow DEST Certified Agreement 2002-2005*.

Application

4. The Policy details the relocation conditions and entitlements that apply to new employees and existing employees who relocate to another Australian city or town:

- a. as a result of engagement, promotion or movement to a Gazetted vacancy;
- b. as a disciplinary measure;
- c. for a temporary period of at least 13 weeks or more;
- d. to enable the DEST Mobility Policy to apply; or
- e. where the Delegate determines that the relocation is in the interests of the Department.

5. Other applications for relocation assistance, including those due to illness, will be considered on a case by case basis.
6. Part A (paragraph 8 – paragraph 76) of this document details the provisions for new or existing non-SES employees who relocate to another Australian city or town on an ongoing (permanent) basis for a reason described in paragraph 4.
7. Part B (paragraph 77 – paragraph 126) of this document details the provisions for new or existing non-SES employees who relocate to another Australian city or town on a non-ongoing (temporary) basis for a period in excess of 21 days.

PART A – PERMANENT RELOCATION

Principle

8. When a DEST employee permanently relocates for employment purposes, the move will not result in any unreasonable personal expense or monetary gain. The Department will meet all fair and reasonable costs associated with relocation for the individual and their dependants in accordance with this policy.

Application

9. A person relocating as a result of engagement, promotion or permanent movement to a Gazetted vacancy is eligible for these provisions.

Entitlements

10. The entitlements in this document are prescribed by the *Stay Here and Grow DEST Certified Agreement 2002-2005*. It should be noted that entitlements may differ in certain circumstances and these are described throughout this policy.

11. As there are complexities in the administration of the entitlements contained in this policy, people are encouraged to seek clarification of their entitlements from the HR Services Team before relocation.

12. It should be noted that there is some flexibility that can be exercised by the Delegate within the confines of the provisions in this policy. The onus is on an employee to demonstrate that a case exists for any variation in the application of the policy, i.e. that exceptional circumstances exist.

1. DEST TRAVEL CARD

13. All employees must use the Departmental Travel Card issued for official travel purposes and legitimate business expenses as set out in the *DEST Travel Policy*.

14. As new DEST employees will not be issued with a Travel Card until commencement in the Department, the following arrangements should apply when a person is relocating:

- Air fares – arranged by the area where the new employee is to be employed;
- Accommodation – arranged by the area where the new employee is to be employed;
- Meals – reimbursement of reasonable costs on production of receipts; and
- Taxi Fares – reimbursement of reasonable costs on production of receipts.

2. TRAVEL AND FARES

Travel to New Locality

15. Existing employees are eligible for Paid Miscellaneous Leave to travel to the new locality. A new employee commencing as an ongoing employee is not eligible for leave and must travel to the new locality in their own time.

16. There are two basic means of travel, travel by private vehicle or travel by air (and freight of vehicle if unable to drive and the circumstances are approved by the Delegate). To determine the approved means of travel a cost comparison is undertaken through the travel processing centre and unless there are extenuating circumstances, the cheaper form of travel is paid. The maximum amount claimable is the distance by the most direct route at \$0.60 per kilometre, or the DEST discounted full economy airfare, whichever is cheaper.

Travel by Private Vehicle

17. An employee will not be authorised to use his or her private vehicle to travel to the new locality if the vehicle is not comprehensively insured.

18. An employee transferring interstate is not required to apply for leave for reasonable travelling time when travelling by private motor vehicle. For the purpose of calculating reasonable travelling time a distance of approximately 700 kilometres by the most direct route, is expected to be covered in one day.

19. Where an employee drives a private motor vehicle to transport themselves and family to the transfer locality, a maximum motor vehicle allowance of \$0.60 per kilometre is payable when travelling by the most direct route (with the maximum amount claimable being no more than the DEST discounted full economy airfare). Where the distance travelled is in excess of 700 kilometres, the employee may be reimbursed the cost of overnight accommodation for the employee and dependants not exceeding the relevant accommodation allowance at Attachment 1 of this policy. Reasonable receipted costs incurred by the employee's family for accommodation and meals en route will also be reimbursed by the Department.

20. Where an employee owns a second motor vehicle it should also, if possible, be driven to the transfer locality by a member of the family. A motor vehicle allowance of \$0.60 per kilometre is also payable for the second vehicle.

21. Where an employee owns a trailer, boat or caravan he/she is normally expected to tow it to the new location. Where an employee owns both a boat and a caravan, the heavier item should be towed and DEST will reimburse the cost of freight of the lighter item. An employee is required to obtain one written quote for the freight. Should the quote exceed \$10,000 the employee must obtain a total of three written quotes, and the cheapest quote will be reimbursed.

Travel by Air and Freight of Vehicle

22. A non-SES employee and their dependants are entitled to travel economy class. Travel to and from airports may be reimbursed and excess baggage allowance may be provided where a household removal is not required. Where travel by air is approved the employee's vehicle may be removed at DEST expense.

23. Where approval has been given for removal of a motor vehicle at DEST expense, the eligible employee must obtain one written quote from the removal company for the freight of the vehicle, including details of insurance costs. Should the quote exceed \$10,000 the employee must obtain a total of three written quotes, and the cheapest quote will be reimbursed.

24. Employees are advised that they should ensure their vehicle has appropriate insurance to cover the vehicle during the freight. No Commonwealth Insurance or Indemnity exists in respect of damage or loss to the vehicle and its accessories during the freight. DEST will not accept liability for damage to, or loss of the employee's vehicle while in the custody, possession or control of the Commonwealth or its Agents.

25. Should an employee who has been relocated at Departmental expense need to return to their former location to arrange for the packing of furniture and other household effects or to accompany their family to travel to the new location, an economy fare for the employee may be paid by the relevant area of the Department. The employee will need to account for this time by applying for approved leave or flextime if he or she will be absent from duty during working hours.

3. REMOVAL AND STORAGE OF FURNITURE AND EFFECTS

Removals of Household Effects and Domestic Pets

26. An employee is entitled to receive reimbursement of costs incurred that are associated with the removal of their furniture, motor vehicle, pets and household effects, including insurance, from the original locality to the new locality. Employees are responsible for arranging their removal.

27. Employees must obtain one written quote from a removal company which should include any insurance and/or storage costs. Should the quote exceed \$10,000 the employee must obtain a total of three written quotes, and the cheapest quote will be reimbursed.

28. Up to a maximum of \$250 overall and not for each pet may be reimbursed for the transport of domestic pets. Such transports are to be arranged privately and will be reimbursed upon production of a receipt. Transport costs also include boarding costs associated with transporting a pet.

Storage

29. An employee may have their furniture and effects stored at Departmental expense for a period while attempting to locate suitable 'long term' accommodation. Employees must arrange their storage privately. Please note that storage costs will only be met while the employee has an entitlement to receive payment of Temporary Rental Assistance (TRA) (refer to paragraphs 41-51). Where storage will be required, employees should ensure an estimate of storage costs is included in the removal of furniture quote.

Insurance and Claims for Damages

30. All removal quotes must include insurance as any claims for loss/damage must be made against the removalist. DEST will not be liable for any claims associated with the relocation.

4. DISTURBANCE ALLOWANCE

Entitlement

31. Where an employee's household effects have been removed at Departmental expense from the employee's former locality to the new locality, the employee is entitled to be paid a flat rate of Disturbance Allowance of \$600.00 for an employee without dependants, or \$1,200.00 for an employee with spouse, partner or dependant.

32. Disturbance Allowance is a one-off payment to offset the following:

- connection or reconnection of a telephone service at the new locality;
- stamp duty and any establishment fee on registration of the employee's motor vehicle at the new locality;
- any establishment fee payable for transfer of the employee's drivers licence;
- connection of public utilities; and
- other non-reimbursable costs.

33. Where an employee has received Disturbance Allowance at the new locality, and subsequently relocates within the new locality, no further Disturbance Allowance is payable.

5. SETTLING-OUT ASSISTANCE

Entitlement

34. Settling-Out Assistance (SOA) is payable at the original locality if, prior to relocation, an employee is required to vacate their existing home:

- in order to sell or lease it; or

- the lease has expired; or
- furniture and effects have been uplifted.

35. An allowance may be paid for up to seven days in respect of short-term accommodation (usually motels/hotels).

36. Payment of SOA is based on the employee's family status as follows:

- without dependants – 100% of the DEST Accommodation Rates; or
- with dependants accompanying the employee -150% of the DEST Accommodation Rates.

Note: For existing DEST employees, if the accommodation is not charged to the DEST Travel Card, an amount of \$60.00 per night is the relevant rate.

6. SETTLING-IN ASSISTANCE

Entitlement

37. Settling-In Assistance (SIA) may be paid in respect of short-term commercial accommodation, meals and incidentals, until the employee can obtain accommodation in a house, townhouse, unit or flat. Payment of SIA is based on the employee's family status as follows:

- without dependants – 100% of the DEST Travel Rates; or
- with dependants accompanying the employee –150% of the DEST Accommodation Rates.

Note: For existing DEST employees, if the accommodation is not charged to the DEST Travel Card, an amount of \$60.00 per night is the relevant rate.

Commencement and Cessation of Settling-In Assistance

38. Payment of SIA would normally start immediately before commencement of duty at a new locality. Where circumstances warrant it, SIA may be paid up to seven days before commencement of duty at the new locality, if for example accommodation is scarce and the employee elects to relocate early.

39. SIA will cease on the earliest of the following occurrences:

- a. the day when the employee moves into suitable accommodation;
- b. the day when the employee moves into suitable temporary accommodation; or
- c. for a maximum period of six weeks.

7. TEMPORARY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (TRA)

Application

40. Temporary Rental Assistance (TRA) may be paid to an employee who owns a house at the original locality that the employee vacated before, and because of, relocation.

41. Where an employee is occupying temporary accommodation that is unsuitable for their long-term needs, the payment of TRA is dependant upon the employee being able to demonstrate their efforts to obtain suitable accommodation in the new locality. The employee is also required to demonstrate that he or she owns the vacated house at the original locality, and has placed that house on the market with genuine intentions of selling it.

42. Suitable premises are regarded as accommodation (whether rented or purchased) suitable for the employee's long term needs having regard to reasonable domestic requirements.

Commencement and Cessation of Temporary Rental Assistance

43. TRA is payable from either:

- the day after the end of the six week period of SIA; or
- the day after the employee moves into suitable temporary accommodation.

44. The maximum period for which TRA may be paid is 13 weeks.

45. TRA will cease on the earliest of the following occurrences:

- a. suitable long-term accommodation is secured;
- b. the employee sells their house at the original locality; or
- c. for a maximum of 13 weeks.

46. The Delegate may approve a continuation of TRA up to a maximum period of 12 months if they are satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist and that positive efforts have been made by the employee throughout the period to obtain suitable long-term accommodation. Failure to sell a home at the previous locality is not necessarily an exceptional circumstance.

Entitlement and Rate of Temporary Rental Assistance

47. When an employee moves into suitable temporary accommodation earlier than the six weeks provided for under SIA, TRA may be payable for the remainder of the six weeks as follows:

- without dependants – either 100% of the accommodation component listed in this document, or the actual accommodation rate, whichever is the lesser;
- with dependants – either 150% of the accommodation component listed in this document, or the actual accommodation rate, whichever is the lesser.

Note: If the accommodation is not charged to the DEST Travel Card, an amount of \$60.00 per night is the relevant accommodation component listed in this document.

48. Following the end of the six week period provided for under SIA, TRA may be payable to the end of the 13 week period as follows:

- without dependants – either 50% of the accommodation component listed in this document, or the actual accommodation rate, whichever is the lesser; or
- with dependants – either 75% of the accommodation component listed in this document, or the actual accommodation rate, whichever is the lesser.

Note: If the accommodation is not charged to the DEST Travel Card (i.e. staying with family or friends), an amount of \$30.00 per night is the relevant accommodation component listed in this document.

49. If continuation of TRA is approved beyond 13 weeks, the Delegate will determine an appropriate rate that will not be more than 50% of the actual rental costs.

50. An employee must notify the HR Services Team immediately if their circumstances change at any time while they are receiving TRA.

8. REIMBURSEMENT OF BOND MONIES

Application

51. A person relocating as a result of engagement, promotion or permanent movement to a Gazetted vacancy is eligible for these provisions.

Entitlement

52. If an employee rents or leases temporary accommodation in which he or she intends to live and pays bond money, the employee is entitled to an allowance equal to the amount (of bond money) paid. The employee must repay to DEST the amount of the allowance over five pays (i.e. 10 weeks) or at the end of the period of TRA, whichever is the earlier. If the employee receives an amount of money as interest accrued on the bond money, the employee must repay to DEST the full amount of interest immediately after it is received.

9. ASSISTANCE WITH COSTS ON SALE/PURCHASE OF HOME

Application

53. An employee who relocates from one locality to another on initial engagement or as a result of a promotion or movement to a Gazetted vacancy may be reimbursed certain legal and professional costs on the sale and purchase of their home.

Entitlement

54. An employee is not entitled to payment under these provisions for the sale of more than one home.

55. For the purposes of this provision, the term "home" refers to a house or dwelling the employee (including the employee's partner or spouse) owns wholly or partially (including by way of a mortgage), occupies, and has a right to sell or occupy.

56. An employee is not entitled to receive assistance associated with the sale of a home if:

- a. the employee is transferred back to, and takes up duty in, their original locality; and
- b. the sale of the home at the original locality is under a contract entered into after the date when the employee is notified of the second transfer.

57. An employee is not entitled to receive assistance associated with purchase (including building) of a home at a new locality if he or she:

- a. did not own a home at the original locality; or
- b. relocates to a new locality that is the original locality and received assistance with the sale of a home at the original locality under these provisions.

Time Limits

58. The time limits applying for the payment of assistance are as follows:

- a. **for sale** - begins on the day when the employee receives notification in writing of the reassignment of duties and ends one year after that day; and
- b. **for purchase** - begins on the day when the employee receives notification in writing of the reassignment of duties and ends two years after that day.

59. The Delegate may extend the relevant period if it is considered reasonable.

Assistance with Cost of Sale

60. An employee is entitled to receive a payment of up to \$7,000 to assist with the costs incurred in relation to the sale of a home on production of evidence of:

- a. fees or commissions paid to an agent;
- b. if the employee did not engage an agent, expenses incurred advertising the dwelling-house for sale;
- c. payments to a solicitor engaged by the employee; and
- d. costs incurred in relation to the discharge of a mortgage.

Assistance with Cost of Purchase

61. An employee is entitled to receive on production of receipts:

- a. reimbursement of the amount paid for stamp duty relating to the purchase; and
- b. a payment of up to \$2,000 to assist with the costs incurred in relation to the purchase (including building) of a home that the employee intends to occupy. These costs may include solicitor or other professional cost and costs incurred in relation to taking out a mortgage or insurance but do not include costs associated with financing the purchase of the property.

62. Where an employee can demonstrate that the limits above are inadequate in their particular circumstances, the Delegate may increase the limits.

10. EDUCATION COSTS ASSISTANCE

Application

63. An employee who relocates from one locality to another as a result of a promotion or movement to a Gazetted vacancy is eligible for Education Costs Assistance.

64. For the purposes of this provision, the term 'eligible child' refers to a dependant child of the employee who, on the date of relocation, was:

- a. less than 20 years of age;
- b. undertaking, or proposed to undertake, study as a full-time student at a secondary school; and
- c. not enrolled or eligible for enrolment for a course of study at a university for a degree or diploma.

Entitlement

65. Education Costs Assistance may be payable to help with the costs involved in avoiding disruption to the final stages of an eligible child's secondary education (i.e. Year 12) following transfer to a new location. The assistance relates to the cost of boarding a child at school at the pre-transfer locality. The assistance may also be paid in circumstances where a child moves to the transfer locality ahead of the employee in order to begin the school year at a school in the transfer locality.

66. In addition, assistance is also available to cover tuition fees for eligible child/children where the employee is eligible to receive assistance with boarding fees.

Boarding Assistance

67. The amount of boarding assistance payable to an employee for an eligible child in a year is calculated in accordance with the following formula:

$$\$10,000 \times \frac{A}{B}$$

where

- A is the number of weeks (not including any week, or part of a week, before the date of relocation or during which the secondary school is in vacation) in the year during which the child boards and lives at the secondary school; and
- B is the number of weeks in the year during which tuition is given to secondary students at the secondary school.

Tuition Assistance

68. The amount of tuition assistance payable to an employee for an eligible child in that year, in addition to boarding assistance is calculated in accordance with the following formula:

$$\$10,000 \times \frac{A}{B}$$

B

where

- A is the number of weeks (not including any week, or part of a week, preceding the date of relocation of the employee) in the year during which the child receives tuition at the secondary school; and
- B is the number of weeks in the year during which tuition is given to secondary students at the secondary school.

Cessation of Assistance

69. The payment of the assistance will cease on the date when the employee takes up residence in, or moves his or her household to, a new locality. If at the time the employee takes up residence or moves his or her household to a new locality, the child is enrolled in a current term at school, the Delegate may determine an alternative cessation date. This date will be no later than the day following the end of the current school term.

70. The payment of assistance will cease on the date when the employee was notified that the proposed relocation had been cancelled. If at the time the employee takes up residence or moves his or her household to a new locality, the child is enrolled in a current term at school, the Delegate may determine an alternative cessation date. This date will be no later than the day following the end of the current school term.

Payment of Assistance for Repeated Years

71. If, in any year, an eligible child repeats a year of his or her course of secondary education, the child is not eligible for assistance in that year, unless the Delegate considers, having regard to the circumstances, that this is unreasonable.

Payment of Assistance by Instalments

72. Boarding or tuition assistance payable to an employee will be paid by instalments, and on the dates as determined by the Delegate.

11. ACCOMMODATION, MEAL AND INCIDENTALS RATES

Accommodation Rates

73. DEST Non-SES Employees who relocate are required to charge accommodation costs where possible to the DEST Travel Card in accordance with the DEST Travel Policy. If an employee does not charge the accommodation to the DEST Travel Card, an amount of \$60.00 per night will be paid.

74. The DEST Accommodation Rates are at *Attachment 1*.

75. The following meal and incidental rates are only payable during the SIA period. No allowance for meals and incidentals is payable during periods where the employee is in receipt of TRA.

Without Cooking Facilities (eg. in a Motel/Hotel)

Breakfast	\$18.40
Lunch	\$20.55
Dinner	\$35.40
Incidentals	\$14.20
Total per day	\$88.55

With Cooking Facilities (eg. serviced apartment)

Where cooking facilities are available, a weekly rate of \$150 is payable.

Employees are entitled to receive a weekly incidental component of \$75 per week.

Staying Privately with Family or Friends

76. An employee will be paid a rate for accommodation, meals and incidentals of \$60.00 per day.

PART B - TEMPORARY RELOCATION

Principle

77. When a person temporarily relocates for employment purposes, the move will not result in any unreasonable personal expense or monetary gain. The Department will meet all fair and reasonable costs associated with relocation for the individual in accordance with this policy. Where an employee elects to have his/her dependants accompany him/her on a temporary transfer, no allowances will be paid to cover any additional expense involved.

78. Where employees on temporary relocation give up their accommodation at the previous locality, or are not required to pay board in their absence, no allowances beyond the first 21 days will be paid.

Application

79. An employee who temporarily relocates is eligible for these provisions.

Entitlements

80. The entitlements in this document are prescribed by the *Stay Here and Grow DEST Certified Agreement 2002-2005*. It should be noted that entitlements may differ in certain circumstances and these are described throughout this document.

81. As there are complexities in the administration of the entitlements contained in this policy, people are encouraged to seek clarification of their entitlements from the HR Services Team before relocation.

82. It should be noted that there is some discretion that may be exercised by the Delegate within the confines of the provisions in this policy, depending on the nature of the position and the employee's circumstances.

1. DEST TRAVEL CARD

83. All employees must use the Departmental Travel Card issued for official travel purposes and legitimate business expenses as set out in the *DEST Travel Policy*.

2. TRAVEL AND FARES

Travel to Temporary Locality

84. Employees are generally expected to travel to the temporary locality by the quickest, safest and most cost effective means available. The most efficient means of transport to another locality is usually by air. Non-SES employees are entitled to travel economy class.

Travel by Private Vehicle

85. Where an employee elects to drive a private motor vehicle to transport himself/herself to the transfer locality, a motor vehicle allowance of \$0.60 per kilometre is only payable where it is cheaper for the employer than travelling by plane.

Fares to Return Home during Temporary Relocation

86. An employee who is temporarily located away from their usual work locality for a period of at least eight weeks is entitled to one economy class return air fare to their home or usual work locality during that period of eight weeks. Where the relocation continues beyond eight weeks, a similar entitlement arises in each eight week period thereafter.

87. A fare to return home is to be used in the employee's own time. Any costs associated with the travel, other than the air fare (eg taxi fares), are the employee's own responsibility.

88. Absences from the temporary locality through use of fares to return home do not break continuity of residence at the temporary locality.

3. REMOVAL AND STORAGE OF FURNITURE AND EFFECTS

Application

89. A person relocating on a temporary transfer may be eligible for these provisions if:

- the temporary transfer is for an extended period (at least three months); and
- it would be cheaper for DEST to reimburse costs associated with a removal to accommodation rented by the employee than for the employee to be living in commercial accommodation for an extended period.

90. Employees need to check their entitlements with the HR Services Team prior to making any arrangements with regard to such moves.

Removals

91. Employees are responsible for arranging their removal privately. Employees must obtain one written quote from the removal company, including details of insurance costs. Should the quote exceed \$10,000 the employee must obtain a total of three written quotes, and the cheaper of the quotes will be reimbursed.

Insurance and Claims for Damages

92. All removal quotes must include insurance as any claims for loss/damage must be made against the removalist. DEST will not be liable for any claims associated with the relocation.

4. DISTURBANCE ALLOWANCE

Application

93. This allowance is payable only to an employee who is relocated as a result of a temporary movement for a period of 12 months or more, and has had household effects removed at Departmental expense.

Entitlement

94. Where an employee's household effects have been removed at Departmental expense, the employee is entitled to be paid a flat rate of Disturbance Allowance of \$600.00.

5. DAILY RATE OF TRAVEL ALLOWANCE (TA)

Eligibility

95. The daily rates of TA are payable to employees absent overnight from their original locality while travelling to take up duty at the transfer locality, travelling on duty or working away from their usual place of work.

96. The daily rate of TA is payable from the date and time of departure from the original locality until midnight on the 21st day. The daily rate of TA is also payable for the return trip to the original locality at the end of the temporary transfer.

Circumstances in which Travelling Allowance is not payable

97. If an employee is temporarily transferred to a locality in anticipation of a permanent transfer or promotion, TA is not payable. Instead employees are to be paid permanent transfer allowances from the date of arrival at the new location.

98. Should an employee be promoted or permanently transferred while on temporary transfer away from their original locality, TA will cease at midnight on the day before the date of effect of the promotion or at midnight on the day before the date of written notice that the permanent

transfer has been approved. Temporary Rental Assistance will then be paid on and from the date of effect of the promotion or the date of written notification of the transfer.

Components of daily TA

99. The daily rate of TA is made up of three components:

- Accommodation;
- Meals; and
- Incidentals.

6. ACCOMMODATION RATES AND LIMITS

100. Accommodation rates are determined by the *DEST Travel Policy* and are dependant on where the employee travels. Different accommodation rates apply to capital cities, non capital and other country centres.

101. The DEST Accommodation Rates are at *Attachment 1*.

7. USING THE TRAVEL CARD FOR ACCOMMODATION

102. Under the DEST Travel Card arrangements, it is important to plan your accommodation requirements in advance. Accommodation bookings are your responsibility, and should be made at the same time as your other travel arrangements.

103. Where possible, employees are required to charge all accommodation costs to the DEST Travel Card. Where the card is used, the amounts incurred may be up to the maximum of the rates for the relevant travel destination as set out at *Attachment 1*.

104. When checking out of your accommodation at the end of your stay, you may only use your DEST Travel Card for payment of expenses incurred for accommodation and business expenses (phone/fax). Other expenditure, such as using the mini bar or video hire, is of a personal nature and must be paid for separately by you.

105. If an employee does not charge the accommodation to the Card, a flat amount of \$60.00 per night will be paid.

106. However, there may be situations where the DEST Travel Card cannot be used (such as where there is no commercial accommodation provider that will accept the DEST Travel Card in a non-capital city). In these circumstances, approval may be granted for reimbursement to be made at the reasonable rate.

8. MEAL ALLOWANCE RATES

107. During the first 21 days of travel, the meal allowance rates are paid as follows:

Breakfast	\$18.40
Lunch	\$20.55
Dinner	\$35.40
Incidentals	\$14.20
Total per day	\$88.55

9. REVIEWED RATE OF TRAVEL ALLOWANCE (RTA)

108. Employees who have continuously lived at one locality away from their original locality for more than 21 days are to be paid the reviewed rate of travel allowance (RTA) from midnight on the 22nd day. RTA is based on reasonable accommodation and meals costs, not the rates specified for trips less than 21 days.

109. Definitions:

Boarding	Renting
Motel accommodation	Renting a flat or house for a set period
Staying with family/friends and contributing towards costs	Self-contained/serviced apartments
Boarding where meals are included	

110. Self-contained/serviced apartments are considered to be renting as they are fully self-contained and employees are able to prepare their meals and do their laundry without having to pay any extra. Boarding usually means that employees do not have the use of kitchen facilities, although meals may be included in the cost of the board.

111. Hotels or motels are acceptable for short-term transfers (i.e. transfers that extend marginally beyond the period in which the daily rate is payable for example where they exceed 21 days by one or two weeks). For long-term temporary transfers, rented accommodation should be obtained. However, employees should not be required to sign long term leases which have to be broken in order to find rental accommodation and, in many cases, employees are not aware how long the temporary transfer will actually last.

112. It is expected that, in most cases accommodation would be rented as “furnished” as it is not usually appropriate or cost effective to remove an employee’s furniture and effects for the period of the temporary transfer. Should the employee obtain unfurnished accommodation, consideration will be given to reimbursing the reasonable cost for hiring necessary household furniture and effects. Any hiring charges will be regarded as part of the total rent and the accommodation limits will be applied. If an employee’s household furniture and effects can be removed to the temporary location and then returned to headquarters for less cost than hiring, removal will be arranged at Commonwealth expense. The cost of storing household furniture and effects at headquarters may also need to be considered in deciding whether removal would be cheaper than hiring. No storage costs are payable where the employee owns their own home.

10. ACCOMMODATION

113. The accommodation limits for RTA are based on reasonable actual expenses and are dependant on where the employee travels and the method of payment used.

114. Employees who will be receiving RTA should approach several commercial accommodation providers to secure reasonable long-term rates. This is particularly relevant where the temporary transfer is likely to extend beyond 8 weeks.

115. The reasonable rate is the same as the DEST Accommodation Rates. Where an employee spends more than the reasonable rate, he/she will need to provide evidence that,

given their particular circumstances, the lowest obtainable rate was still above the reasonable rate. An employee's decision to stay at a higher priced establishment is not an acceptable reason for extending the limit, nor is choosing to stay at an establishment where the DEST Travel Card is not accepted when the temporary transfer is to a capital city.

116. However, there may be situations where the DEST Travel Card cannot be used (such as where there is no commercial accommodation provider that will accept the DEST Travel Card in a non-capital city). In these circumstances, approval may be granted for reimbursement to be made at the reasonable rate.

117. Where the employee chooses not to use the DEST Travel Card (i.e.; chooses to stay with a non-commercial accommodation provider, such as with friends or family), the maximum amount that will be reimbursed is \$420 per week or the actual rent, whichever is the cheaper.

118. Different accommodation rates apply to each capital city, non capital and other centres and normal country centres. Receipts must be produced to the HR Services Team to verify accommodation expenditure.

11. MEAL ALLOWANCE RATES

119. The meal rates payable vary according to whether or not meals are included in the board and lodging and whether employees have access to cooking facilities. Where meals are not included in the board and lodging and there are no cooking facilities, the daily rate of meal allowance is payable.

120. Where cooking facilities are available, a flat weekly rate of \$150.00 is payable.

12. INCIDENTALS

121. Employees are entitled to receive a weekly incidental component of \$75 per week.

13. CONTINUING EXPENSES

122. Employees on RTA may incur unavoidable expenses at their original locality due to their temporary relocation that are over and above what would be incurred if the transfer did not take place. These continuing expenses may be reimbursed on production of receipts. Continuing expenses DO NOT include any expenses that would normally be paid while living at the original locality such as mortgage payments, rent, rates, land tax and insurance.

14. CONTINUITY OF RESIDENCE AT THE TEMPORARY LOCATION

123. Where employees are away from a temporary locality and are not performing duty elsewhere, such as if they return home for the weekend, or if they are on leave, the absence does not break continuity of residence in the temporary locality. This means that on their return to the temporary locality, they either receive any outstanding balance of TA (the first 21 days) or they resume receiving RTA.

124. Where employees on TA are absent from the temporary locality to perform duty and return to the temporary locality after being away for one week or less, residence at the temporary locality is unbroken.

125. Where the absence of an employee from a temporary locality is more than one week, residence at the temporary locality is:

- unbroken, where reasonable costs for the retention of accommodation at the temporary locality have been reimbursed; or
- broken, in all other cases.

126. Where continuity is broken, the employee will again receive the daily rate of TA when they recommence at the temporary locality.

DEST ACCOMMODATION RATES – Effective 1 January 2005

CAPITAL CITIES

Region	Accommodation Expenses	Region	Accommodation Expenses
Adelaide	114.00	Hobart	92.00
Brisbane	110.00	Melbourne	131.00
Canberra	97.00	Perth	107.00
Darwin	105.00	Sydney	144.00

HIGH COST, TIER 2 AND OTHER COUNTRY CENTRES

High Cost Country Centres	
Ballarat	\$98.00
Broome	\$143.50
Burnie	\$95.00
Carnarvon	\$92.50
Christmas Island	\$110.00
Cocos (Keeling) Island	\$112.50
Dampier	\$108.00
Devonport	\$94.00
Gold Coast	\$112.00
Horn Island	\$108.00
Jabiru	\$170.00
Karratha	\$146.00
Kununurra	\$110.00
Newcastle	\$108.00
Newman	\$115.00
Northam	\$100.00

Port Hedland	\$117.00
Port Lincoln	\$99.00
Thursday Island	\$135.00
Tom Price	\$97.00
Weipa	\$115.00
Wollongong	\$105.50
Tier 2 Country Centres	
Albany	\$85.00
Alice Springs	\$87.00
Ararat (VIC)	\$87.00
Bathurst	\$87.00
Bendigo	\$87.00
Bunbury	\$87.00
Cairns	\$87.50
Halls Creek	\$106.00
Kalgoorlie	\$87.00
Katherine	\$85.00
Launceston	\$89.00
Maitland	\$93.00
Mt Isa	\$87.00
Queenstown	\$87.00
Wagga Wagga	\$87.00
Warrnambool	\$87.00
Other Country Centres	
Bright	\$71.00

Broken Hill	\$83.50	
Castlemaine	\$71.00	
Derby	\$84.50	
Emerald	\$71.00	
Exmouth	\$110.50	
Geelong	\$75.00	
Geraldton	\$79.00	
Gosford	\$79.00	
Griffith	\$77.00	
Leeton	\$87.00	
Marla	\$84.00	
Mt Magnet	\$73.00	
Nhulunbuy	\$121.00	
Norfolk Island	\$120.00	
Orange	\$84.00	
Paraburdoo	\$117.00	
Port Pirie	\$73.00	
Roebourne	\$75.00	
Wilpena	\$112.50	
Wyndham	\$99.50	
Yulara	\$361.50	

Any other Country Centres \$71.00