

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace  
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Budget Estimates 2012-2013**

**Cross Portfolio**

**DEEWR Question No.** EW0072\_13

**Senator Back provided in writing.**

**Question**

**Travel Costs**

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).
3. Are the Government's Lowest Practical Fare travel policy for Domestic Air Travel (Finance Circular No. 2009/10) and Best Fare of the Day for International Air Travel (Finance Circular No. 2009/11) guidelines being followed? How is this monitored? If the guidelines are not being followed, please explain why.
4. 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.
5. 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. "

**Answer**

1. The Department and the Agencies in the Portfolio do not record travel data in a way that would readily allow answers to be provided for this question.
2. The total cost of travel for the 2011-2012 financial year to 31 May 2012 is provided in the table below:

<b>Dept/ Agency</b>	<b>2011-12 \$</b>
DEEWR	10,930,437
Australian Building and Construction Commissioner (ABCC)	1,233,477
Australian Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Authority (ACARA)	280,123
Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) *	580,051
Comcare	2,237,579
Fair Work Australia (FWA)	2,022,859
Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO)	2,539,920
Safe Work Australia (SWA)	417,097

\* AITSL previous responses included travel for external participants of AITSL Focus Groups and Committees. This has now been amended to reflect AITSL staff and Directors only.

3. It is the policy of this Department and the Portfolio Agencies to adhere to the Lowest Practical fare guidelines for Domestic Travel and the Best Fare of the Day Guidelines for international travel. All departmental and agency staff required to travel, take the route which best meets the needs of the portfolio in terms of ensuring maximum value to the Australian Government and the most efficient and effective way to achieve portfolio objectives.

4. Agency policies regarding the provision of lounge memberships are detailed below.

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Policy</b>
DEEWR	Delegate may approve where it is anticipated that eight or more business trips will be required to be undertaken in a twelve month period.
ACARA	Does not provide lounge memberships to employees.
ABCC	Delegate may approve following consideration a business case outlining frequency of travel and reasons for membership.
AITSL	Provided for all staff at or above Manager level.
Comcare	Delegate may approve following consideration a business case outlining frequency of travel and reasons for membership.
FWA	Delegate may approve following consideration a business case outlining frequency of travel and reasons for membership.
FWO	Delegate may approve where it is anticipated that 18 or more business trips will be required to be undertaken in a twelve month period.
SWA	Delegate may approve where it is anticipated that eight or more business trips will be required to be undertaken in a twelve month period.

A breakdown of the lounge memberships at 31 May 2012 is provided below.

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Staff Class'n</b>	<b>QANTAS</b>	<b>Virgin</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
DEEWR	APS 1-3	2			21,178
	APS 4-6	66			
	EL1 & EL2	238	7		
	SES and Equiv	64	1		
ABCC	APS 4-6	26			8,695
	EL1 & EL2	19			
	SES and Equiv	8			
AITSL	EL1 & EL2	11	4		5,670
	SES and Equiv	4	3		
Comcare	APS 4-6	28	4		28,852
	EL1 & EL2	44	12		
	SES and Equiv		2		
FWA	EL1 & EL2	4			949
FWO	APS 1-3	1			24,133
	APS 4-6	21			
	EL1 & EL2	46			
	SES and Equiv	2			
SWA	APS 4-6	2			3,471
	EL1 & EL2	7			

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Staff Class'n</b>	<b>QANTAS</b>	<b>Virgin</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
	SES and Equiv	2	5		

Note: The average cost of membership varies as some employees receive complimentary lounge memberships.

5. DEEWR and portfolio agencies do not approve travel of support staff based on servicing SES officers.