

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
Additional Estimates Hearing – February 2010
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Topic: Copenhagen Costs

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Question: (Senator Macdonald)

...what was the cost of getting there, what was the method and class of travel, what was the cost of the hotels stayed in, what was the star rating of those hotels and what was the carbon footprint?

Answer:

What was the cost of getting there

Costs of official overseas travel by Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, accompanying spouses (where relevant) and accompanying staff employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* are paid for by the Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance). Dates, destinations, the purpose and costs of all official overseas travel are tabled in the Parliament every six months in a report titled *Parliamentarians' Travel paid by the Department of Finance and Deregulation*. These reports are also published to the Finance website.

What was the method and class of travel

The Minister and Secretary of the Department of Climate Change travelled to Copenhagen on a combination of first and business class flights the cost of their airfares totalled \$30,560. The two officers from the Office of the Minister for Climate Change and Water travelled business class and their airfares totalled \$20,401. Twenty eight (28) officers from the Department of Climate Change travelled to Copenhagen on business class flights. The total cost of the flights was \$300,245. One officer from the Department of Climate Change travelled with the Prime Minister on the VIP RAAF aircraft.

What was the cost of hotels stayed in?

The Minister, her two staff and 29 officers from the Department stayed at the Hotel Kong Arthur. The cost of the Hotel Kong Arthur was \$267,768. The cost of the hotel included a nightly CO₂ charge of DKK 30. Breakfast was also included in the nightly room rate.

One officer from the Department stayed at the Hotel Imperial Copenhagen, which cost \$3,117.33. The Hotel Imperial Copenhagen does not specify whether there were carbon offsets arrangements in place.

What was the star rating of those hotels?

The Hotel Kong Arthur was a 4 star rated hotel. The Hotel Imperial Copenhagen was a 4 star rated hotel.

Calculating emissions from government travel is complex. The Government reports direct greenhouse gas emissions and associated emissions of Government energy use in the annual whole-of-government energy performance report *Energy Use in the Australian Government's Operations* tabled in Parliament. Denmark, in its budget for the conference, allocated approximately one million US dollars (0.7 million Euro) for offsetting emissions related to the conference. The largest single source of emissions was the flights taken by decision makers travelling to Copenhagen. The Government does not generally purchase carbon offsets for emissions generated in carrying out Government business, however, some hotels in Copenhagen offered carbon offset arrangements. The Hotel Kong Arthur is a carbon neutral hotel and a nightly CO₂ quota of DKK30 per night per room was incorporated into the nightly room charge.