

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman

Outcome/Program: Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman

Topic:

Senator: Senator Ryan

Question reference number: 102

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 30 March 2012

Number of pages: 2

Question:

1. For the financial year to date, please detail all travel (itemised separately,) undertaken by your portfolio Minister and Parliamentary Secretaries. Include details of what the travel was for, what cost was spent on travel (including travel type – i.e. business airfare), accommodation, security, food, beverages (alcohol listed separately), gifts, entertainment, and all other expenses.
2. For the financial year to date, please provide the same information (itemised separately) for any Minister and Parliamentary staff that accompanied the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary on their travel and include a similar breakdown of the costs incurred by or on behalf of those staff.
3. For the financial year to date, please provide the same information (itemised separately) for Departmental officers that accompanied the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary on their travel and include a similar breakdown of the costs incurred by or on behalf of those staff.
4. For the financial year to date, please detail all travel (itemised separately) undertaken by employees of each department and agency within each portfolio. Include details of what the travel was for, what cost was spent on travel (including travel type – i.e. business airfare), accommodation, security, food, beverages (alcohol listed separately), gifts, entertainment, and all other expenses.
5. Are employees taking the most direct route when travelling? If not, please explain why.
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 cost per employee.
7. When SES employees travel, do any support or administrative staff (such as their 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:

Q1 & 2: The office has no information about travel costs by ministers, parliamentary secretaries and MOP(S) Act staff, as these arrangements are administered by the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

Q3: Nil

Q4: The office does not record travel data in a way that would readily allow it to answer these questions without an unreasonable diversion of resources. The total office expense for travel year to date end January was \$556,652.44.

Q5: Yes

Q6: Staff at the following levels are provided with a Qantas lounge membership:

APS5	1
APS6	2
EL1	7
EL2	13
SESB1	4
Acting Ombudsman	1

SES officers are entitled to a lounge membership as part of their terms and conditions of employment. Office policy states that other officers are granted membership if they are required to travel frequently. The average cost of airline lounge membership per employee is \$191.30.

Q7: No