

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES 2013

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Australian Public Service Commission

Outcome/Program: Cross Portfolio

Topic: Travel Costs

Senator: Ryan

Question reference number: 69

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Tuesday, 2 April 2013

Number of pages: 2

Question:

1. For the financial year to date, please detail 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 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). Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
3. What travel is planned for the rest of this financial year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
4. What travel is planned for the rest of this calendar year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
5. 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 the department/agency following the advice? How is this monitored? If the guidelines are not being followed, 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 total costs of the lounge memberships.
7. 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.
8. Does the department/agency elect to offset emissions for employees work related travel? If yes, what is the cost?

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Answer:

1. For this financial year to date no Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) official accompanied the Minister and/or Parliamentary Secretary on their travel.
2. For the financial year to date as at 31 January 2013, \$1,104,000 excluding GST has been spent on travel as detailed below:

APSC staff Airfare	148,844
Leading Australia's Future in the Asia-Pacific (LAFIA)	117,920
Travel allowance	305,469
International assistance recipient airfare costs	332,093
Indigenous recruitment candidate airfare costs	43,411
Non-APSC Senior Reviewer	10,483
Taxi and parking	92,663
Motor vehicle	52,948
Total travel cost	1,103,832

The APSC does not record travel data in a way that would readily allow the detailed breakdown of costs and itemised information requested to be provided to these questions. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of APSC resources.

3. It is not expected that the travel activity would increase in comparison to historical trends. Business as usual activities include travel associated with representational responsibilities, international assistance, Indigenous recruitment and learning and leadership activities such as Leading Australian Future in Asia. The detailed information regarding travel plan is not collected at the APSC.
4. Please refer to the answer above.
5. The Government's Lowest Practical Fare travel policy for Domestic Air Travel and Best Fare of the Day for International Air Travel are followed. Adherence is monitored on a trip by trip basis by the delegate who approves the travel.
6. The APSC's travel policy specifies that lounge membership is available via individual agreements. Other officials may put a business case to access the lounge membership where there is a demonstrated business need. As at January 2013, there are 31 employees who have Qantas club membership and 2 employees who have Velocity club membership. Each Qantas membership cost \$290 (inclusive of GST) to renew on an annual basis and Velocity costs \$249 (inclusive of GST). Free upgrades of membership class may be offered to employees who travelled frequently. Typically, the employees holding lounge membership are in the classification range of Executive Level (EL) and Senior Executive Service (SES)
7. The APSC SES officers travel without personal support staff.
8. The APSC does not elect to offset emissions for employees work related travel.