

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**  
**Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio**  
**Department of Climate Change**  
**Budget Estimates Hearing–May 2009**

**Written question reference:** CC23a-d

**Outcome/Output:** Response to climate change

**Topic:** Teleconferences

**Hansard Page:** Written

**Question:** (Senator Birmingham)

- a. How many teleconferences have been held by the Ministers(/Parliamentary Secretary) with overseas events or conferences over the last year?
- b. What funding has been provided for such teleconferences?
- c. What plans does the government have to commence or increase the use of teleconferences by the Ministers?
- d. How much has been spent on the teleconferences over the last year? How much is planned to be spent over the coming year?

**Answer:**

- a. The Minister has regular bilateral discussions with overseas counterparts by telephone. She also holds regular teleconferences and videoconferences with officials, staff and others, as well as providing video messages for a range of conferences. However, there has not been opportunity for teleconference participation in multilateral climate change negotiations.
- b. See answer to part (a).
- c. The Government first announced the National Intergovernmental Telepresence System in the 2008-09 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook. The project will install and support a network of 20 Telepresence sites across Australia and is due for completion by 30 June 2010. The project has been funded to reduce interstate travel and to reduce the associated travel costs, greenhouse gas emissions and to increase productivity for inter-jurisdictional meetings, including COAG and Ministerial Council meetings. While the Department of Finance and Deregulation is responsible for delivering the project, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) is the overall project sponsor.
- d. See answer to part (a).