

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2012-2013

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Australian Public Service Commission
Outcome/Program: Cross Portfolio
Topic: Travel Costs

Senator: Ryan

Question reference number: 113

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 6 July 2012

Number of pages: 2

Question:

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.

Answer:

1. No Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) official accompanied the Minister and/or Parliamentary Secretary on their travel.
2. For the financial year to date, \$2.032m excluding GST has been spent on travel as detailed below:

APSC staff airfare	\$334,654
Overseas study tour airfare (Leading Australia's future in the Asia-Pacific)	\$138,949
International assistance recipient airfare	\$466,141
Indigenous recruitment candidate airfare	\$219,902
Travel allowance	\$617,282
Taxi and parking	\$145,675
Motor vehicle	\$109,363
Total travel cost	\$2,031,965

Of the total airfare cost, it is estimated that only 29% (\$335k) was for APSC staff whilst the remaining 71% was for non-APSC travel: i.e. travel for public servants coming to Australia from developing countries, indigenous candidates travel for recruitment and other APS employees travel for the overseas study tour.

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. The Government's Lowest Practical Fare travel policy for Domestic Air Travel and Best Fare of the Day for International Air Travel are being followed. This is monitored on a trip by trip basis by the delegate who approves the travel.