

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
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: 96

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 12 July 2013

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). 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. What is the policy for business class airfare tickets? Is there still a reduction in business flights as per the media release by the Minister for Finance and Deregulation and the Special Minister of State dated 25 September 2012?
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?

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.

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2. For the financial year to date as at 31 May 2013, \$1,425,027 excluding GST has been spent on travel as detailed below:

APSC staff Airfare	242,118
Leading Australia's Future in the Asia-Pacific (LAFIA)	212,067
Travel allowance	399,769
International assistance recipient airfare costs	285,918
Indigenous recruitment candidate airfare costs	36,456
Non-APSC Senior Reviewer	22,889
Taxi and parking	145,673
Motor vehicle	80,139
Total travel cost	1,425,027

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 Australia's Future in Asia. The information regarding travel plan at the detailed level is not captured centrally at the APSC.
4. Please refer to the answer above.
5. The Commission requires that all staff travel on economy class for domestic short haul trips. This policy change has achieved a reduction in the unit cost of domestic short haul 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 30 employees who have Qantas club membership and 1 employee who has 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.