

QUESTION: P15

SENATOR FIELDING:

1. How much money has the portfolio spent on domestic airfares for each of the last three financial years?

Answer: 2005-06 (to end October): \$60,629

2004-05: \$219,134

2003-04: \$152,944

2. How much money has the portfolio spent on overseas airfares for each of the last three financial years?

Answer: 2005-06 (to end October): \$4,874

2004-05: \$83,508

2003-04: \$39,530

3. How much money has the portfolio spent on economy class domestic airfares for each of the last three financial years?

Answer: The department does not keep a breakdown of expenditure by class of airfare.

4. How much money has the portfolio spent on business class domestic airfares for each of the last three financial years?

Answer: See previous answer.

5. How much has the portfolio spent on first class domestic airfares for each of the last three financial years?

Answer: Nil

6. What would be the estimated financial year dollar saving if all public servants in the portfolio travelled economy class for flights of less than one and a half hours duration?

Answer: Estimated savings would be negligible as most travel of less than one and a half hours is by economy class. In accordance with the Certified Agreement, all staff are entitled to travel by business class when travelling overseas (therefore all the amounts under question 2 would be for business class), and within Australia if the continuous flight time (excluding connecting flights) is in excess of three hours and the employee is expected to perform duty immediately following the completion of the flight. Only SES officers are entitled to travel by business class when travelling domestically, but this would make up a very small proportion of the expenditure reported under question one (SES officers make up a little less than 4 per cent of the department's staff, and this would fairly represent their share of total domestic airfares, their more expensive airfares being cancelled out by their lower propensity to travel).