

**SENATE FINANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION LEGISLATION COMMITTEE  
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 2006-07 (30 OCTOBER 2006)  
DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**QUESTION: P3**

SENATOR FIERRAVANTI-WELLS:

What is the total cost of running the Senate on a yearly basis?

Is it possible in turn to estimate a figure for the daily cost of running the Senate?

**Answer:** Attachment A shows the cost of the Senate sitting for a normal sitting week (based on 4 days of sittings) over and above the normal day to day running costs of both the Department of the Senate and the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS), i.e. only marginal costs of each department directly attributable to the chamber's activities have been included, along with the travel costs of senators and staff for the week (this item is paid by the Department of Finance and Administration).

Thus, the marginal cost of the Senate sitting for a whole year, assuming 19 weeks of sittings and estimates hearings, would range from \$7,218,480 to \$9,246,426 per annum.

The daily cost, assuming all costs can be equally allocated across the 4 days, would range from \$94,980 to \$121,664 per day.

Further to the costs included in Attachment A, both the Department of the Senate and DPS incur day to day running costs for activities that directly and indirectly support the functioning of the chamber, but which are not incurred solely because the chamber is sitting. It is difficult to specifically allocate many of these costs to the cost of running the Senate chamber. In addition to this, costs incurred by other departments in responding to Senate debates and preparing responses to questions on notice is unknown.

For information, included below are the department's full annual costs, split by output group. A small percentage of these costs are included in Attachment A (representing those additional costs which are incurred when the chamber is sitting).

**Department of the Senate**

<b>Office</b>	<b>2005-06 (\$'000)</b>	<b>2004-05 (\$'000)</b>
<b>Clerk's Office</b>	1,016	923
<b>Table Office</b>	2,425	2,550
<b>Procedure Office</b>	5,525	5,128
<b>Committee Office</b>	8,178	8,756
<b>Black Rod's Office</b>	4,557	5,173
<b>Total departmental expenses</b>	<b>21,701</b>	<b>22,530</b>

Note: A significant percentage of the costs of the Clerk's Office, Table Office and the Black Rod's Office is dedicated to supporting the chamber during sitting days. Costs of committees meeting in Canberra on non-sitting weeks and outside Canberra are not included in Attachment A.

**COST OF RUNNING THE SENATE**  
**One sitting week (Monday to Thursday)**  
**As of 6 November 2006**

	Estimated cost	
	Minimum	Maximum
<b>Senators and Staff:</b>		
Airfares for 74 Senators from home base to Canberra (return)	\$94,640	\$94,640
Airfares for 74 staff members from home base to Canberra (return)	\$68,436	\$68,436
Accommodation allowance for 74 Senators @ \$190.00 per night x 5n	\$56,240	\$56,240
Accommodation allowance for 74 staff members @ \$180.00 per night x 5n	\$53,280	\$53,280
Daily allowances for 2 ACT senators @ \$65 per day x 4 days	\$520	\$520
Comcar services	\$29,600	\$59,500
Cabcharge	\$18,648	\$41,440
Overtime for 76 staff members	\$41,265	\$68,775
	<u>\$362,628</u>	<u>\$442,830</u>
<b>Department of Parliamentary Services:</b>		
Employees	\$1,794	\$3,140
Printing	\$2,309	\$4,040
Electricity	\$4,160	\$7,280
Water/waste	\$499	\$874
Security	\$2,600	\$4,550
	<u>\$11,362</u>	<u>\$19,884</u>
<b>Department of the Senate:</b>		
Chamber staff	\$1,910	\$5,560
Transport staff	\$913	\$1,825
Stationery Store	\$828	\$1,324
Mail and Freight	\$828	\$1,242
Printing	\$0	\$785
Office Services	\$626	\$1,251
Table Office	\$626	\$9,535
Procedure Office	\$0	\$1,018
Departmental staff Cabcharge	\$0	\$1,200
Sitting week newspapers	\$200	\$200
	<u>\$5,929</u>	<u>\$23,940</u>
	<u><b>\$379,920</b></u>	<u><b>\$486,654</b></u>

## Notes/Assumptions

All 'estimated' costs are based on normal sitting hours. 'Maximum' costs are based on sitting until 11:00 pm. The only exceptions to these assumptions relate to Comcar and Cabcharge costs - refer below.

Comcar 'estimated' cost is based on \$80.00 per travelling Senator per day. The 'maximum' cost is based on Comcar daily usage by the Senate (9 September 2005).

Cabcharge 'estimated' cost is based on average of \$18.00 per journey - fourteen separate journeys are required in a sitting week (Senators and staffers from home base to local airport, staffers to hotel accommodation in Canberra on Sunday, staffers to and from Parliament House on Monday to Thursday, staffers to Canberra Airport on Friday, and Senators and staffers returning home from local airport on Friday). The 'maximum' Cabcharge cost is based on \$40.00 per journey.

Departmental staff Cabcharge cost is based on average of \$30.00 per journey for 10 employees.

Senators' staffers overtime allowance is based on an average salary of \$55,123.

Black Rod's Office staff costs are based on two additional Chamber Staff at APS3, one Chamber Staff performing higher duties of an APS3 (nominally APS1/2), one additional Transport Staff at APS3, one additional Stationery Store Staff at APS1/2, and one additional Mail & Freight Staff at APS1/2, and two HSA's for 'maximum' cost.

Table Office staff costs are based on two HSA's, and overtime for four APS6 and three APS4 employees.

Procedure Office staff costs are based on overtime for one APS4 employee.

All departmental staff costs are based on top range salary rates for each classification.

Travel costs for senators and staff are paid by the Department of Finance and Administration.

Costs of committees meeting in Canberra on non-sitting weeks and outside Canberra are not included in Attachment A