

Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing – October 2009

Department of Finance and Deregulation

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

Outcome 3, Program 3.1

Topic: Community Cabinet Meeting

Question reference number: F74

Type of Question: Hansard, F&PA 98, 20 October 2009

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 4 December 2009

Number of Pages: 2

Senator Bernardi asked:

I was told there was a bus available and Minister Ellis did not avail herself of it... I want to know who booked the car, why was it there and kept waiting for so many hours when other transport facilities were available, what cost there was to the taxpayer and whether it is true that indeed a taxi was engaged all day to ferry Minister Ellis around Port Macquarie.

Mr Tune We can provide some information on that now. We cannot answer every question you have raised here, but in general terms, car transport bookings, including in the case you have raised, are made by parliamentarians or their staff. That is the way it operates... If car transport costs include the use of a COMCAR, or a taxi in lieu of a COMCAR, the ministers and parliamentary secretaries (*costs*) are met by their respective home departments. So the costs involved would probably be best directed to that department. That is basically it. The other things we can take on notice. Some, as I said, are probably best directed to the Minister's home department.

Senator Bernardi My concerns are noted. I note the information you have provided. Any further information which you have undertaken to give on notice I would appreciate.

Mr Tune Will do.

Answer:

An employee of Minister Ellis' office made bookings with COMCAR for car-with-driver services on 25 August 2009.

In line with standard practices where no COMCAR is available, the reservation was allocated by COMCAR to the local taxi company in Port Macquarie.

The cost to COMCAR for this service from the taxi company amounted to \$206.31, which was forwarded to the portfolio department for payment.