

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Supplementary Budget Estimates 15-18 October 2012

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

**Department/Agency:** Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Outcome/Program:** 1.1.3 Support Services for Government Operations

**Topic:** Public Service Efficiency

**Senator:** Senator Ryan

**Question reference number:** 79

**Type of Question:** written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 30 November 2012

**Number of pages:** 3

**Question:**

1. Please detail how the department/agency will achieve savings over the forward estimates through pursuing further efficiencies in the way the public service operates (see media release by the Minister for Finance and Deregulation and the Special Minister of State of 25 September 2012 [http://www.financeminister.gov.au/media/2012/mr\\_1982012.html](http://www.financeminister.gov.au/media/2012/mr_1982012.html)).

In addition, please provide the following detail:

2. How will reductions in air travel spending be achieved? What is the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
3. What restrictions will be implemented for business flights? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
4. How will the use of external consultants and contractors be reduced? How will this impact on the Department/agency? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
5. How will the department/agency manage moving recruitment advertising online? Will all future recruitment advertisement be online only? If not, explain why. What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
6. How will printing costs be reduced? Explain if and how the department/agency will reduce its printing costs by five per cent, or if it will not, why not? How will it be determined what documents will no longer be printed? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?

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#### **Answer:**

1. The Department will achieve savings over the forward estimates through:
  - a. reductions in the use of consultants and contractors;
  - b. reductions in domestic and international travel;
  - c. reductions in recruitment advertising expenditure; and
  - d. reductions in printing and publication expenditure.
2. Reductions in air travel will be achieved through reducing domestic and international travel, increasing the use of the Government's virtual meeting (telepresence) facilities, and booking cheaper fares where possible. In 2012-13 the Department has reduced budgeted air travel expenditure by 8%. The estimated savings over the forward estimates will be proportionate to the appropriation.
3. Travel will be conducted in accordance with the Department's Chief Executive Instructions and Operational Guidelines. The current departmental travel policy only allows business class travel for Senior Executives on flights greater than three hours. The estimated savings over the forward estimates will be proportionate to the appropriation.
4. Reductions in the use of contractors and consultants will be achieved by utilising the broad range of skills within the Department. This will reduce the reliance on external parties for the provision of services. In 2012-13 the Department has reduced budgeted contractor and consultant expenditure by 15%. The estimated savings over the forward estimates will be proportionate to the appropriation.
5. The Department is currently advertising online through APSjobs.gov.au. All recruitment advertising will be undertaken in accordance with the Australian Government's advertising guidelines. Recruitment advertising expenditure is a subset of the recruitment budget which has been reduced by 3%. The estimated savings over the forward estimates will be proportionate to the appropriation.
6. Reductions in printing costs will be achieved through greater reliance on online publishing. The Department assesses each publication to determine how it will be

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published. In 2012-13 the Department has reduced budgeted printing expenditure by 17%. The estimated savings over the forward estimates will be proportionate to the appropriation.