

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

Portfolio

Question No. 90

Senator Humphries asked the following question at the hearing on 14 February 2012:

Community Cabinets

1. What was the cost of Ministers travel and expenses for the Community Cabinet meetings held this financial year to date?
2. How many Ministerial Staff travelled with the Minister for the Community Cabinet meetings for this financial year to date? What was the total cost of this travel?
3. How many Departmental officers travelled with the Minister for the Community Cabinet meetings for this financial year to date? What was the total cost of this travel? List travel type, accommodate and any other expenses.
4. What was the total cost to the Department and the Ministers office for the Community Cabinet meetings for this financial year to date?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

1) The Department is unable to provide information about the costs associated with the Attorney or Minister's attendance, or the attendance of ministerial staff, at these meetings. Travel costs by ministers, parliamentary secretaries and other staff covered by the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* are administered by the Department of Finance and Deregulation and departments do not hold this information.

2), 3) and 4). For the 2011/12 financial year to 14 February 2012, there were two Community Cabinet meetings which were attended by either the former Attorney-General, the Hon Robert McClelland MP or the former Minister for Home Affairs and Justice, the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP.

The Minister for Home Affairs and Justice attended the Community Cabinet meeting in Hobart on 3 October 2011, and was accompanied by one Departmental officer and one Ministerial staffer.

Both the Minister for Home Affairs and Justice and the Attorney-General attended the Community Cabinet meeting in Werribee on 9 November 2011, and were accompanied by one Ministerial staffer each and one Departmental officer .

Costs associated with departmental officers' attendance at the two meetings are detailed below:

Meeting	No of Departmental Staff	Flight Costs	Accommodation Costs	Meal Costs	Other Costs	Total Cost of Departmental Staff
Hobart, Tas 3 October 2011	1	\$347.88	\$167	\$113.10	\$24.70	\$652.68
Werribee, Vic 9 November 2011	1	\$587.32	\$198	\$113.10	\$49.40	\$947.82

Total costs for the Department were \$1600.50.