

## **QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

**ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 11 February 2013**

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

**(AE13/0452) PROGRAM – Internal Product**

Senator Humphries (written) asked:

Portfolio wide - Please provide an update of the savings achieved 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: Can you quantify the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates for reductions in air travel? Has there been a reduction in business flights? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates? Has there been a reduction in the use of external consultants and contractors? Has this impacted on the Department/agency, and how? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates? Provide an update of moving recruitment advertising online. Is any recruitment still in printed materials, and if yes, why? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates? Has the department/agency reduced its printing costs? If no, why not? Have printing costs increased, and if yes why and how much? Has the five per cent savings target been achieved – if yes, how, or if it will not, why not? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?

*Answer:*

The department has implemented the Whole of Australian Government (WOAG) travel arrangements and WOAG travel management company agreement. The cost of air travel has declined.

Business travel in the department is closely monitored and can only occur when a business case is prepared and approved by an expenditure delegate. Given the irregular number of trips required for carrying out departmental business, particularly for IMA related activities, it has been very difficult to quantify the savings.

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) has been actively reducing its reliance on external consultants and contractors. In particular, DIAC is striving to reduce its contracted ICT workforce and increase its APS ICT workforce. The department must reduce the costs associated with delivering services, and at the same time build long-term workforce capability. While it is difficult to quantify forecasted savings, our experience has shown that replacing contractor resources with APS staff achieves savings.

It is not possible to quantify the total number of documents that are printed in the department as printers and multi-function devices record the number of pages

printed, as opposed to the number of documents produced. Where possible, DIAC will continue to publish documents online, which should have a flow on effect of reducing printing costs.

The department has been reducing its expenditure on recruitment advertising since the APS Gazette was published online in 2007 and will continue to advertise online. By managing recruitment advertising online, the department has recorded savings of almost 50 per cent since the 2009–10 financial year. In accordance with the Department of Finance and Deregulation's Non-campaign Recruitment Advertising Policy, the department will continue to only use press advertising for recruitment in exceptional case.

#### MRT-RRT:

The MRT-RRT seeks to achieve savings by pursuing efficiencies across all operations. Video-conferencing arrangements are used instead of travel in all appropriate circumstances. The tribunals also follow the Australian Government's guidelines relating to air travel and using best fares of the day whenever possible. External consultants are only engaged when there is a need for expertise or knowledge that is not available to the tribunals. Recruitment advertising using online media only in the financial year to date 31 January 2013 has reduced advertising costs by approximately \$24 000 compared to the 2011–12 financial year.