

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

**Portfolio**

**Question No. 83**

**Senator Humphries asked the following question at the hearing on 30 May 2013:**

Meeting costs

- a) What is the Department/Agency's meeting spend for this financial year to date? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events, including any catering and drinks costs.
- b) For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, please detail total meeting spend for this financial year to date. Detail date, location, purpose and cost of each event including any catering and drinks costs.
- c) What meeting spend is the Department/Agency's planning on spending? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
- d) For each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary office, what meeting spend is currently being planned for? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of each event including any catering and drinks costs.

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

For 2012-13 financial year information up to 31 January 2013, please refer to QoN 124 from the Additional Estimates round.

For the period 1 February 2013 to 31 May 2013 please see below.

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Agency	a) Event details, location and cost	b) Ministers meeting spend	c) Dept/ Agency Planned spend	d) Planned Ministers spend
Attorney-General's Department	<p>Given the wide ranging nature of its work, the Department arranges many meetings. To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources.</p> <p>For portfolio ministers, and their offices, costs such as for catering are met by the Attorney-General's Department while other costs (e.g. travel costs) are met by the Department of Finance and Deregulation.</p> <p>For costs that are met by AGD, information is provided in part b).</p>	<p>Attorney-General's Office - \$97.53 – general catering costs</p> <p>Minister for Home Affairs, Minister for Justice's Office - \$109.09 – general catering costs</p>	As spending on meetings is generally ad hoc in nature and not a significant budget item, there are no specific plans in relation to meeting spend.	Nil.
Administrative Appeals Tribunal	Nil	N/A	There is no specific plan in place for the rest of the financial year. It is expected that minor meeting expenses will be incurred in the normal course of conduct of AAT business for the remainder of the financial year.	N/A
Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity	<p>ACLEI's total spend for meeting costs for the period 1 February – 31 May 2013 is \$410.87, as listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 March /2013, Community of Practice for Corruption Prevention meeting: \$155.46</li> <li>• 29 May 2013, Investigation stakeholder meeting – AFP &amp; ACBPS: \$121.35</li> <li>• Various dates – general meeting expenses for guests: \$134.06</li> </ul>	N/A	There is no specific spending planned for the rest of the financial year. It is expected that minor expenses will be incurred in the normal course of conducting business, consistent with ACLEI guidelines	N/A

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Australian Crime Commission	The ACC meets with a range of external stakeholders for a variety of purposes. Where ever possible these meetings are conducted at ACC offices or on stakeholder premise. To detail all these meetings would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.	N/A	As spending on meetings are generally ad hoc in nature and not a significant budget item, there are no specific plans in relation to meeting spend.	N/A
Australian Customs and Border Protection Service	As detailed in the responses to October 2012 Supplementary Estimates QoN 107 and February 2013 Additional Estimates QoN 113, Customs and Border Protection's total cost of hospitality and entertainment for 1 July 2012 to 31 May 2013 was \$22,382.92. This includes meeting costs involving external parties such as catering costs. Given the wide ranging nature of Customs and Border Protection's work, a significant number of meetings are held with a large number of stakeholders across industry and other law enforcement, government and international agencies. To provide a further break down on such meetings would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources.	N/A	As spending on meetings are generally ad hoc in nature and not a significant budget item, there are no specific plans in relation to meeting spend. However, meetings will occur as part of conducting the normal course of the agency's operations during the remainder of the financial year and next financial year.	N/A
Australian Federal Police	AFP does not separately track meeting expenses and to do so would be an unreasonable diversion of resources. Meetings with a hospitality component are included in the response to May 2013 Budget Estimates QoN82 Hospitality & Entertainment.	N/A	As spending on meetings are generally ad hoc in nature and not a significant budget item, there are no specific plans in relation to meeting spend.	N/A
Australian Government Solicitor	Australian Government Solicitor (AGS) is a government business enterprise operating on a commercial and competitive basis in providing legal and related services to government and its agencies. AGS does not receive any Budget or other appropriations and its employees are engaged outside of the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i> . The question is therefore not applicable to AGS			
Australian Human Rights Commission	AHRC does not separately track meeting expenses and to do so would be an unreasonable diversion of resources. Meetings with a hospitality component are included in the response to QON 82 itemising Hospitality and Entertainment.	N/A	As spending on meetings are generally ad hoc in nature and not a significant budget item, there are no specific plans in relation to meeting spend.	N/A

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Australian Institute of Criminology	Meetings held at the AIC include the Audit Committee, Criminology Research Advisory Council, National Drug and Law Enforcement Research Fund Board and Executive Committee, Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards, as well as various roundtables and seminars. Number in excess of 20. \$4,623 To provide a further break down on such meetings would involve an unreasonable diversion of resources.	N/A	\$700	N/A
Australian Law Reform Commission	The ALRC meets with stakeholders so as to consult with them on various inquiries being undertaken. These meetings do not usually incur any costs. Meetings with a hospitality component are reported in the response to Question on Notice #82 Hospitality & Entertainment from May 2013 Budget Estimates hearings.	N/A	NIL	N/A
Australian Security Intelligence Organisation	For security reasons it would not be appropriate to comment on ASIO's meetings	N/A	For security reasons it would not be appropriate to comment on ASIO's meeting costs	N/A
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre	\$33,267.58. This includes meeting costs such as venue hire and catering involving external parties, but excludes travel. Given the wide-ranging nature of AUSTRAC's work, a significant number of meetings are held with a large number of stakeholders across industry and law enforcement, government and international agencies.	N/A	Some further expenditure on meetings has been forecast for the month of June 2013. The expenditure will be incurred in the normal course of conducting the agency's operations.	N/A
Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions	Nil	N/A	On occasion the CDPP hosts liaison meetings. Tea and coffee are provided at minimal cost.	N/A

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CrimTrac	<p>CrimTrac officers regularly meet with state and territory police agencies, accredited agencies and other key stakeholders for project and stakeholder consultation and as part of governance arrangements.</p> <p>Where applicable the travel costs associated with those meetings is included in the answer to Question 89.</p> <p>The catering and room hire costs for CrimTrac organised meetings for the period from 1 February 2013 to 31 May 2013 was \$4,491.</p> <p>Costs in detail were:</p> <p>February 2013, Strategic Issues Group Meeting, Melbourne, \$748.</p> <p>March 2013, Board of Management Meeting, Canberra, \$477.</p> <p>March 2013, Audit Committee Meeting, Canberra, \$88.</p> <p>March 2013, Chief Information Officer Meeting, Canberra, \$712.</p> <p>March 2013, Strategic Issues Group Sub-Working Group, Melbourne \$313.</p> <p>April 2013, NCOS AAG Meeting, Canberra, \$1,537.</p> <p>April 2013, Chief Finance Officers Meeting, Canberra, \$84.</p> <p>May 2013, CHENZA Meeting, Canberra, \$362.</p> <p>May 2013, Chief Information Officer Meeting, Canberra \$44.</p> <p>May 2013, Audit Committee Meeting, Canberra, \$88.</p> <p>May 2013, Strategic Issues Group Meeting, Canberra, \$38.</p>	N/A	Costs are anticipated to continue at similar rates to the period from 1 July 2012 to 31 May 2013.	N/A

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Family Court of Australia	The Court has incurred \$1,939 for the year to date (1 Feb to 31 May) on meetings. The Court does not account for meetings on the basis of the purpose of the meeting and is therefore unable to provide a further breakdown. The expenses to date cover judiciary and court staff meeting with overseas delegations and professional associations.	N/A	The Court does not budget for meetings on the basis of the purpose of the meeting and is therefore unable to provide a further breakdown or an estimated budget for 2012/13.	N/A
Federal Court of Australia	The Court does not capture expenditure by the category of 'meetings', whether they be internal meetings or meetings involving external parties. It would be impractical to undertake such a dissection manually.	N/A	Spending on meetings is done on an ad hoc basis and thus there are no specific plans in place for the rest of the financial year. It is expected that costs related to meetings will be incurred as a normal part of the Court's operations.	N/A
Federal Circuit Court of Australia	The Court has incurred \$455 for the year to date (1 Feb to 31 May) on meetings. The Court does not account for meetings on the basis of the purpose of the meeting and is therefore unable to provide a further breakdown. The expenses to date cover judiciary and court staff meeting with overseas delegations and professional associations.	N/A	The Court does not budget for meetings on the basis of the purpose of the meeting and is therefore unable to provide a further breakdown or an estimated budget for 2012/13.	N/A
High Court of Australia	The High Court of Australia does not record meetings as a separate cost entity. To extract, analyse and consolidate the data from each separate record would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.			

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Insolvency and Trustee Service Australia	<p>21 February 2013 – Registered Trustee Information Session – (following up location, but probably Melbourne) - \$225.63 for catering.</p> <p>28 February 2013 – Trustee Information Session – Holiday Inn Cairns - \$280 venue hire and catering.</p> <p>1 March 2013 – Trustee Information Session – Ibis Townsville - \$300 venue hire and catering.</p> <p>7 March 2013 – Liaison with Financial Counsellors – Sydney Office - \$15 catering</p> <p>13 March 2013 – Registered Trustee Training Session – Adelaide Office - \$158.45 catering</p> <p>25 March 2013 – Law Council Meeting – Adelaide Offices - \$200.00 catering</p> <p>2 April 2013 - Liaison with Financial Counsellors – Melbourne Office – no costs</p> <p>4 April 2013 – Forum with International Visitors – Sydney Office - \$119.20 catering</p> <p>23 April 2013 Registered Trustee Training Session – Adelaide Office - \$49.60 catering</p>	N/A	<p>A definitive meeting plan has not yet been formulated for the 2013-14 Financial Year.</p> <p>Plans were made for June 2013 for the following:</p> <p>5 June 2013 – Financial Counsellors Training – Adelaide Office - \$14.65 catering</p> <p>18 June – Major Creditor Forum- Sydney Offices - \$248.35 catering</p> <p>18 June – Welcome function for delegation from Indonesian Ministry of Law and Human Rights - \$99.00 catering.</p>	N/A
National Native Title Tribunal	<p>The National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT) will not be providing a response to this question, as from 1 July 2012 the NNTT is no longer a <i>Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997</i> Agency, and is funded to carry out its functions as a sub-program of the Federal Court of Australia’s appropriation. On 12 March 2013 the <i>Courts and Tribunals Legislation Amendment (Administration) Act 2013</i> came into operation. On that day the Australian Public Service Commissioner signed a determination which transferred all staff employed by the Tribunal to the Federal Court of Australia under s.72 of the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i>, but those staff are designated staff assisting the Tribunal under the <i>Native Title Act 1993</i>.</p>			

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Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	<p>11 April 2013, Sydney, Privacy Advisory Committee, \$172.46</p> <p>16 April 2013, Canberra, Information Contact Officer Network, \$2101.89</p> <p>21 May 2013, Canberra, Information Advisory Committee, \$2192.23</p>	N/A	The OAIC does not plan to hold future events for the period ending 30 June 2013.	N/A
Office of Parliamentary Counsel	8 March 2013, catering for Board of Tax meeting, OPC's premises, \$555.45	N/A	There are no plans at present for meeting expenditure for the remainder of the financial year.	N/A