

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 27–28 May 2013

#### IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

#### **(BE13/0502) PROGRAM – Internal Product**

Senator Humphries (Written) asked:

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:*

(1) The Department has recorded a reduction in the volume of domestic business flights for the financial year to date compared to the 2011-12 financial year as shown in the table below. There is an increase in the volume of international business flights for the financial year to date compared to 2011-12 because of the opening of offshore processing centres in Papua New Guinea and Nauru.

<b>Trips/Sectors</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>FYTD 31 May 2013</b>
Domestic	39 266	36 413
International	8 099	10 369
<b>Total</b>	<b>47 365</b>	<b>46 782</b>

The Department has not estimated savings specifically arising from travel over the forward estimates.

(2) Since 2012–13 the Department has been actively reducing the costs of and reliance on external consultants and contractors. In 2012-13 the Department engaged a total of 577 Information and Communication contractors through the ICT Services Panel. In 2013-14 the Department has reduced the total number of ICT contractors to 321 resulting in a reduction of 256 ICT contractors with a cost saving in the order of \$40,000,000.

(3) The Department will continue to only use press advertising for recruitment in exceptional cases, in accordance with the Department of Finance and Deregulation's Non-campaign Advertising Policy.

(4) The very detailed information sought is not readily available in consolidated form and it would be a major task to collect and assemble it. The considerable resources required to collate the information cannot be justified.

#### *MRT-RRT:*

The MRT-RRT seeks to achieve savings by pursuing efficiencies across all operations. The tribunals have recorded increased business travel for the period 1 July 2012 to 12 June 2013 compared to the financial year 2011-12, with costs incurred for independent merits reviews. Excluding these costs, the tribunal spent less on business travel compared to the financial year 2011-12 by using video conferencing and applying the Best Fare of the Day.

External consultants are only engaged when there is a need for expertise or knowledge that is not available to the tribunals. The tribunals spent \$99,445 on external consultants and contractors in the financial year 2011-12 and has spent \$179,277 in 2012-13 to 12 June 2013. This includes contractor costs associated with a major one-off project to relocate the Melbourne office of the tribunals.

Recruitment advertising using online media only in the financial year to 12 June 2013, has reduced advertising costs by approximately \$24,000 compared to 2011-12.

The MRT-RRT reduced printing cost from \$20,890 in 2011-12 to \$17,167 in 2012-13 to 12 June 2013 achieving the 5 per cent target. It is noted that printing costs primarily relate to the Annual Report and include preparation of the internet versions of the report.

The public service efficiencies savings over the forward years are \$649,000 in 2013-14, \$120,000 in 2014-15, \$45,000 in 2015-16 and \$28,000 in 2016-17. The MRT-RRT has not quantified specific projected savings in each category.