

Guidelines for Tasmanian Government Businesses

Overseas Travel

May 2014

Government of Tasmania 2014

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Overseas Travel Guidelines

1. Purpose

These guidelines set out the requirements of Shareholding Ministers in relation to overseas travel by the Chairperson, Directors and Chief Executive Officers of Government Businesses.

Government Businesses should have regard to these guidelines, in addition to any existing Board-approved internal policies in place for overseas travel arrangements, and they should be applied where existing arrangements do not sufficiently address the matters covered below.

2. Introduction

From time to time, a Government Business may identify a business case for overseas travel by a member of the Board of Directors or an employee of the business. Such travel is to be undertaken for the purpose of conducting official business. The expected outcomes and benefits to be achieved as a result of the travel should be relevant to the directions and strategic priorities of the Government Business.

3. Application

These guidelines apply to all State-owned Companies and Government Business Enterprises. These guidelines take effect from the day they are issued. The reporting requirements under Clause 7 commence with the 2012-13 Annual Report.

4. Guiding Principles

Government businesses should exercise economy, accountability and transparency in relation to overseas travel, and ensure that tangible benefits are realised for the business and the State. In particular:

- **internal policies** — Government Businesses should have Board-approved policies for overseas travel consistent with the Shareholding Ministers' accountability expectations;
- **business purpose** — there must be a demonstrated business case for the travel setting out how it contributes directly to achieving the business' strategic objectives, as endorsed by the Shareholding Ministers;
- **minimising travel** — business travel must represent efficient, effective, ethical and economical use of time and business funds. Overseas travel should only be undertaken if other options such as teleconferencing and videoconferencing are considered unsuitable or ineffective; and
- **public disclosure and accountability** — overseas travel and travel expenditure should be appropriately controlled and accounted for, including adequate public disclosure of the travel undertaken.

5. Combining with Personal Travel and Accompanying Persons

Personal travel is not to be included in itineraries without being approved beforehand. Any personal component should be clearly identifiable and able to be separately accounted for in the interests of accountability and transparency.

The cost of any personal travel that is combined with business travel is to be met by the officer.

Costs in relation to any non-employee of the business accompanying the Chairperson, Director or Chief Executive Officer, are not to be met by the Government Business.

6. Board Approval Requirements

Any overseas travel to be undertaken by a member of the Board of Directors or the senior management team of the business must be approved by the Board.

In order to assess requests for overseas travel, the Board must be provided with written justification for the need for overseas travel and details of the expected benefits and how the travel is consistent with the strategic objectives of the business.

All approvals must be obtained prior to travel being undertaken.

Any overseas travel to be undertaken by other staff must be approved consistent with internal Board-approved policies.

7. Reporting Requirements

All overseas travel undertaken by a member of the Board of Directors or an employee of the business must be disclosed:

- to the Shareholding Ministers, and to Treasury, as the principal financial advisor to the Shareholding Ministers, as detailed in 7.1 below; and
- in summary form in the financial report section of the annual report, as detailed in 7.2.

7.1 Reporting to Shareholding Ministers

The Shareholding Ministers consider the following information to be the minimum acceptable level of disclosure for Government Businesses to the Shareholding Ministers and Treasury in relation to each individual overseas trip undertaken:

- details such as name;
- position held;
- destination;
- total cost; and
- purpose for travel.

The Shareholding Ministers expect that the disclosure of this information will be made by the business no later than 60 calendar days after the end of the financial year in which the travel commenced.

7.2 Disclosure in Annual Reports

The Shareholding Ministers consider the following summary information to be the minimum acceptable level of disclosure for Government Businesses in their annual reports:

- the total number of overseas trips undertaken during the year by a member of the Board of Directors or an employee of the business; and
- the total cost of all overseas travel undertaken by a member of the Board of Directors or an employee of the business for the same period.

It is at the discretion of the business as to how this disclosure is presented in the annual report (including aggregation).



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