

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NUMBER: 901

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Mr M Swart (DA) to ask the Minister of Finance:

- (1) What the total expenditure amounted to in respect of business class airline tickets for officials of the National Treasury in the 2008-09 financial year;
- (2) what the quantum of savings would have been had economy class tickets been purchased during the said period;
- (3) whether, in light of the current economic climate, the right of officials to fly business class will be withdrawn; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

NW1057E

Reply:

The National Treasury obtained the services of a new travel agency during August 2008 and therefore only information for the period 1 July 2008 to March 2009 could be obtained (9 Months).

The following costs cover all senior officials but exclude the Ministry and the DG:

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|-----|--|---|-------------|
| (1) | Domestic air travel | : | R 862,284 |
| | International air travel | : | R8,324,494 |
| | Total expenditure | : | R9,186,778 |
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| (2) | Domestic air travel potential saving | : | R 200,143 |
| | International air travel potential saving | : | R 3,121,687 |
| | Total potential saving | : | R 3,321,830 |
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| (3) | A circular with regard to cost saving measures was issued by the Chief Financial Officer, where officials from Deputy Director-General level and below were requested to fly economic class for all domestic flights and international flights taking less than 4 hours. | | |

Officials are only travelling business class for longer international flights. Senior officials are almost always required to work as soon as they land and return as soon as possible. This measure ensures that the department also saves on accommodation costs as it minimises the number of overnight stays in overseas hotels.

The National Treasury is very committed to explore all avenues to curtail costs and will do so vigorously.