

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NUMBER 2507

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Mr N J J van R Koornhof (Cope) to ask the Minister of Finance:

- (1) Whether the National Treasury had revised their policy on entertainment, travel and subsidy in accordance with the financial conditions now prevailing; if not, why not; if so, (a) how much was spent in each case and (b) how does this present expenditure compare with that of the (i) 2008-09 and (ii) 2009-10 financial years;
- (2) whether video-conferencing are being used more extensively to minimise costs; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

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REPLY:

- (1) Yes, every opportunity is taken to cut expenditure on travel and other needs. However, the National Treasury has a larger number of obligations on behalf of government to international organisations which requires that officials are present at fora such as the G20, Financial Services Board, African Development Bank, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and others.

The National Treasury's policy is to evaluate and implement standards strictly based on the principles of cost effectiveness. The policies are developed internally and therefore no expenditure was incurred.

(1)(b) Table 1. Expenditure Trend

Items	(i) Actual Exp 2008/09	(ii) Actual Exp 2009/10	Actual YTD Apr - Aug '10
	R'000	R'000	R'000
Travel and Subsistence	43,914	36,212	14,454
Entertainment	248	137	69
<b>Total of Goods and Services</b>	<b>556,698</b>	<b>493,047</b>	<b>130,577</b>
T&S as % of G&S	7.9%	7.3%	11.0%
Entertainment as a % of G&S	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%

- (2) During 2009/10, 88 video calls conferencing calls were made compared to the 47 in 2008/09. There has been an increase of 87% in the use of this facility during this financial year. This has resulted in reduction of time spent on the road, increases productivity time while cutting costs on travelling and accommodation.