

22nd July 2009

Our ref: R00130

Freedom of Information Request - Agency Expenditure.

Your request to SEEDA is:

1. *details of any first-class flights taken by agency staff members; and;*
2. *details of rail journey costs taken by agency staff members within the UK – broken down into standard and first-class travel.*

Information requested

1. First class flights in 2007/08 and 2008/09

SEEDA's foreign travel policy for Agency staff members is that all foreign travel bookings should be at standard class where the flight duration is expected to be less than five hours. For flights longer than 5 hours, business class travel is allowed to reflect the fact that travellers typically have full schedules of meetings at both ends of the flight, and/or are expected to work while on the flight.

First-class travel on domestic flights is not allowed for SEEDA staff except where such flights are provided to passengers holding business-class international tickets at no extra cost to SEEDA.

In 2007/08 and 2008/09 there were 5 and 2 flights respectively which had first-class domestic flights included as part of a business-class international travel ticket, as detailed in the tables below;

Destination (2007/08)	No. of travellers
San Francisco – Phoenix – San Diego – Los Angeles	1
San Francisco – Phoenix – San Diego - Los Angeles	1
Dallas – San Antonio – Dallas	1
Los Angeles – Phoenix – Los Angeles – Santa Ana – San Francisco – San Antonio – Chicago	1
San Francisco – Los Angeles – Phoenix – Los Angeles – Santa Ana – San Francisco – Los Angeles	1



Destination (2008/09)	No. of travellers
Dallas – New Orleans	1
Doha – Dubai	2

2. Details of Rail journey costs in 2007/08 and 2008/09

It has not been possible to locate, extract and collate information relating to individual journeys or class of travel within the “appropriate limit” of 2.5 days as described in the Freedom of Information (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. To extract this information would involve manually examining hard copy expenses claims, Credit Card claims and travel warrants for every employee over the last two years. If you would like to send us confirmation to proceed on your behalf, we will issue a formal fees notice before commencing the work setting out the likely cost against the amount of time anticipated.

Routinely SEEDA staff are required to travel standard class; however, our policy allows in principle for first class travel where staff are undertaking journeys of over two hours outside the region.

Total rail costs incurred by SEEDA staff members amounted to £146,843 in 2007/08, and £135,571 in 2008/09.