

S. L. 117 P.

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## \$25.1m for air fares

The Government has allowed \$25,104,000 in its 1977-78 estimates of expenditure to cover air fares of Government officials and their families entitled to overseas holidays.

This is an increase of \$2,604,000 over the approved estimate for 1976-77 - a growth of 11.6 per cent.

Listed under Miscellaneous Services, the official explanation for the provision is "to cover the costs of passages and related expenditure in respect of Government officials and their families entitled to vacation leave overseas."

The higher provision is to cover increases in air fares and the number of passages.

The 30 approved "merit trips" for Government official overseas have been allotted \$290,000 in the estimates - nearly double the 1976-77 provision because the number of merit trips that financial year was halved.

The provision for "passages for wives of senior local officials" remains the same at \$466,000. This sum is "for passages for wives of senior officers on locally recruited terms of service accompanying their husbands on merit trips and courses."

The total provision for passages for Government officials - for holidays, merit trips and passages for wives - is \$25,860,000.

This is more than the estimates for the entire costs of Legal Department, the Legal Aid Department and the Governor's Establishment combined.

Also under the Miscellaneous Services are \$1,780,000 earmarked for Silver Jubilee celebrations and a provision of \$5,000 for cash awards for suggestions made by individual members of the Civil Service on ways of improving efficiency.