



Australian Government

**Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority**

Assurance Review 2024/016

Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price

Senator for the Northern Territory

Travel to the Gold Coast

19 to 21 October 2023

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Executive summary

1. The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) conducted an Assurance Review of Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price's travel between 19 and 21 October 2023.
2. The focus of the Assurance Review was whether Senator Nampijinpa Price claimed Members of Parliament work resources (parliamentary work resources) in relation to travel sponsored by the Centre for Independent Studies to the Gold Coast between 19 and 21 October 2023. This travel was declared by Senator Nampijinpa Price on the Register of Senators' Interests for the 47th Parliament (Register of Interests).
3. Parliamentarians may be invited by sponsors to attend and/or speak at events relating to the parliamentarian's portfolio responsibilities. Sponsors may provide financial support for some expenses for officially-invited parliamentarians and/or their staff at these events.
4. The Assurance Review forms part of IPEA's 3 Year Assurance Plan.

Scope and Purpose

5. The scope of this Assurance Review is travel to and from the Gold Coast by Senator Nampijinpa Price between 19 and 21 October 2023.

Engagement with parliamentarian

6. IPEA engaged with Senator Nampijinpa Price on one occasion, by letter and email. The details of the interaction are described in the Assessment section below and can also be followed at Attachments 1 to 3.

Assurance Review Findings

7. The Assurance Review assessed the appropriate use of parliamentary work resources by Senator Nampijinpa Price to ensure that the resources claimed had not already been met by a third party.
8. Having considered the available information, including responses from Senator Nampijinpa Price's office, IPEA found that the resources claimed by Senator Nampijinpa Price were consistent with the legislative framework. No resources were claimed that duplicated the expenses already covered by third party sponsors.

Audit and Assurance function

IPEA's statutory audit function

9. IPEA audits parliamentarians' use of their parliamentary business work resources and the use of travel resources by their staff under section 12 of the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* (IPEA Act). IPEA conducts Assurance Reviews to assess the use of the resources against the legislative framework to determine if there has been a misuse.

10. Potential outcomes of an Assurance Review include:

- a. no further action in circumstances where the review has concluded the use of parliamentary business resources was not inconsistent with the legislative framework, or
- b. administrative remedial action, including penalty, where the review has concluded there is evidence the use of parliamentary business resources was not consistent with the legislative framework, or
- c. an IPEA initiated Ruling or Audit, where there is evidence of systemic or substantial misuse of parliamentary business resources, or
- d. referral to the Australian Federal Police where compelling prima facie evidence of fraud or other criminal conduct is identified, or
- e. referral to the National Anti-Corruption Commission, where there is clear evidence of serious or systemic corrupt conduct.

Legislative framework

11. The legislation relevant to this Assurance Review is:

- a. *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (PBR Act)
- b. *Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017* (PBR Regulations)
- c. *Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017* (the Determination)
- d. *Parliamentary Business Resources (Commonwealth Transport) Determination 2017*.

12. The PBR Act and PBR Regulations establish a framework (the legislative framework) for providing resources to parliamentarians in respect of their parliamentary business. Parliamentarians are eligible to claim public resources under the framework in respect of their parliamentary business.

13. Section 6 of the PBR Act provides the following meaning of **parliamentary business**:

- (1) The parliamentary business of a member means any of the following:
 - (a) the **parliamentary duties** of a member, being activities of the member that:
 - i. relate directly to the member's role as a member; and
 - ii. are determined for the purposes of paragraph (4)(a);
 - (b) the **electorate duties** of the member, being activities of the member that:
 - i. support or serve the member's constituents; and
 - ii. are determined for the purposes of paragraph (4)(b);
 - (c) the **party political duties** of the member, being activities determined for the purposes of paragraph (4)(c);
 - (d) for a member who is an office holder or a Minister of State – the **official duties** of the member being activities that:
 - i. relate to the member's role as an office holder or Minister of State; and
 - ii. are determined for the purposes of paragraph (4)(d).

14. Subsection 6(4) of the PBR Act provides that the Minister must determine activities of a member that are **parliamentary duties** of the member, or **electorate duties** of the member, or **party political** duties of the member, or **official duties** of the member.
15. The Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017 determines the activities which fall within the four duty streams set out in section 6 of the PBR Act.
 - (1) For the purposes of paragraph 6(4)(a) of the Act, the **parliamentary duties** of a member are the activities specified in Schedule 1 for that member.
 - (2) For the purposes of paragraph 6(4)(b) of the Act, the **electorate duties** of a member are the activities specified in Schedule 2 for that member.
 - (3) For the purposes of paragraph 6(4)(c) of the Act, the **party political duties** of a member are the activities specified in Schedule 3 for that member.
 - (4) For the purposes of paragraph 6(4)(d) of the Act, the **official duties** of a member are the activities specified in Schedule 4 for that member.
16. As an overarching matter, the public resources prescribed in Parts 2, 3 and 4 of the PBR Regulations are subject to a specific accountability regime established in the PBR Act for that purpose. Parliamentarians' access to and use of public resources are subject to the following obligations:
 - parliamentarians must be personally responsible and accountable for their use of public resources, and to act ethically and in good faith using and accounting for their use of those resources (section 25)
 - a parliamentarian must not claim or use public resources unless it is for the dominant purpose of conducting their parliamentary business (dominant purpose test, see section 26)
 - a parliamentarian must ensure value for money for the Commonwealth in incurring expenses or claiming public resources, taking into account the need to conduct the parliamentary business (value for money test, see section 27), and
 - a parliamentarian must not claim resources or incur expenses if any conditions for accessing the resources have not been met (section 28).
17. In accordance with sections 30 and 31 of the PBR Act, the Commonwealth must pay the travel expenses and travel allowances as prescribed by the PBR Regulations. Division 1 of Part 2 of the PBR Regulations prescribes travel expenses and travel allowances for travel within Australia for the purposes of sections 30 and 31 of the PBR Act.

Assurance Review methodology

Background

18. Under IPEA's Assurance program, IPEA conducts ongoing, systematic analysis of the parliamentary business resources accessed by parliamentarians and their staff via a combination of regular transaction sampling and review of publicly available information.
19. On 4 November 2023, IPEA identified that Senator Nampijinpa Price had updated the Register of Interests to declare that she had been sponsored to attend and/or speak at a range of engagements. Most of the engagements were in Australia, with one international event.

20. On 5 November 2024, IPEA commenced a Preliminary Assessment into the use of parliamentary business resources by Senator Nampijinpa Price to travel to, within or return from various sponsored engagements between 8 July 2022 and 17 August 2024.
21. The Preliminary Assessment found that Senator Nampijinpa Price accessed parliamentary business resources (flights only) to travel to and from the Gold Coast to attend the Consilium Conference between 19 and 21 October 2023.
22. On 23 December 2024, IPEA commenced an Assurance Review to determine whether the parliamentary business resources claimed by Senator Nampijinpa Price had already been met by third parties.

Scope of Assurance Review

23. The scope of this Assurance Review is travel between 19 and 21 October 2023 by Senator Nampijinpa Price to and from the Consilium Conference on the Gold Coast that was sponsored by the Centre for Independent Studies and declared by Senator Nampijinpa Price on the Register of Interests.

Method

24. IPEA considered the legislative framework and applied the following questions to the use of resources associated with travel to and from the Gold Coast during the period in scope:
 - a. Although Senator Nampijinpa Price declared that she received sponsorship for flights and accommodation by the Centre for Independent Studies, was it possible that flights were not included in the sponsorship package?
 - b. If flights were included in the sponsorship package, did Senator Nampijinpa Price accept this aspect of the sponsored package?
 - c. If flights were not included in the sponsorship package:
 - i. what was the dominant purpose of Senator Nampijinpa Price's travel?
 - ii. what was the nature of her parliamentary business?
 - iii. did the parliamentary business fall within the definition of one or more of the four duty streams in the Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination?
25. IPEA conducted the Assurance Review by examining and assessing:
 - a. information held by IPEA, including in the Parliamentary Expenses Management System
 - b. the legislative framework and supporting guidelines
 - c. information provided by the parliamentarian.

Assessment of work resources

Summary of findings

Analysis

26. On 23 December 2024, IPEA identified that Senator Nampijinpa Price travelled to and from the Gold Coast between 19 and 21 October 2023 using parliamentary work resources for her flights.
27. On 15 January 2025, IPEA wrote to Senator Nampijinpa Price detailing the requirements of the legislative framework and identifying the travel funded using parliamentary work resources for the relevant period (**Attachment 1**). Senator Nampijinpa Price was asked to advise whether the resources claimed had also been paid by the Centre for Independent Studies. A response was requested by 29 January 2025.
28. On 22 January 2025, Senator Nampijinpa Price's office contacted IPEA by telephone to seek an extension to the response timeframe. IPEA agreed to extend the timeframe to 12 February 2025 (**Attachment 2**).
29. On 12 February 2025, a response was received from Senator Nampijinpa Price's office (**Attachment 3**) stating that the declaration Senator Nampijinpa Price made on the Register of Interests was incorrect and should not have stated that flight costs were covered by the Centre for Independent Studies. The response also noted that Senator Nampijinpa Price attended the Consilium Conference to speak about the role of government policy in indigenous affairs, and as such, the dominant purpose of Senator Nampijinpa Price's travel was parliamentary business, in her role as Shadow Minister for Indigenous Australians.
30. Having regard to the information provided by Senator Nampijinpa Price, IPEA concluded that the travel was consistent with the legislative framework and that no resources were claimed that duplicated the expenses already covered by the Centre for Independent Studies.

Conclusion

31. The Assurance Review assessed the appropriate use of parliamentary work resources by Senator Nampijinpa Price to ensure that the resources claimed had not already been met by a third party.
32. Having considered the available information, including responses from Senator Nampijinpa Price's office, IPEA found that the resources claimed by Senator Nampijinpa Price were consistent with the legislative framework. No resources were claimed that duplicated the expenses already covered by third party sponsors.

From: [Assurance](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Assurance](#)
Subject: Assurance Review of travel and travel-related expenses [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Wednesday, 15 January 2025 3:25:18 PM
Attachments: [Letter to Senator J Price: Assurance Review of travel and travel-related expenses.pdf](#)

OFFICIAL

Dear Senator Price

Attached please find correspondence from the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority for your consideration.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]
A/g Director, Audit and Assurance
Transparency, Assurance and Legal Branch
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
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The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and acknowledges their continuing connection to Land, Waters and Community. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures, and the elders past, present and emerging.





Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

15 January 2025

Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price
Senator for Northern Territory
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Senator

Assurance Review of travel and travel-related expenses

The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) has responsibility under the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* to review work expenses accessed by parliamentarians.

IPEA is undertaking an Assurance Review of travel and travel-related expenses incurred in relation to your travel to and from the Gold Coast between 19-21 October 2023 to attend Consilium 2023, for which you declared on the Register of Senators' Interests that your flights and accommodation expenses had been covered by the Centre for Independent Studies. Specifically, IPEA is seeking information regarding the use of parliamentary resources to travel to an event which may have been sponsored by another party.

Please note that IPEA publishes completed assurance reviews on the website at www.ipea.gov.au/assurance-audit/published-assurance-reviews.

Division 2 of Part 3 of the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (the PBR Act) sets out the principles parliamentarians are to apply when utilising public resources.

As you would be aware, under the principles-based scheme parliamentarians have an obligation to be prepared to publicly justify their use of public resources for conducting their parliamentary business (subsection 25(3) of the PBR Act). Parliamentarians also have an obligation to ensure that expenses that are incurred, or allowances or other public resources that are claimed, in relation to the conduct of the member's parliamentary business, provide value for money, taking into account the need to conduct the member's parliamentary business (section 27 of the PBR Act). Parliamentarians are personally responsible and accountable for their use of public resources.

Attachment A details your Commonwealth funded travel for the relevant period. In your response, we ask you to consider the principles that apply when utilising public resources and whether the expenses claimed had already been met by the Centre for Independent Studies.

Your response will assist us to review your use of public resources against the principles based Parliamentary Business Resources framework, and to determine any next steps in our review of your travel expenses.

Please provide a written response via email to assurance@ipea.gov.au, by close of business on **Wednesday 29 January 2025** or advise us prior to the date if you need more time.

Should you wish to discuss this matter, please contact [REDACTED] on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

A/g Branch Manager, Transparency, Assurance and Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
T: 02 6215 3000

Attachment A
Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price
Assurance Review of travel to the Gold Coast

With regard to the following travel transactions, please advise whether the expenses claimed were also paid by the Centre for Independent Studies?

Work Expense	Departure Location	Departure Date	Departure Time	Arrival Location	Arrival Date	Arrival Time	Amount (GST excl.)
Travel Fares – Qantas Airways	Canberra	19 October 2023	6:25PM	Brisbane	19 October 2023	7:10PM	\$665.83
Travel Fares – Virgin Airlines	Gold Coast	21 October 2023	11:45AM	Canberra	21 October 2023	2:25PM	\$370.45

From: Assurance
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Assurance
Subject: HPE CM: Assurance Review - Senator Jacinta Price - Extension request [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Wednesday, 22 January 2025 3:58:36 PM

OFFICIAL

Good afternoon [REDACTED]

Thank you for your call. As discussed, IPEA is happy to extend the timeframe for response until 12 February 2025.

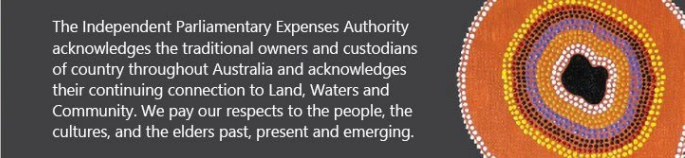
Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Assistant Director
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I am in the office Wednesday to Friday

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
WFH	WFH	✓	✓	✓



From: [REDACTED] (Sen J. Nampijinpa Price)
To: Assurance
Subject: HPE CM: RE: Assurance Review - Senator Jacinta Price - Extension request [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Wednesday, 12 February 2025 6:39:48 PM

Good afternoon [REDACTED]

I've spoken with Senator Nampijinpa Price regarding this and examined our records.

It seems that the declaration on the register of Senator's interests is incorrect. The declaration should read that the cost of the Senator's accommodation only was met by the Centre for Independent Studies.

At Consilium, the Senator appeared on a panel where she reflected on the referendum and spoke about the way forward in government policy in Indigenous affairs. She also appeared on a Centre for Independent Studies podcast and attended a number of conference sessions and events associated with the conference.

The dominant purpose of the travel was her parliamentary business as a shadow minister. Accepting the sponsored accommodation from the Centre for Independent Studies represents a saving to the Commonwealth. The Senator did not claim travel allowance for this trip.

The register of interests will be updated in due course.

Does the above advice satisfy your requirements? If not, what are the next steps?

Warm regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Office of Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price
Senator for the Northern Territory
Parliament House, Canberra
T [REDACTED] | E [REDACTED]

From: Assurance <Assurance@ipea.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 22 January 2025 3:59 PM
To: [REDACTED] (Sen J. Nampijinpa Price) <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Assurance <Assurance@ipea.gov.au>
Subject: Assurance Review - Senator Jacinta Price - Extension request [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Good afternoon [REDACTED]

Thank you for your call. As discussed, IPEA is happy to extend the timeframe for response until 12 February 2025.

Kind regards

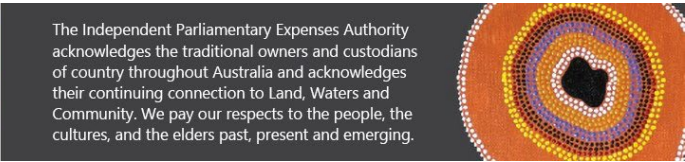
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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W: www.ipea.gov.au
Social: [LinkedIn](#) / [X/Twitter](#)

I am in the office Wednesday to Friday

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
WFH	WFH	✓	✓	✓



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