



Australian Government

**Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority**

Assurance Review 2025/005

Mr Pat Conaghan MP

Member for Cowper

Family reunion travel

1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023

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Executive summary

1. The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) conducted an Assurance Review of Mr Pat Conaghan MP's use of parliamentary business work resources for family reunion purposes (family reunion travel resources) between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2023 (the period in scope). The Assurance Review forms part of IPEA's 3 Year Assurance Plan.

Scope and Purpose

2. The scope of this Assurance Review is family reunion travel by Mr Conaghan and his family between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2023.
3. The purpose of the Assurance Review was to determine whether the family reunion travel resources were used in accordance with the legislative framework.

Engagement with Mr Conaghan

4. IPEA engaged with Mr Conaghan on two occasions to understand the nature of the travel undertaken by him and his family during the relevant period. These interactions are detailed in the Assessment section below and can also be found at **Attachments 1 to 3**.

Assurance Review Findings

5. Having regard to the information made available from Mr Conaghan, IPEA found that the use of family reunion travel resources was consistent with the legislative framework.

Audit and Assurance function

IPEA's statutory audit function

6. 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 resources against the legislative framework to determine if there has been misuse.
7. 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. referral to the National Anti-Corruption Commission, where there is clear evidence of serious or systemic corrupt conduct.

Legislative framework

8. IPEA applied the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (PBR Act) and its associated instruments as the relevant legislation for this Assurance Review. The PBR Act is a principles-based framework (legislative framework) that requires parliamentarians to ensure expenditure is incurred for the 'dominant purpose' of conducting parliamentary business and in a manner that represents 'value for money'.
9. The legislation relevant to this Assurance Review is:
 - a. *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (the PBR Act)
 - b. Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017 (the PBR Regulations)
 - c. Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017
 - d. Parliamentary Business Resources (Commonwealth Transport) Determination 2017
10. The principles-based legislative framework imposes a number of obligations upon parliamentarians in relation to their use of work resources. In summary, parliamentarians are personally responsible and accountable for their use of work resources. They must be prepared to publicly justify their use of work resources for conducting their parliamentary business, and must act ethically and in good faith in using, and accounting for the use of, those resources.
11. Parliamentarians are not able to claim work resources unless their travel:
 - is for the dominant purpose of conducting their parliamentary business;
 - represents value for money; and
 - meets the relevant conditions connected to the travel claim or expense.
12. 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)
13. 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. 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.

14. Section 6 of the PBR Regulations provides the meaning of **family reunion purposes** as:

A family member of a member travels for **family reunion purposes** if:

- (a) the member is travelling within Australia for the dominant purpose of conducting the member's parliamentary business; and
- (b) the family member travels to accompany or join the member; and
- (c) the travel by the family member is for the dominant purpose of facilitating the family life of the member's family.

15. Section 4 of the PBR Regulations provides the following meaning of **family member**:

- (a) the member's spouse or nominee;
- (b) a dependent child of the member;
- (c) a designated person in relation to the member.

Assurance Review methodology

Background

- 16. Under IPEA's Assurance program, IPEA conducts ongoing, systematic analysis of the parliamentary business resources accessed by parliamentarians and their staff through a combination of regular transaction sampling and review of publicly available information.
- 17. In 2024, IPEA commenced a Preliminary Assessment into travel by Mr Conaghan and his family members during the period in scope.
- 18. After excluding family travel to and from Canberra, the Preliminary Assessment found that parliamentary business resources were used by Mr Conaghan during the period in scope.
- 19. On 5 February 2025, IPEA commenced an Assurance Review of Mr Conaghan's family reunion travel.

Scope of Assurance Review

- 20. The scope of this Assurance review is family reunion travel undertaken by Mr Conaghan and his family between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2023. Family travel to and from Canberra to reunite family with the parliamentarian is excluded.

Method

- 21. IPEA considered the legislative framework and applied the following questions:
 - a. What was the dominant purpose of the travel?
 - b. What was the nature of the parliamentary business?
 - c. Did the travel by the family members meet the three-part test under section 6 of the PBR Regulations?
- 22. In assessing whether the dominant purpose of the travel was parliamentary business, IPEA considered:
 - a. the parliamentarian's role; and
 - b. any supporting evidence relating to their travel.

23. 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
- d. the parliamentary sitting timetables from the APH website (www.aph.gov.au).

Assessment of work expenses

Summary of findings

Analysis

- 24. Mr Conaghan and his family undertook one trip using parliamentary work resources for which IPEA required additional information to assess whether their use of family reunion travel was consistent with the legislative framework.
- 25. Mr Conaghan, his spouse and two dependants flew from Port Macquarie to Perth (via Sydney) on 27 April 2023 using parliamentary work resources for flights, ground transport and three nights of travel allowance in Perth.
- 26. They returned from Perth to Port Macquarie (via Brisbane) on 30 April 2023, using parliamentary work resources for flights and ground transport.
- 27. On 5 February 2025, IPEA wrote to Mr Conaghan detailing the requirements of the legislative framework and identifying the travel using parliamentary work resources for the period in scope (**Attachment 1**). Mr Conaghan was asked about the dominant purpose of his travel and the nature of his parliamentary business, with reference to the Determination. Mr Conaghan was also asked to advise whether his family's travel met the three-part test in Section 6 of the PBR Regulations. A response was requested by 28 February 2025. No response was received.
- 28. On 11 April 2025, IPEA wrote to Mr Conaghan a second time advising that a response had not yet been received and requesting a response by 28 April 2025 (**Attachment 2**).
- 29. On 15 April 2025, Mr Conaghan responded to IPEA (**Attachment 3**).
- 30. In his response, Mr Conaghan stated that the travel in April 2023 was undertaken as a member of the Joint Select Committee on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice Referendum, for the dominant purpose of conducting a public hearing in Perth on Friday 28 April 2023. He also included a link to the proceedings.
- 31. Mr Conaghan provided that the nature of the parliamentary business was parliamentary duties as per Schedule 1 a):

In the member's capacity as a member of the Parliament:

a) Preparing for, participating in and attending to business arising from proceedings of the Parliament, whether by committee of the whole or otherwise

- 32. Mr Conaghan confirmed that his family's travel met the three-part test set out in the PBR Regulations.

33. Mr Conaghan also stated that he sought advice in relation to this travel, and IPEA confirms that this advice was followed.
34. IPEA notes Mr Conaghan's advice that the dominant purpose of the travel undertaken by Mr Conaghan to Perth in April 2023 was parliamentary business, and that his family accompanied him for the dominant purpose of facilitating family life.

Conclusion

35. Having regard to the information made available from Mr Conaghan, IPEA found that the use of family reunion travel resources was consistent with the legislative framework.

[REDACTED]

From: Assurance
Sent: Thursday, 6 February 2025 11:02 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Assurance
Subject: HPE CM: Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: Attachment A - Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination.pdf; Letter - IPEA to Mr Pat Conagahn MP - 5 February 2025.pdf; Attachment B - Mr Pat Conaghan MP Travel Data.pdf

OFFICIAL

Mr Pat Conaghan MP
Member for Cowper

Dear Mr Conaghan

Attached please find correspondence from the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]

Branch Manager (A/g), Transparency, Assurance and Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
E: assurance@ipea.gov.au
W: www.ipea.gov.au & www.ipea.gov.au/ed



Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

5 February 2025

Mr Pat Conaghan MP
Member for Cowper
PO Box 345, Palm Court Centre
Port Macquarie, NSW, 2444

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Conaghan

Assurance Review of travel and travel-related resources – Family Reunion Travel

The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) has responsibility under the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* to undertake assurance activities in relation to the work expenses of members of parliament.

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

IPEA is undertaking an Assurance Review of travel and travel-related resources accessed in relation to your family reunion travel between 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023.

Legislative framework

The use of travel expenses for family reunion must meet the three-part test below, set out in section 6 of the Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017:

*A family member of a member travels for **family reunion purposes** if:*

- (a) the member is travelling within Australia for the dominant purpose of conducting the member's parliamentary business; and*
- (b) the family member travels to accompany or join the member; and*
- (c) the travel by the family member is for the dominant purpose of facilitating the family life of the member's family.*

Section 6 of the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (the PBR Act) and the Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017 (the Determination – **Attachment A**) define the four streams of parliamentary business. These are parliamentary duties, electorate duties, party political duties and official duties.

The principles parliamentarians are to apply when utilising public resources are set out in part 3 - division 2 of the PBR Act.

Action Required

Attachment B details your Commonwealth-funded family reunion travel within the period that is relevant to this Assurance Review, and we have set out questions for your response. Where we have asked about the nature of your parliamentary business, please reference the definition of Parliamentary Business as outlined in the Determination and provide copies of documentation to support your response, such as diary notes, invitations or media reporting.

Please provide a written response via email to assurance@ipea.gov.au, by close of business on **28 February 2025**, or advise us prior to the date if you need more time.

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

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
A/g Branch Manager, Transparency, Assurance & Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603



Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017

I, Mathias Cormann, Minister for Finance, make the following determination.

Dated 14 December 2017

Mathias Cormann
Minister for Finance

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1 Name

This instrument is the *Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences at the same time as the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*.

3 Authority

This instrument is made under section 6 of the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*.

4 Interpretation

(1) In this instrument:

Act means the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*.

Note: A number of expressions used in this instrument are defined in the definitions section of the Act, including the following:

- (a) *constituent*;
- (b) *member*;
- (c) *office holder*, and
- (d) *vice regal function*.

(2) For the avoidance of doubt, an activity specified in a Schedule to this determination is specified whether it takes place within Australia or overseas.

5 Parliamentary business of members

- (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.

Schedule 1—Parliamentary duties

(Act s 6(4)(a))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Parliamentary duties
All members who are a senator or member of the House of Representatives	In the member's capacity as a member of the Parliament: a) Preparing for, participating in and attending to business arising from proceedings of the Parliament, whether by committee of the whole or otherwise; b) Developing, reviewing or amending legislation or proposed legislation, and activities engaged in for that purpose; c) Undertaking research, communication (including with stakeholders) or administration connected with the business of the Parliament, the member's policy portfolio, or their role as a member; d) Preparing for, participating in, or attending to matters arising from an official government, parliamentary or vice regal meeting, event or function; e) Preparing for, participating in and attending to matters arising from a meeting (including with stakeholders), event or function for the purposes of their role as a member, including in relation to the member's policy portfolio; f) Preparing for, participating in, or attending to business arising from a non-Parliamentary committee, taskforce or other formal group in which the member participates; g) Representing the Parliament, in accordance with an approval of the Parliament or a House of the Parliament, and engaging in associated activities for that purpose; h) Representing a Minister or office holder in their official capacity, at the request of that Minister or office holder, at a meeting, event or function; i) Representing the Government or Australia, with the approval of the Prime Minister. <i>Note: For Ministers representing the Government or Australia in their capacity as a Minister, this would be part of the member's official duties (see Schedule 4).</i>

Schedule 2—Electorate duties

(Act s 6(4)(b))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Electorate duties
All members who are a senator or member of the House of Representatives	In the member's capacity as their constituent's elected representative: a) Facilitating and participating in debate, discussion, a meeting, event or function, or undertaking research or administrative functions relating to matters of importance or interest to constituents (including matters that do not relate exclusively to constituents, such as matters of national importance); b) Otherwise communicating with constituents; c) Representing the views and interests of constituents.

Schedule 3—Party political duties

(Act s 6(4)(c))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Party political duties
All members who are a senator or member of the House of Representatives	In respect of the political party to which the member belongs, participating in any of the following in their capacity as an elected Senator or member of the House of Representatives: a) a formal meeting of the political party (including a meeting of the party executive, a committee or a subcommittee); b) a national, state or territory conference.

Schedule 4—Official duties

(Act s 6(4)(d))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Official duties
All office holders and Ministers of State	In the member's official capacity (being their capacity as a Minister or office holder, as the case may be): a) Exercising the powers or functions, or performing the duties, of the member's office, or activities engaged in for the purposes of doing so; b) Attending an event to which the member has been invited in their official capacity; c) Other activities directly related to, and engaged in for the purposes of, performing the member's official role.

Attachment B

Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources – Family Reunion Travel

Work Resource	Traveller	Departure Location	Departure Date	Departure Time	Arrival Location	Arrival Date	Arrival Time	Total Amount
Parking	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Port Macquarie	27/04/2023		Port Macquarie	30/04/2023		\$55.00
Airfare – QANTAS Self	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Port Macquarie	27/04/2023	10:05 AM	Sydney	27/04/2023	11:10 AM	\$200.95
Airfare – QANTAS Self	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Sydney	27/04/2023	12:25 PM	Perth	27/04/2023	03:25 PM	\$1,519.32
Airfare – QANTAS Spouse		Port Macquarie	27/04/2023	10:05 AM	Sydney	27/04/2023	11:10 AM	\$200.95
Airfare – QANTAS Spouse		Sydney	27/04/2023	12:25 PM	Perth	27/04/2023	03:25 PM	\$1,519.32
Airfare – QANTAS Dependant 1		Port Macquarie	27/04/2023	10:05 AM	Sydney	27/04/2023	11:10 AM	\$347.69
Airfare – QANTAS Dependant 1		Sydney	27/04/2023	12:25 PM	Perth	27/04/2023	03:25 PM	\$3,021.33
Airfare – QANTAS Dependant 2		Port Macquarie	27/04/2023	10:05 AM	Sydney	27/04/2023	11:10 AM	\$347.69
Airfare – QANTAS Dependant 2		Sydney	27/04/2023	12:25 PM	Perth	27/04/2023	03:25 PM	\$3,021.33
Taxi	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Perth A/P	27/04/2023		Perth CBD	27/04/2023	04:48 PM	\$51.35
Travel Allowance – 3 nights – commercial	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Port Macquarie			Perth	27/04/2023	03:25 PM	\$1,257.00
COMCAR	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Perth	30/04/2023	04:45 AM	Perth A/P		05:09 AM	\$147.40

Attachment B

Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources – Family Reunion Travel

Work Resource	Traveller	Departure Location	Departure Date	Departure Time	Arrival Location	Arrival Date	Arrival Time	Amount (GST excl.)
Airfare – QANTAS Self	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Perth	30/04/2023	06:15 AM	Brisbane	30/04/2023	12:35 PM	\$1,135.99
Airfare – QANTAS Self	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Brisbane	30/04/2023	01:55 PM	Port Macquarie	30/04/2023	03:05 PM	\$523.84
Airfare – QANTAS Spouse		Perth	30/04/2023	06:15 AM	Brisbane	30/04/2023	12:35 PM	\$1,135.99
Airfare – QANTAS Spouse		Brisbane	30/04/2023	01:55 PM	Port Macquarie	30/04/2023	03:05 PM	\$523.84
Airfare – QANTAS Dependant 1		Perth	30/04/2023	06:15 AM	Brisbane	30/04/2023	12:35 PM	\$1,135.99
Airfare – QANTAS Dependant 1		Brisbane	30/04/2023	01:55 PM	Port Macquarie	30/04/2023	03:05 PM	\$523.84
Airfare – QANTAS Dependant 2		Perth	30/04/2023	06:15 AM	Brisbane	30/04/2023	12:35 PM	\$1,135.99
Airfare – QANTAS Dependant 2		Brisbane	30/04/2023	01:55 PM	Port Macquarie	30/04/2023	03:05 PM	\$523.84

1. What was the dominant purpose of your travel to Perth from 27 to 30 April 2023?
2. With reference to the Determination at Attachment A, what was the nature of your parliamentary business in Perth from 27 to 30 April 2023?

Attachment B

Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources – Family Reunion Travel

3. Please advise whether your family members' travel expenses meet the three-part test in section 6 of the Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017:
- a. You were travelling for the dominant purpose of conducting your parliamentary business; and
 - b. Your family members were travelling to accompany or join you; and
 - c. Your family members' travel was for the dominant purpose of facilitating family life.

From: Assurance
Sent: Friday, 11 April 2025 2:54 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Assurance
Subject: CM: RE: Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: Mr Pat Conaghan MP - Second Correspondence.pdf; Mr Pat Conaghan MP - First Correspondence.pdf

OFFICIAL

Mr Pat Conaghan MP
Member for Cowper

Dear Mr Conaghan

Attached please find further correspondence from the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority.

Sincerely

Nicole Pearson

Chief of Transparency, Integrity and Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603

E: assurance@ipea.gov.au

W: www.ipea.gov.au & www.ipea.gov.au/ed

From: Assurance <Assurance@ipea.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 6 February 2025 11:02 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Assurance <Assurance@ipea.gov.au>
Subject: Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Mr Pat Conaghan MP
Member for Cowper

Dear Mr Conaghan

Attached please find correspondence from the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority.

Sincerely


Branch Manager (A/g), Transparency, Assurance and Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
E: assurance@ipea.gov.au
W: www.ipea.gov.au & www.ipea.gov.au/ed



Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

11 April 2025

Mr Pat Conaghan MP
Member for Cowper
PO Box 345, Palm Court Centre
Port Macquarie, NSW, 2444

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Conaghan

Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources – Family Reunion Travel

On 5 February 2025, IPEA wrote to you about an Assurance Review of travel and travel-related resources accessed in relation to your family reunion travel between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2023.

A response was requested from you by 28 February 2025. There was a provision in the letter for you to request an extension if you required more time to prepare a written response. An extension has not been requested and your response to this matter is now overdue.

Please provide a written response via email to assurance@ipea.gov.au, by close of business on **Monday 28 April 2025**. If a response is not received by this date, IPEA may consider other options for progressing this matter.

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

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Nicole Pearson
Chief of Transparency, Integrity and Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603



Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

5 February 2025

Mr Pat Conaghan MP
Member for Cowper
PO Box 345, Palm Court Centre
Port Macquarie, NSW, 2444

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Conaghan

Assurance Review of travel and travel-related resources – Family Reunion Travel

The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) has responsibility under the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* to undertake assurance activities in relation to the work expenses of members of parliament.

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

IPEA is undertaking an Assurance Review of travel and travel-related resources accessed in relation to your family reunion travel between 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023.

Legislative framework

The use of travel expenses for family reunion must meet the three-part test below, set out in section 6 of the Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017:

*A family member of a member travels for **family reunion purposes** if:*

- (a) the member is travelling within Australia for the dominant purpose of conducting the member's parliamentary business; and*
- (b) the family member travels to accompany or join the member; and*
- (c) the travel by the family member is for the dominant purpose of facilitating the family life of the member's family.*

Section 6 of the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (the PBR Act) and the Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017 (the Determination – **Attachment A**) define the four streams of parliamentary business. These are parliamentary duties, electorate duties, party political duties and official duties.

The principles parliamentarians are to apply when utilising public resources are set out in part 3 - division 2 of the PBR Act.

Action Required

Attachment B details your Commonwealth-funded family reunion travel within the period that is relevant to this Assurance Review, and we have set out questions for your response. Where we have asked about the nature of your parliamentary business, please reference the definition of Parliamentary Business as outlined in the Determination and provide copies of documentation to support your response, such as diary notes, invitations or media reporting.

Please provide a written response via email to assurance@ipea.gov.au, by close of business on **28 February 2025**, or advise us prior to the date if you need more time.

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

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
A/g Branch Manager, Transparency, Assurance & Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603



Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017

I, Mathias Cormann, Minister for Finance, make the following determination.

Dated 14 December 2017

Mathias Cormann
Minister for Finance

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1 Name

This instrument is the *Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences at the same time as the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*.

3 Authority

This instrument is made under section 6 of the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*.

4 Interpretation

(1) In this instrument:

Act means the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*.

Note: A number of expressions used in this instrument are defined in the definitions section of the Act, including the following:

- (a) *constituent*;
- (b) *member*;
- (c) *office holder*, and
- (d) *vice regal function*.

(2) For the avoidance of doubt, an activity specified in a Schedule to this determination is specified whether it takes place within Australia or overseas.

5 Parliamentary business of members

- (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.

Schedule 1—Parliamentary duties

(Act s 6(4)(a))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Parliamentary duties
All members who are a senator or member of the House of Representatives	In the member's capacity as a member of the Parliament: a) Preparing for, participating in and attending to business arising from proceedings of the Parliament, whether by committee of the whole or otherwise; b) Developing, reviewing or amending legislation or proposed legislation, and activities engaged in for that purpose; c) Undertaking research, communication (including with stakeholders) or administration connected with the business of the Parliament, the member's policy portfolio, or their role as a member; d) Preparing for, participating in, or attending to matters arising from an official government, parliamentary or vice regal meeting, event or function; e) Preparing for, participating in and attending to matters arising from a meeting (including with stakeholders), event or function for the purposes of their role as a member, including in relation to the member's policy portfolio; f) Preparing for, participating in, or attending to business arising from a non-Parliamentary committee, taskforce or other formal group in which the member participates; g) Representing the Parliament, in accordance with an approval of the Parliament or a House of the Parliament, and engaging in associated activities for that purpose; h) Representing a Minister or office holder in their official capacity, at the request of that Minister or office holder, at a meeting, event or function; i) Representing the Government or Australia, with the approval of the Prime Minister. <i>Note: For Ministers representing the Government or Australia in their capacity as a Minister, this would be part of the member's official duties (see Schedule 4).</i>

Schedule 2—Electorate duties

(Act s 6(4)(b))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Electorate duties
All members who are a senator or member of the House of Representatives	In the member's capacity as their constituent's elected representative: a) Facilitating and participating in debate, discussion, a meeting, event or function, or undertaking research or administrative functions relating to matters of importance or interest to constituents (including matters that do not relate exclusively to constituents, such as matters of national importance); b) Otherwise communicating with constituents; c) Representing the views and interests of constituents.

Schedule 3—Party political duties

(Act s 6(4)(c))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Party political duties
All members who are a senator or member of the House of Representatives	In respect of the political party to which the member belongs, participating in any of the following in their capacity as an elected Senator or member of the House of Representatives: a) a formal meeting of the political party (including a meeting of the party executive, a committee or a subcommittee); b) a national, state or territory conference.

Schedule 4—Official duties

(Act s 6(4)(d))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Official duties
All office holders and Ministers of State	In the member's official capacity (being their capacity as a Minister or office holder, as the case may be): a) Exercising the powers or functions, or performing the duties, of the member's office, or activities engaged in for the purposes of doing so; b) Attending an event to which the member has been invited in their official capacity; c) Other activities directly related to, and engaged in for the purposes of, performing the member's official role.

Attachment B

Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources – Family Reunion Travel

Work Resource	Traveller	Departure Location	Departure Date	Departure Time	Arrival Location	Arrival Date	Arrival Time	Total Amount
Parking	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Port Macquarie	27/04/2023		Port Macquarie	30/04/2023		\$55.00
Airfare – QANTAS Self	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Port Macquarie	27/04/2023	10:05 AM	Sydney	27/04/2023	11:10 AM	\$200.95
Airfare – QANTAS Self	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Sydney	27/04/2023	12:25 PM	Perth	27/04/2023	03:25 PM	\$1,519.32
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Airfare – QANTAS Dependant 2		Sydney	27/04/2023	12:25 PM	Perth	27/04/2023	03:25 PM	\$3,021.33
Taxi	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Perth A/P	27/04/2023		Perth CBD	27/04/2023	04:48 PM	\$51.35
Travel Allowance – 3 nights – commercial	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Port Macquarie			Perth	27/04/2023	03:25 PM	\$1,257.00
COMCAR	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Perth	30/04/2023	04:45 AM	Perth A/P		05:09 AM	\$147.40

Attachment B

Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources – Family Reunion Travel

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Airfare – QANTAS Self	Mr Pat Conaghan MP	Brisbane	30/04/2023	01:55 PM	Port Macquarie	30/04/2023	03:05 PM	\$523.84
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Airfare – QANTAS Dependant 2		Brisbane	30/04/2023	01:55 PM	Port Macquarie	30/04/2023	03:05 PM	\$523.84

1. What was the dominant purpose of your travel to Perth from 27 to 30 April 2023?
2. With reference to the Determination at Attachment A, what was the nature of your parliamentary business in Perth from 27 to 30 April 2023?

Attachment B

Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources – Family Reunion Travel

3. Please advise whether your family members' travel expenses meet the three-part test in section 6 of the Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017:
- a. You were travelling for the dominant purpose of conducting your parliamentary business; and
 - b. Your family members were travelling to accompany or join you; and
 - c. Your family members' travel was for the dominant purpose of facilitating family life.

From: Conaghan, Pat (MP) [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 15 April 2025 9:59 AM
To: Assurance
Subject: CM: FW: Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources
CONAGHAN[SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: Mr Pat Conaghan MP - Second Correspondence.pdf; Mr Pat Conaghan MP - First Correspondence.pdf; 1779232 Parliamentary Personal Advice - Use of Scheduled Services - Pat Conaghan MP [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Dear Nicole

My apologies for the oversight of your initial correspondence.

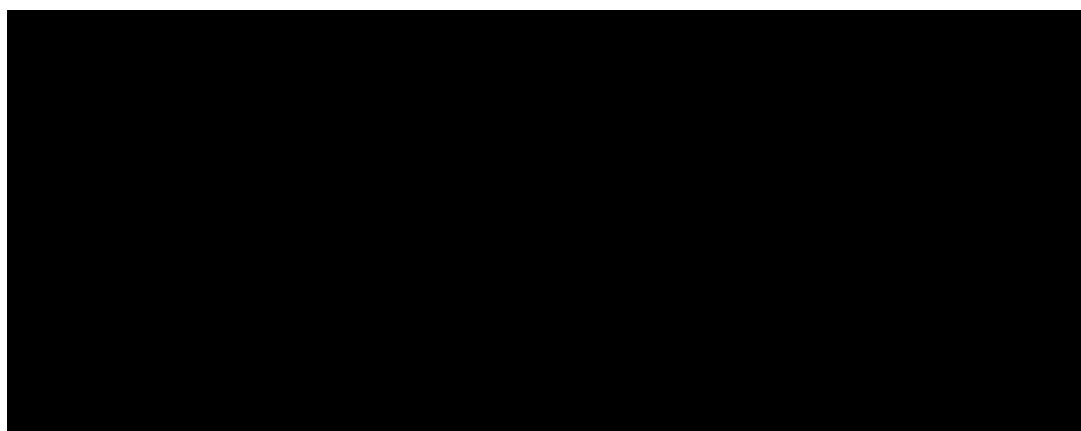
Please find the following information with regard to the assurance review of my family reunion travel as requested.

1. The dominant purpose of travel to Perth between 27 April and 30 April 2023 was as a member of the Joint Select Committee on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice Referendum conducting a public hearing in Perth on Friday 28 April 2023. Link to Committee Public Hearing proceedings [here](#).
2. The nature of the parliamentary business was parliamentary duties as per Schedule 1 a).
In the member's capacity as a member of the Parliament:
a) Preparing for, participating in and attending to business arising from proceedings of the Parliament, whether by committee of the whole or otherwise;
3. I can confirm my family members' travel expenses met the three-part test in the Parliamentary Business Resource Regulations and I have attached travel advice sought and received by my office prior to travel with my family.

I trust this information will meet the evidence requirements.

Kind regards

PAT CONAGHAN MP
Federal Member for Cowper



From: Assurance <Assurance@ipea.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 11 April 2025 2:54 PM
To: Conaghan, Pat (MP) [REDACTED]

Cc: Assurance <Assurance@ipea.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Mr Pat Conaghan MP
Member for Cowper

Dear Mr Conaghan

Attached please find further correspondence from the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority.

Sincerely

Nicole Pearson

Chief of Transparency, Integrity and Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603

E: assurance@ipea.gov.au

W: www.ipea.gov.au & www.ipea.gov.au/ed

From: Assurance <Assurance@ipea.gov.au>

Sent: Thursday, 6 February 2025 11:02 AM

To: 'pat.conaghan.mp@aph.gov.au' <pat.conaghan.mp@aph.gov.au>

Cc: Assurance <Assurance@ipea.gov.au>

Subject: Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Mr Pat Conaghan MP
Member for Cowper

Dear Mr Conaghan

Attached please find correspondence from the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]
Branch Manager (A/g), Transparency, Assurance and Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603

E: assurance@ipea.gov.au

W: www.ipea.gov.au & www.ipea.gov.au/ed

Be careful with this message

External email. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.



Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

11 April 2025

Mr Pat Conaghan MP
Member for Cowper
PO Box 345, Palm Court Centre
Port Macquarie, NSW, 2444

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Conaghan

Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources – Family Reunion Travel

On 5 February 2025, IPEA wrote to you about an Assurance Review of travel and travel-related resources accessed in relation to your family reunion travel between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2023.

A response was requested from you by 28 February 2025. There was a provision in the letter for you to request an extension if you required more time to prepare a written response. An extension has not been requested and your response to this matter is now overdue.

Please provide a written response via email to assurance@ipea.gov.au, by close of business on **Monday 28 April 2025**. If a response is not received by this date, IPEA may consider other options for progressing this matter.

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

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Nicole Pearson
Chief of Transparency, Integrity and Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603



Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

5 February 2025

Mr Pat Conaghan MP
Member for Cowper
PO Box 345, Palm Court Centre
Port Macquarie, NSW, 2444

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Conaghan

Assurance Review of travel and travel-related resources – Family Reunion Travel

The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) has responsibility under the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* to undertake assurance activities in relation to the work expenses of members of parliament.

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

IPEA is undertaking an Assurance Review of travel and travel-related resources accessed in relation to your family reunion travel between 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023.

Legislative framework

The use of travel expenses for family reunion must meet the three-part test below, set out in section 6 of the Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017:

*A family member of a member travels for **family reunion purposes** if:*

- (a) the member is travelling within Australia for the dominant purpose of conducting the member's parliamentary business; and*
- (b) the family member travels to accompany or join the member; and*
- (c) the travel by the family member is for the dominant purpose of facilitating the family life of the member's family.*

Section 6 of the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (the PBR Act) and the Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017 (the Determination – **Attachment A**) define the four streams of parliamentary business. These are parliamentary duties, electorate duties, party political duties and official duties.

The principles parliamentarians are to apply when utilising public resources are set out in part 3 - division 2 of the PBR Act.

Action Required

Attachment B details your Commonwealth-funded family reunion travel within the period that is relevant to this Assurance Review, and we have set out questions for your response. Where we have asked about the nature of your parliamentary business, please reference the definition of Parliamentary Business as outlined in the Determination and provide copies of documentation to support your response, such as diary notes, invitations or media reporting.

Please provide a written response via email to assurance@ipea.gov.au, by close of business on **28 February 2025**, or advise us prior to the date if you need more time.

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

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
A/g Branch Manager, Transparency, Assurance & Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603



Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017

I, Mathias Cormann, Minister for Finance, make the following determination.

Dated 14 December 2017

Mathias Cormann
Minister for Finance

Contents

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Schedule 2—Electorate duties	4
Schedule 3—Party political duties	4
Schedule 4—Official duties	5

1 Name

This instrument is the *Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences at the same time as the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*.

3 Authority

This instrument is made under section 6 of the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*.

4 Interpretation

(1) In this instrument:

Act means the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*.

Note: A number of expressions used in this instrument are defined in the definitions section of the Act, including the following:

- (a) *constituent*;
- (b) *member*;
- (c) *office holder*, and
- (d) *vice regal function*.

(2) For the avoidance of doubt, an activity specified in a Schedule to this determination is specified whether it takes place within Australia or overseas.

5 Parliamentary business of members

- (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.

Schedule 1—Parliamentary duties

(Act s 6(4)(a))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Parliamentary duties
All members who are a senator or member of the House of Representatives	In the member's capacity as a member of the Parliament: a) Preparing for, participating in and attending to business arising from proceedings of the Parliament, whether by committee of the whole or otherwise; b) Developing, reviewing or amending legislation or proposed legislation, and activities engaged in for that purpose; c) Undertaking research, communication (including with stakeholders) or administration connected with the business of the Parliament, the member's policy portfolio, or their role as a member; d) Preparing for, participating in, or attending to matters arising from an official government, parliamentary or vice regal meeting, event or function; e) Preparing for, participating in and attending to matters arising from a meeting (including with stakeholders), event or function for the purposes of their role as a member, including in relation to the member's policy portfolio; f) Preparing for, participating in, or attending to business arising from a non-Parliamentary committee, taskforce or other formal group in which the member participates; g) Representing the Parliament, in accordance with an approval of the Parliament or a House of the Parliament, and engaging in associated activities for that purpose; h) Representing a Minister or office holder in their official capacity, at the request of that Minister or office holder, at a meeting, event or function; i) Representing the Government or Australia, with the approval of the Prime Minister. <i>Note: For Ministers representing the Government or Australia in their capacity as a Minister, this would be part of the member's official duties (see Schedule 4).</i>

Schedule 2—Electorate duties

(Act s 6(4)(b))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Electorate duties
All members who are a senator or member of the House of Representatives	In the member's capacity as their constituent's elected representative: a) Facilitating and participating in debate, discussion, a meeting, event or function, or undertaking research or administrative functions relating to matters of importance or interest to constituents (including matters that do not relate exclusively to constituents, such as matters of national importance); b) Otherwise communicating with constituents; c) Representing the views and interests of constituents.

Schedule 3—Party political duties

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Member (or class)	Party political duties
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Schedule 4—Official duties

(Act s 6(4)(d))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Official duties
All office holders and Ministers of State	In the member's official capacity (being their capacity as a Minister or office holder, as the case may be): a) Exercising the powers or functions, or performing the duties, of the member's office, or activities engaged in for the purposes of doing so; b) Attending an event to which the member has been invited in their official capacity; c) Other activities directly related to, and engaged in for the purposes of, performing the member's official role.

Attachment B

Assurance review of travel and travel-related resources – Family Reunion Travel

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2. With reference to the Determination at Attachment A, what was the nature of your parliamentary business in Perth from 27 to 30 April 2023?

Attachment B

Assurance review of travel and travel-related expenses – Family Reunion Travel

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 - b. Your family members were travelling to accompany or join you; and
 - c. Your family members' travel was for the dominant purpose of facilitating family life.

[The page contains a large, faint, and mostly illegible watermark or bleed-through from the reverse side. The text is mirrored and difficult to decipher, but appears to be a formal document or letter.]

