i.	Committee Information		
		Type	**Branch**
ii.	IPEA hot issues updates: • IPEA issues and updates	HIB	All Branches
Title – CEO Brief		**Type**	**Branch**
01	Family Reunion Travel	CEO	CSB and TIL
02	CTM Services, Contract and Financial Issues	CEO	TEC
03	Travel Expenses and Contracts	CEO	TEC
04	Fundraising Events Travel	CEO	CSB and TIL
05	Returned Travel Expense and Travel Allowance Claims	CEO	CSB and TEC
06	Machinery of Government	CEO	Corporate
07	PEMS – System Updates	CEO	TIL
08	Wells Audit	CEO	TIL
08A	Amos Audit	CEO	TIL
09	Audit and Assurance	CEO	TIL
10	Data, Reporting, Certification and Website	CEO	TIL
11	Travel Advice, Administration and Education	CEO	CSB
12	Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy	CEO	Corp
13	Budget and Performance Measures	CEO	Corp
14	Human Resources	CEO	Corp
15	Communication and Media	CEO	Corp
16	IPEA Client Satisfaction Survey 2025-26	CEO	Corp
17	Debtors	CEO	Corp & TIL
18	IPEA Members of the Authority – List and Appointment Dates	CEO	Corp
19	Dominant Purpose	CEO	TIL

FAMILY REUNION TRAVEL

Subject/Issue

The *Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017* (PBR Regulations) allows for nominated family members of parliamentarians to access Commonwealth resources to travel for family reunion purposes.

Key points

- Family reunion travel can be accessed where all of the following conditions are met:
  - the parliamentarian is travelling for the dominant purpose of conducting their parliamentary business, and
  - the family member/s travels to accompany or join the parliamentarian, and
  - travel is for the dominant purpose of facilitating the family life of the parliamentarian.
- IPEA provides advice to parliamentarians and their authorised staff on the use of family reunion travel.
- IPEA undertakes regular assurance activities on parliamentarians' use of family reunion travel.
- In December 2025, the Prime Minister announced there would be changes to the FRT provisions under *Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017*.
- On 20 January 2026, the Remuneration Tribunal released a statement that announced changes to the family reunion travel provisions for all parliamentarians. On 9 February 2026, the Special Minister of State announced that these changes are intended to take effect from 1 July 2026.
- From 1 July:
  - All parliamentarians (including senior office holders) will have a single-family reunion budget.
  - The family reunion budget will be calculated using economy class fares rather than business class fares.
  - All family reunion travel must be booked at economy class.
  - Only one Australia-wide family reunion trip will be allowed each financial year, and this will be deducted from the family reunion travel budget.

- Spouses of senior office holders may take up to 3 trips per year to attend an engagement in their capacity as the spouse of a senior office holder (this was previously unlimited).
- Spouses or nominees of all parliamentarians may take up to 3 trips per year as an official invitee of a government, parliamentary or vice-regal function (previously unlimited).

- IPEA will hold education sessions for parliamentarians and their staff about the changes, and how the legislative provisions will apply. These sessions will be held during the sitting weeks in at the end of June and beginning of July.

Format	**Dates**	**Audience**
Email	Week of 15 June	Parliamentarians
Information sessions	Monday 22 to Thursday 25 June Monday 29 June Tuesday 30 June Wednesday 1 July Thursday 2 July	In person at APH 3.30pm to 4.00pm Senate Committee Room 1S4 Online sessions via Teams 11.30am to 12.00pm (AEST) 3.00pm to 3.30pm (AEST) Drop in sessions 9.00am to 5.00pm APH room 6.G.023 - adjacent to the pool of reflection

Schedule 2, part II, division 1

[redacted]

If asked… What are the current family reunion travel provisions

- Parliamentarians have 2 family reunion travel budgets, calculated on a financial year basis.
- These budgets are:
  - Canberra and within local area budget – this is a dollar limited budget based on the value of 9 business class return airfares to Canberra for the

parliamentarian's spouse or nominee plus 3 economy class return airfares to Canberra for each dependent child. Travel can be up to business class.

  - Australia-wide travel – this is a trip count limited to 3 (total) return airfares. Travel can be up to business class.

- Spouses of senior office holders (as defined under the PBR Regulations) may access unlimited travel for family reunion purposes.

If asked… How much family reunion travel is used by parliamentarians?

- During the 24/25 financial year (to 31 December 2025) there were a total of 1,426 family reunion tickets processed to a value of $805,580.47.

Background

- The Prime Minister requested IPEA provide him with advice on the family reunion travel provisions under the PBR framework in December 2025.
- The Remuneration Tribunal, the independent body which has responsibility for determining parliamentary entitlements, was subsequently requested to review the family reunion provisions and published its statement on 20 January 2026.
- Until the changes take effect, the existing family reunion provisions continues to apply. Family reunion travel is intended to support parliamentarians in maintaining family connections while fulfilling their parliamentary duties, provided legislative criteria is met.
- Parliamentarians may receive up to 2 separate family reunion travel budgets; with the amount available determined by the family members they formally nominate. Nominations influence both the size and structure of the budgets, which are calculated annually at the start of each financial year.
- Under the PBR Regulations, spouses of senior office holders can access unlimited family reunion travel, reflecting the additional demands placed on senior office holders and the need to support family stability in those roles.
- IPEA plays a central role in supporting compliance with these provisions and provides verbal and written advice to parliamentarians and their authorised staff on the appropriate use of family reunion travel. In addition, IPEA conducts regular assurance activities to monitor the use of these resources and ensures they align with the legislative requirements.

Date:	6/05/2026
Branch:	CSB
Cleared by Chief:	Jaan-Clare Witcombe
Contact Officer:	Jaan-Clare Witcombe
Telephone No:	s22(1) [redacted]

FOI25-26-32 - Document 3

CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026
Michael Frost – s22(1) [redacted]

CTM SERVICES, CONTRACT AND FINANCIAL ISSUES

Subject/Issue

Corporate Travel Management (CTM) is the current travel management services provider contracted by IPEA for parliamentary travellers. There are a number of ongoing CTM matters, including their services provided, current financial issues, the status of the current contract and travel impacts from the middle east conflict.

Key points issues

CTM Services

- IPEA does not book travel for parliamentary travellers. Each office books their own travel directly through CTM.
- The choice of airline and associated costs are a decision at the time of booking and take into consideration several factors including value for money.

CTM Financial Issues

- In August 2025, CTM voluntarily suspended its shares from trading on the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX) and delayed the publication of its FY25 accounts after discovering the discrepancies across its UK operations. As of 8 May 2026, they remain suspended from the ASX.
- CTM Australia has provided assurances to IPEA in writing, and in person, that their Australian business remains operational and that the business can deliver against all aspects of the IPEA contract.
- In late 2025, IPEA conducted additional data checks of more than 1,000 CTM transactions for the period 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025. No material issues were identified through these checks.
- The Department of Finance has commissioned and commenced an audit of the Australian Government Travel Arrangements. IPEA will continue to liaise with Finance as that audit progresses.

CTM Contract

- The CTM contract commenced 1 January 2022, with a duration of 3 years (to December 2024). The contract has 3 one-year extension options. IPEA has exercised 2 options to extend the contract. The contract is now due to expire on 31 December 2026.

- Consistent with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 and the Commonwealth Procurement Rules, IPEA must approach the market to identify its next travel services provider.
- IPEA informed the market on 20 August 2025 of the planned procurement for a travel services provider in the second quarter of 2025–26.
- The Request for Tender (RFT) for travel services was published on AusTender on 14 November 2025 and closed on 12 December 2025.
- IPEA intends to complete the procurement process by 30 June 2026. Work is progressing well and the process is close to finalisation.

Conflict in the Middle East

- IPEA has not seen a significant increase in domestic flight costs and has not received feedback from clients that key routes are no longer available or that availability is affecting their ability to travel for parliamentary business.
- CTM are actively monitoring airline advisories and route changes, and provide real-time updates on disruptions, safety alerts, and alternative itineraries in line with contractual requirements.
- IPEA is monitoring quotes and itinerary changes for international travel relating to parliamentary travellers given the volatility in the international market linked to the conflict.
- There have been instances where costs have increased due to route availability, airline fuel surcharges and the timeliness of the travel bookings when compared to travel date.

If asked… Did CTM apply for the travel tender process announced on AusTender?

- As the RFT process is still on-going, IPEA cannot comment on details of the process, including applicants.
- The current Request for Tender (RFT) for travel management services for IPEA, providing travel related services for parliamentary travellers, which closed on AusTender on 12 December 2025, is not directly affected by these issues.

If asked… Will the resignation of the CTM Global CEO impact IPEA or the services provided to parliamentarians and their staff?

- IPEA does not anticipate any impact as CTM operations are ongoing with an acting Global CEO in place.
- The contractual conditions and requirements on CTM have not changed, they remain the same even if the Global CEO changes.
- The IPEA CEO has met with the acting CTM Global CEO, Ms Ana Pedersen, twice in 2026, on Monday 16 March and Tuesday 21 April 2026.

If asked… What is IPEA doing to ensure that CTM's Australian services provided to parliamentarians and their staff are not affected?

- IPEA is continuing to apply existing contract requirements including tracking and checking tickets/transactions.
- In late 2025, IPEA conducted additional data checks of more than 1,000 CTM transactions for the period 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025. No material issues were identified through these checks.
- IPEA is aware that Finance commissioned and commenced an audit of the whole of Australian Government Travel Arrangements. Finance is consulting with IPEA on their audit and IPEA supports the audit fully.
- Questions about that audit are best referred to the Department of Finance.

If asked… Is IPEA involved in the Department of Finance audit announced at the last Estimates Hearing?

- IPEA is aware that Finance commissioned and commenced an audit of the whole of Australian Government Travel Arrangements. Finance is consulting with IPEA on their audit and IPEA supports the audit fully.
- Further questions about that audit are best referred to the Department of Finance.

If asked… What assurances has CTM provided to IPEA about their Australian Business?

- On 28 November, IPEA received assurance from CTM Australia that the issues affecting CTM UK do not impact the Australian business or services provided to parliamentary travellers under the IPEA contract.

- On 4 December 2025, Jo Sully, CTM Chief Executive Officer for Australia and New Zealand, wrote to Christina Grant, CEO of IPEA, providing assurance that the issues affecting CTM UK do not impact the Australian business or the travel services provided under the IPEA contract.
- Ms Grant and senior staff within IPEA have met with both the Global CEO of CTM, Ms Ana Pedersen and Ms Sully, who have both provided assurances that the current arrangements for IPEA and parliamentary travellers will continue to be provided in accordance with the current contract.

Background

- CTM, a global travel services provider headquartered in Australia, has publicly acknowledged its financial statements are yet to be signed off. This relates to audit issues in its UK operations.
- As part of a disclosure statement, CTM confirmed it (their UK based operations) is working with KPMG to complete their work and determine the quantum of any further restatements and adjustments.
- At this stage IPEA has not identified any impacts to the travel services provided by CTM to our clients.
- CTM provided an assurance to IPEA, in writing, that these matters do not impact its operations in Australia, including the service and arrangements provided to parliamentary travellers as part of their contract with IPEA.
- IPEA continues to liaise with the Department of Finance about its audit of CTM.
- Questions about the CTM audit are best referred to the Department of Finance.

Attachment A – CTM ASX Announcement - 22 April 2026

Date:	8/05/2026
Branch:	TEC
Cleared by Chief:	Michael Frost
Contact Officer:	Michael Frost
Telephone No:	s22(1) [redacted]

CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026

Michael Frost–s22(1) [redacted]

TRAVEL EXPENSES AND CONTRACTS BRANCH

Subject/Issue

This brief covers the following travel expense and contract matters:

- Cabcharge
- Special Purpose Aircraft, and
- International Travel.

Refer to the dedicated CTM Brief (Item 02) for Travel Services Provider information.

Cabcharge

IPEA’s Cabcharge arrangements and annual spend.

Key points

- Cabcharge does not offer dedicated contracts, instead IPEA’s arrangements with Cabcharge are in accordance with the Terms and Conditions (T&C’s) on Cabcharge’s website.
- Under the Cabcharge T&Cs, IPEA is restricted to querying transactions within 2 months from the date of travel.
- Cabcharge invoice IPEA monthly by email for payment. IPEA’s total Cabcharge spend over the past 4 financial years is $6,951,475.43 (GST exclusive).

Cabcharge expenditure by financial year (as at 30 April 2026)

Year	Amount	Transaction number
2025-26 (10 months)	$1,588,341.53	25,182
2024–25	$1,740,396.05	30,998
2023–24	$1,651,279.50	36,236
2022–23	$1,305,177.55	31,092
2021–22	$666,280.80	14,412 (during COVID)

- In November 2025, Cabcharge renewed 1,091 cards. IPEA advised impacted cardholders of the process on 28 October 2025 and commenced the renewal on 10 November 2025, resulting in a smooth transition for clients.
- As at 30 April 2026, there are 1,095 digital cards and 684 physical cards.

Regulated Rideshare including UBER

Regulated rideshare including Uber may be accessed instead of a taxi. Where a parliamentarian or staff member accesses Uber for parliamentary or official business they may be able to claim the expense from IPEA.

Key points

- Currently, parliamentarians and staff must seek reimbursement of claims for regulated rideshare expenses at the conclusion of their trip.
- IPEA is actively seeking rideshare options similar to the Cabcharge billing service to provide our clients with greater choices when travelling.

Special Purpose Aircraft

While use of the Special Purpose Aircraft (SPA) is provided under the *Parliamentary Business Resources (Commonwealth Transport) Determination 2017*, IPEA does not arrange SPA travel. The Department of Defence (Defence) is responsible for SPA.

Key points

- Defence administers SPA and manages its use. IPEA does not have a role in approving the use of SPA by parliamentarians.
- Defence invoices IPEA under a cost recovery arrangement for passengers IPEA identifies as being subject to a travel-related budget (such as some spouses of parliamentarians or accompanying family members and electorate staff).
- IPEA received information for the 2025–26 FY and is currently working through that information with Defence.
- The 2024–25 financial year value changed due to SPA travel being incorrectly invoiced to nominated electorate employees. IPEA has recouped the funds from Defence.
- No SPA travel has been invoiced for the 2025–26 financial year due to recent team changes at Defence and issues with providing accurate data to IPEA. IPEA expects the updated data to be finalised by the end of May 2026.

<u>SPA flights expenditure by financial year (as at 30 April 2026)</u>

Financial Year	Value of invoices paid
2025–26	$0.00
2024–25	$9,234.51
2023–24	$11,068.39
2022–23	$30,877.52

Financial Year	Value of invoices paid
2021–22	$34,609.48
2020–21	$20,940.54

*Table current as at 30 April 2026. Note: IPEA has recently received information for the 2025-26 financial year and is working through that information.

International travel expenses

IPEA administers international travel expenses in accordance with the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (PBR Act) and *Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017* (PBR Regs).

Key points

- IPEA actively monitors international airfare bookings and liaises with the travel service provider (CTM) where an airfare quote appears to be inconsistent with the value for money obligations.
- IPEA does not book travel, including international, for parliamentarians and their staff. Each office is responsible for their own bookings.
- IPEA publishes international travel expenses of parliamentarians and staff in the quarterly public expenditure reports. These may include airfares, allowances, accommodation, meals, and ground transport.
- The Prime Minister must approve official international travel for Ministers or parliamentarians representing the Government or Australia in accordance with the PBR Regs.
- The relevant Minister's Office is responsible for seeking approval from the Prime Minister's Office and advising it of any changes. This process is managed by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- The Leader of the Opposition, Leader of a Minority Party and Presiding Officers may also approve international travel using their budgets and in accordance with the PBR Regs.
- Both Presiding Officers must approve Parliamentary Delegations.
- The Presiding Officers are provided an annual budget for international travel. They may approve international travel for another parliamentarian to represent them under this budget. This budget is $250,000 for each presiding officer for a financial year. The limit applies to the office of presiding officer, not to the individual holding the office (Subdivision B).

- The Leader of the Opposition has their own annual budget for international travel. The Leader may travel under this budget or approve another member of their party to travel under this budget. The budget for the 2025–26 financial year is $107,076.00 and is calculated as the total value of four (4) first class around-the-world airfares (Subdivision D).
- The Leader of a Minority party has their own annual budget for international travel. The Leader may approve another member of their party to travel under this budget. The budget for the 2025–26 financial year is $26,769.00 and is calculated as the value of one (1) first class around-the-world airfare (Subdivision E).
- Both Presiding Officers must approve delegation travel IPEA administers. A program is approved at the beginning of the calendar year. Additional delegations may be added to the program during the year (Subdivision F).

International travel expenditure for 2025-26 (as at 30 April 2026)

Approval type	Number of trips	Total amount paid*
Presiding Officer approved (Subdivision B)	10	$568,899.10
Prime Minister approved (Subdivision C)	111	$3,933,467.90
Leader of the Opposition (Subdivision D)	0	$0.00
Leader of a minority party (Subdivision E) (Australian Greens)	1	$9,736.00
Parliamentary Delegations (Subdivision F)	12	$790,129.22
Total	134	$5,302,232.22

If asked... about the delay finalising acquittals

- IPEA was unable to raise invoices for international travel expenses until relevant PEMS functionality was built and implemented. That functionality was released on 11 September 2024.
- IPEA is now able to raise invoices and acquit trips in accordance with the PBR Act and PBR Regs.
- IPEA has written to all travellers that were impacted by the delay. IPEA is working through the backlog of acquittals within current resources.

Date:	8/05/2026
Branch:	TEC
Cleared by Branch Manager:	Michael Frost
Contact Officer:	s22(1) [redacted]
Telephone No:	s22(1) [redacted]
Mobile No:	N/A

Attachment A

SPECIAL MINISTER OF STATE

SENATE

QUESTION NO 3572

Senator Jacqui Lambie asked the Special Minister of State, upon notice, 09 September 2024 —

1. How many domestic and international flights has the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority booked for parliamentarians and staff over the past 10 financial years; please tabulate this information for each financial year.

2. How many domestic flights has the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority booked for each of the following airlines over the past 10 financial years: Qantas, Virgin, Jetstar, Rex Airlines and Bonza; please table this information and include the costs of each airline.

3. What percentage of total domestic flights booked by the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority have been with Qantas.

4. How many domestic flights has the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority booked between Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane over the past 10 financial years: please tabulate this information and include the number of flights booked for Qantas, Virgin, Jetstar, Rex Airlines and Bonza and costs for each airline.

5. Does the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority have a default or preferred airline for parliamentarians and staff; if so, what criteria or guidelines are used to determine this preference.

6. What process does the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority follow to ensure that flights represent the best value for money and are an appropriate use of public resources.

7. Does the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority undertake cost comparisons between different airlines before booking flights for parliamentarians and staff; if not, why.

Senator Farrell: The answer to the honourable Senator's question is as follows:

The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) does not book travel for parliamentarians and their staff. Each office is responsible for making their own airline bookings through the contracted services provider, Corporate Travel Management. The choice of airline and associated costs are a decision at the time of booking and take into consideration several factors including location, availability, duration, schedule, and value for money.

On its website IPEA publishes quarterly expenditure reports that outline details of parliamentarians' expenditure on travel. Note: The following data includes travel and associated fees (such as cancellation fees or refunded costs).

1.

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
No. of flights	56,989	55,924	58,408	57,420	54,010	40,210	25,725	20,812	48,339	51,065
Amount ($)	27,829,526	29,111,530	30,748,797	31,515,524	27,457,068	17,065,390	11,027,606	9,620,524	28,610,634	32,745,109

2.

Amount ($ million)	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Virgin	5,277,743	5,570,281	5,796,875	6,270,276	5,758,384	3,626,717	1,014,985	846,697	2,521,434	2,692,660
Qantas	17,983,205	18,839,120	19,648,276	19,806,111	18,022,288	10,897,916	9,605,302	7,998,770	22,063,155	25,627,127
Jetstar	109,408	103,068	86,625	86,806	81,337	46,510	73,077	68,554	125,438	130,794
Rex Airlines	222,513	322,286	269,553	227,932	318,597	236,129	113,023	115,368	159,125	151,276
Bonza	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	103

No. of flights	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Virgin	15,140	15,291	16,444	16,650	16,003	12,380	3,318	3,115	8,403	7,664
Qantas	38,590	36,787	38,204	36,929	34,786	25,644	21,213	16,637	37,096	40,453
Jetstar	477	490	392	351	361	217	309	201	296	322
Rex Airlines	662	939	777	673	921	713	356	423	502	415
Bonza	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

3.

(%)	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total
Qantas	70	68	68	67	66	65	82	80	79	81	72

Note: Virgin Australia entered voluntary administration on the 21st of April 2020 which affected the availability of Virgin domestic flights and services provided.

4. The data in this answer reflects each instance of travel involving trips to and from either Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane. This includes a total of 6 combinations of travel - Sydney to Melbourne, Sydney to Brisbane, Melbourne to Sydney, Melbourne to Brisbane, Brisbane to Sydney and Brisbane to Melbourne.

Note: The total values in these tables in the years up to and including part of 2021-2022 may not represent the full cost of all trips that have multiple legs of travel. Where the trip cost was assigned to the first leg and that leg is to a destination that falls outside the scope of this question, the system is unable to report this value.

Amount ($)	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Virgin	697,066	856,413	813,226	1,043,320	931,308	374,746	59,821	105,032	208,940	246,115
Qantas	1,870,776	2,424,557	2,081,928	2,144,238	2,250,950	898,203	445,113	985,360	1,244,595	1,575,951
Jetstar	3,171	4,941	2,339	2,712	2,203	523	1,507	2,108	6,960	5,539
Rex Airlines	-	-	-	-	-	-	93	0*	5,261	4,754
Bonza	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

No. of flights	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Virgin	1,464	1,761	1,655	2,005	2,146	1,123	195	419	631	698
Qantas	3,357	4,034	3,392	3,427	4,206	2,167	1,176	2,316	2,235	2,952
Jetstar	16	22	10	9	11	4	9	4	21	17
Rex Airlines	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	19	14
Bonza	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

*Refer to note above.

5. No.

6. IPEA has a contract with a travel services provider, Corporate Travel Management (CTM). The contract provides that the supplier is to use existing Commonwealth Government arrangements including Whole of Australian Government (WoAG) airfares. Parliamentarians are personally responsible and accountable for their use of public resources and should be prepared to publicly explain and support their decisions to use public resources, including airfares. Staff of parliamentarians travel as directed by their employing parliamentarian and must travel in accordance with the conditions as outlined in their employment framework. IPEA conducts its functions as outlined in Section 12 of the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017*.

7. No. Parliamentarians and their staff book travel through the contracted travel services provider. The choice of airline and associated costs are a decision at the time of booking and take into consideration several factors including location, availability, duration, schedule, and value for money.

On its website IPEA publishes quarterly expenditure reports that outline details of parliamentarian's expenditure on travel.

CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026
Jaan-Clare Witcombe

FUNDRAISING EVENTS TRAVEL

Subject/Issue

Under the Parliamentary Business Resources Framework, parliamentarians are restricted from accessing Commonwealth resources to travel to and from fundraising events.

Key points

- Parliamentarians' travel under the *Parliamentarian Business Resources Act 2017* (PBR Act) must satisfy the PBR Act obligations.
- Importantly, a parliamentarian may only travel at Commonwealth expense when they are travelling for the dominant purpose of conducting their parliamentary business.
- 'Parliamentary business' is defined in the *Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017* and the PBR Act. The definition specifically prescribes that parliamentary business does not include any activity with the dominant purpose of:
    - providing a personal benefit to the parliamentarian or another person (such as a candidate or political party), or
    - pursuing commercial purposes of the parliamentarian or another person (such as a local business or political party).
- Under the PBR Act, a 'commercial purpose' is defined as a purpose related to the derivation of financial gain or reward.
- For travel, this means that a parliamentarian cannot use Commonwealth resources where they are travelling for the purpose of undertaking fundraising (for themselves or a political party or candidate), soliciting donations or attending fundraising events and activities unless it relates to a registered charity, not-for-profit or public fund established for emergency relief or similar assistance.

Background

- The *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (PBR Act) establishes the framework under which parliamentarians may access Commonwealth resources.
- The PBR Act obligations require parliamentarians' use of public resources:
    - is for the dominant purpose of their own parliamentary business ('dominant purpose test')

    - provides value for money ('value for money test')
    - meets the specific conditions that apply to that expense or resource
    - is publicly justifiable (reasonableness given community expectations), and
    - is used ethically and in good faith.
- Travel falling outside the definition of parliamentary business (as set out in the *Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017)* cannot be claimed at Commonwealth expense.

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Branch:	CEB
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Contact Officer:	[redacted]
Telephone No:	[redacted]
Mobile No:	[redacted]

CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026

Jaan-Clare Witcombe – s22(1) [redacted]
Michael Frost – s22(1) [redacted]

RETURNED TRAVEL EXPENSE AND TRAVEL ALLOWANCE CLAIMS

Subject/Issue

IPEA has previously been asked about its rationale for returning travel claims to either Parliamentarians or their staff.

Key points

- In the 2024–2025 Financial Year, less than 8% of travel expense and travel allowance claims were returned to claimants by IPEA administrators (breakdown in table below).
- For this financial year (to 30 April 2026), IPEA has returned less than 5% of travel claims.
- IPEA only returns claims that cannot be processed due to an error that IPEA cannot resolve or where there is missing information. IPEA notifies the client when a claim cannot be processed and provides advice on rectifying the claims.
- For travel expenses IPEA is actively working to reduce the requirement to return claims and since 1 January 2026 there has been a dramatic decline in the volume of returns.

Number of claims returned in current financial year (to 30 April 2026)

2025/26 Financial Year

	1 July 2025 to 30 April 2026		
Claim type	**Total claims**	**Returned**	**%**
Travel expense	7,876	1,309	16.629%
Travel allowance	25,608	254	0.99%
Total	33,484	1,563	4.67%

Number of claims returned in the previous financial year

2024/25 Financial Year

	1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025		
Claim type	**Total claims**	**Returned**	**%**
Travel expense	9,108	2,362	25.94%
Travel allowance	31,469	521	1.65%
Total	40,577	2,883	7.11%

If asked about returned claim numbers for current financial year:

- IPEA reviewed its standard operating procedures in the 3rd quarter of 2025 and identified and implemented improvements to reduce the number of claims returned. This included:
    - In circumstances where IPEA can rectify the issue by reviewing information provided with the claim, IPEA will advise the client and update the claim on the client's behalf instead of returning the claim.
- When returning a claim, IPEA provides an explanation in the notes field in the PEMS system, and by either email or phone call as required. If the claim is being returned because it does not meet either a legislative, policy or system requirement, IPEA will also explain this to the client.

Reasons for returns

There are several reasons why a claim may be returned for amendment.

- Travel expenses:
    - The receipt is missing required information such as dates.
    - The date varies between the claim and the receipt.
    - The locations do not match the claim and the receipt.

- Travel allowances:
  - The amount of Motor Vehicle Allowance (MVA) claimed exceeds the listed travel leg/s.
  - The arrival destination does not match the overnight location claimed (for example: the client flew to Melbourne but is claiming travel allowance in Sydney).
  - The receipt supplied does not match the overnight location claimed in PEMS.
  - Staff do not start travel from or return to their work base (as stipulated as a requirement under the framework).
  - for manually certified claims, the parliamentarian (or authorised approver) has not signed the claim and provided it to IPEA in PEMS.

Background

- Parliamentarians and their staff may claim travel allowances (including Travel Allowance (TA) or Motor Vehicle Allowance (MVA)) when they a required to stay overnight away from their home or work base.
- In addition, when travelling for parliamentary business for (parliamentarians) or undertaking official duties (for staff), they may incur minor travel related costs that can be reimbursed as travel expenses.
- Travel resources for staff are provided for in the *Commonwealth Members of Parliament Staff Enterprise Agreement 2024–27.* Clause 2 of the Domestic Travel Guideline also outlines the Commonwealth's responsibility for covering travel costs, including:
  - Travel from an employee's work base to a location where they have official business:
    a. an employee's work base to a place where they have official business (noting that in practice, travel on official business often begins or ends at the employee's home or accommodation)
    b. any further travel to another place where the employee has official business, and
    c. the return travel to the employee's work base.
- In October 2025, IPEA reviewed its travel allowance processing standard operating procedures. The review focused on identifying opportunities to reduce the number of claims returned to clients and improving the overall efficiency and clarity of the claims process.

- As part of these improvements, IPEA now updates a claim on the client’s behalf where the issue can be resolved using the information already provided. In these circumstances, IPEA advises the client of the correction rather than returning the claim, reducing administrative burden and avoiding unnecessary claim processing delays.

- If a claim looks to have a minor error or is missing something such as a travel leg on a travel allowance claim, where there is no financial impact on the claim then IPEA will clarify with the traveller how the claim should have been entered and will update the claim on the traveller’s behalf.

- Claims will be returned only when IPEA cannot process them due to errors that cannot be rectified internally, where essential information is missing, or where there is an increase in the value of a claim (due to budgetary implications). In these cases, IPEA will provide a clear explanation in the notes field of the PEMS system and follow up by email or phone as required. Where a claim is returned because it does not meet a legislative, policy, or system requirement, IPEA will explain the relevant requirement to ensure the client understands the basis for the decision.

- These changes aim to streamline the claims process, improve client experience, and ensure that returns occur only when strictly necessary.

Date:	8/05/2026
Branch:	TEC & CSB
Cleared by Branch Manager:	Jaan-Clare Witcombe & Michael Frost
Contact Officer:	Michael Frost
Mobile No:	Michael Frost s22(1) [redacted]

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 2025-26

Finance Portfolio
7-8 October 2025

Department/Agency: Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
Outcome/Program: Outcome 1 - Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
Topic: Travel Claims

Senator: James McGrath

Question reference number: F201
Type of question: Written
Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 28 November 2025

Number of pages: 2

Question:

1. How many travel expense, travel allowance or office expense claims are returned to staff (what percentage of claims are returned)?
2. What percentage of above claims were returned each quarter for the last three years?
3. For claims that have been returned, what is the most common reason for the return?

Answer:

Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA)

IPEA is responsible for administering travel expenses and travel allowances and will provide a response for these. IPEA is not responsible for office expenses.

1. Less than 5% of travel expense and travel allowance claims are returned to claimants by IPEA administrators.

	1 July to 30 September 2025		**%**	**1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025**		**%**	**1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024**		**%**
	Total	Returned		Total	Returned		Total	Returned	
Travel Allowance	7,349	71	0.97	30,551	248	0.81	28,930	341	1.18
Travel Expense	2,188	356	16.27	8,998	892	9.91	7974	783	9.82
Total	9,537	427	**4.48**	39,549	1,140	**2.88**	36,904	1,124	**3.05**

2.

% of Returned Claims	1 July to 30 September 2025	1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025	1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024
Travel Allowance			
Q1 - 1 July to 30 September	0.97%	0.66%	1.10%
Q2 - 1 October to 31 December		0.96%	1.29%
Q3 - 1 January to 31 March		0.69%	1.25%
Q4 - 1 April to 30 June		0.95%	1.08%
% of Returned Claims	**1 July to 30 September 2025**	**1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025**	**1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024**
Travel Expense			
Q1 - 1 July to 30 September	16.27%	8.64%	11.14%
Q2 - 1 October to 31 December		9.50%	9.40%
Q3 - 1 January to 31 March		11.03%	8.49%
Q4 - 1 April to 30 June		10.85%	10.04%

3. There are a number of reasons why a travel claim may be returned for amendment or correction. The most common reasons include:
    a. the attached receipt is missing required information for example dates and evidence of payment
    b. the dates on the claim and the attached receipt do not match
    c. the locations on the claim and the attached receipt do not match.

Department of Finance (Ministerial and Parliamentary Services)

The Department of Finance is responsible for office expenses and provided the following response.

Since 1 July 2022, the Department of Finance has finalised 124,688 office expense payments in the Parliamentary Expense Management System (PEMS). In 2025, between 1 January and 30 September 2025, Finance has finalised 27,296 office expense payments in PEMS.

Given the volume of office expense payments processed, it would require an unreasonable allocation of resources to provide a further breakdown of the number of office expenses claims returned to staff, the percentage each quarter for the last three years, or to undertake a qualitative analysis to advise the most common reason for the office expenses claim that were returned.

Date sent to MO	3 November 2025
Tabling Due Date	28 November 2025
IPEA content cleared by (Deputy Secretary or agency equivalent):	Christina Grant, CEO
Group/Agency:	IPEA
Contact Officer and Branch (FAS/AS or agency equivalent):	Jaan-Clare Witcombe Chief Client Services Branch
Telephone No:	s22(1) [redacted]
Consultation:	Department of Finance (Ministerial and Parliamentary Services)
QoN Reference Number:	F201
PDR Number:	SQ25-000277

Agreed / Please Resubmit

Date / /

CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026

s22(1) [redacted]

MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT – OFFICE EXPENSES

Subject/Issue

A Machinery of Government (MOG) change will transfer the Department of Finance's (Finance) administration of claimable office expenses under the Parliamentary Business Resources framework to IPEA.

Key points

- From 1 July 2026, IPEA will administer office expense functions for parliamentarians and MOP(S) Act employees excluding:
    - property and management support
    - COMCAR, including vehicles and depots
    - private plated vehicles and residential internet and telephone services
    - commercial insurance policies for parliamentarians
    - legislative oversight and policy advice to government.
- In addition to existing functions, IPEA will administer a new function of personal advice to parliamentarians on the use of parliamentary office expenses.
- Personal advice on the use of office expenses will be available during eastern Australia business hours (9am to 5pm) over the phone, in writing or in person.
- As part of the MOG, IPEA is expecting to receive 17 ASL to administer office expense functions.
- Communication and information sessions about the MOG change are scheduled for parliamentarians, their staff and relevant government departments.

Format	Dates	Audience
Email	Mid-June 2026	Parliamentarians and staff
Postcard	Mid-June 2026	All parliamentarian electorate and APH offices
Email	Late June 2026	Other government departments
Email	Late June 2026	Parliamentarians and staff
Email	Early July 2026	Parliamentarians and staff

Information sessions – APH & online	Week of 1 July	Parliamentarians and staff

- The MOG's governance model includes representation from IPEA and Finance. This includes:
  - *Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) Committee*: The SRO members include senior executive stakeholders from Finance and IPEA. The SRO Committee held its first meeting on Tuesday 10 March 2026 with an on-going fortnightly schedule.
  - *IPEA and Finance MOG Working Group*: The Working Group meets weekly with elected Finance and IPEA subject matter expert representatives to address action items from the SRO Committee and raise items for escalation.

Background

- The *Parliamentary Business Resources Legislation Amendment (Review Implementation and Other Measures) Act 2024* transferred the administration of certain office work expenses to IPEA.
- The *Parliamentary Business Resources Legislation Amendment (Machinery of Government Change) Act 2025* delayed the MOG from 1 July 2025 to 1 July 2026.

Date:	30/04/2026
Branch:	CEO
Cleared by Chief:	CEO
Contact Officer:	s22(1) [redacted]
Telephone No:	s22(1) [redacted]
Mobile No:	s22(1) [redacted]

CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026
Nicole Pearson – s22(1)

PEMS SYSTEMS UPDATES

Subject/Issue

Parliamentarians and their staff, IPEA and the Department of Finance (Finance) use the Parliamentary Expenses Management System (PEMS) to lodge, administer and report on claims, expenses and budgets.

Key points

Finance is the PEMS lead agency (system owner), including resolving all technical issues.

If asked… about the PEMS enhancements project

- The PEMS enhancement project is delivered by the Department of Finance, as the system owner using a business-led approach involving IPEA and relevant areas.
- The enhancement project will finish on 31 December 2026.
- The delivery schedule of what has been delivered and yet to be delivered is at **Attachment A**.
- All delivery times have either been met or are on schedule.
- No extension to the PEMS project has been agreed at this time. Questions about support for future enhancements to the PEMS system are best referred to Finance.

If asked… about future upgrade to the platform that houses PEMS

- Finance is responsible for any required upgrade to the platform that PEMS sits on.
- Such changes would be delivered by Finance as the system owner.
- IPEA is an observer on the platform upgrade project committee.
- Specific questions on the upgrade should be directed to Finance.

If asked… about current funding

- The Department of Finance is best placed to respond to question on funding details.

If asked… about past financial contributions

- In 2017, the Budget measure to fund the PEMS build included $1.3m in budget savings for IPEA and a reduction of 13 ASL, assuming efficiencies from the automation of manual activities from 2020–2021 onwards.
    - Questions about the status of the 2024 PEMS benefits realisation report, produced by Finance, should be directed to Finance.
- In 2019–2020 IPEA contributed $5 million to the project to assist in the development of IPEA-specific functions within PEMS.
- In 2021–22 and 2022–2023 IPEA received one-off supplementation ($1.3m) to its Departmental budget to reflect the delay in the full implementation of PEMS functionality.
- Funding was not restored for 2023–24 and IPEA incurred an operating loss of $0.7m.
- One-off supplementation ($1.5m) was provided in the 2024–25 Budget pending finalisation of the PEMS benefits realisation review.
- Ongoing restoration of funding ($1.5m pa) was provided at 2025–26 MYEFO, returning the PEMS savings previously deducted.

Background

Delivered work packages in FYTD

Work Package ID	Description	Delivery Date
UX 1	Improvements to the User Experience Efficiencies particularly for office managers and Parliamentarians in accessing information and processing claims. • Enhancing the default dashboard columns, filters and search functions • Expanding useful templated ‘Views’ • Updating search logic to broaden results	Sep 25

Work Package ID	Description	Delivery Date
	• Improving visibility of the 'Return Reason' on screen and enhancing the related email. • Workflow enhancements and group certification for Parliamentarians.	
IPEA 4	<u>Travel expense Administration Dashboard</u> • Enabling the bulk verification of travel provider file journals and auto-verification rules	Sep 25
PBR 3	<u>File Attachments</u> • Increasing the file size and type when attach supporting evidence to claims for both office and travel.	Nov 25
PCR ESS 1	<u>PEMS S4/HANA Proof of Concept</u> • To assess the technical feasibility of converting the current PEMS Platform, ECC6, to the newer SAP S/4 HANA platform. • and gather information that enables the evaluation against other platform options and future planning activities. (stabilisation of platform/ PEMS)	Jan 26
PCR IPEA 1	<u>Ability to Pay Supplier Transactions</u> • Further ability to pay travel related supplier transactions in specific circumstances. (for example, Corporate Travel Management (CTM) and Cabcharge) where the travel date is outside the client's employment contract and corresponding grace period. • New capability to enable the reimbursement of travel expenses for a physical aid person as per the Remuneration Tribunal.	Mar 26
PBR 2	<u>Debt Dashboard</u> • Enhancing the overall performance and usability of the debt management processes and dashboard capability.	Mar 26

Work packages scheduled for delivery in 2026

Work Package ID	Description	Delivery Date
PCR ESS 3	<u>IPEA/ MaPS MoG</u> • Effective 1 July 2026, the responsibility for office work expenses will transfer from Finance to the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority under a Machinery of Government (MoG) change.	Jul 26

Work Package ID	Description	Delivery Date
	• This transfer includes the migration of functions within PEMS, encompassing claims/transaction processing, historical adjustments, debt management, budget allocation, access controls, and supporting business processes.	
PCR IPEA 2	Remuneration Tribunal - Family Reunion Travel • Amendments to Budget functionality as per the Remuneration Tribunal.	Jul 26
PCR ESS 2	BPT Neo to Cloud Foundry Migration • PEMS currently relies on an SAP platform (BTP Neo) that will be retired on 31 December 2026. To ensure continuity, the system is moving to the newer BTP Cloud Foundry platform. • This is primarily a back-end technical migration with minimal impact to users and no significant changes expected to functionality or user experience. • The move ensures the system remains supported, secure, and compatible with both current (ECC6) and future (S/4HANA) SAP environments	Sept 26
IPEA 9	Withholding Tax Improvements • Automation of manual processes to maintain, calculate and report withholding tax on motor vehicle allowance (MVA) and Private vehicle allowance (PVA) including provision of payment summaries to the ATO	Dec 26
HR 8	• Same Day Travel Allowance – MoPS Act EA implementation	Proposed Dec 26

Date:	6/05/2026
Branch:	TIL and CSB
Cleared by Branch Manager:	Nicole Pearson
Contact Officer:	Nicole Pearson
Telephone No:	s22(1) [redacted]

Delivered work packages in FYTD

Work Package ID	Description	Delivery Date
UX 1	<u>Improvements to the User Experience</u> Efficiencies particularly for office managers and Parliamentarians in accessing information and processing claims. • Enhancing the default dashboard columns, filters and search functions • Expanding useful templated 'Views' • Updating search logic to broaden results • Improving visibility of the 'Return Reason' on screen and enhancing the related email. • Workflow enhancements and group certification for Parliamentarians.	Sep 25
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PCR IPEA 1	<u>Ability to Pay Supplier Transactions</u> • Further ability to pay travel related supplier transactions in specific circumstances. (for example, Corporate Travel Management (CTM) and Cabcharge) where the travel date is outside the client's employment contract and corresponding grace period. • New capability to enable the reimbursement of travel expenses for a physical aid person as per the Remuneration Tribunal.	Mar 26
PBR 2	<u>Debt Dashboard</u> • Enhancing the overall performance and usability of the debt management processes and dashboard capability.	Mar 26

Attachment A

Work packages scheduled for delivery in 2026

Work Package ID	Description	Delivery Date
PCR ESS 3	IPEA/ MaPS MoG • Effective 1 July 2026, the responsibility for office work expenses will transfer from Finance to the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority under a Machinery of Government (MoG) change. • This transfer includes the migration of functions within PEMS, encompassing claims/transaction processing, historical adjustments, debt management, budget allocation, access controls, and supporting business processes.	Jul 26
PCR IPEA 2	Remuneration Tribunal - Family Reunion Travel • Amendments to Budget functionality as per the Remuneration Tribunal.	Jul 26
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IPEA 9	Withholding Tax Improvements • Automation of manual processes to maintain, calculate and report withholding tax on motor vehicle allowance (MVA) and Private vehicle allowance (PVA) including provision of payment summaries to the ATO	Dec 26
HR 8	• Same Day Travel Allowance – MoPS Act EA implementation	Proposed Dec 26

CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026
Nicole Pearson

WELLS AUDIT

Subject/Issue

Section 12(1)(i) of the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* allows the conduct of audits relating to MP work resources and MOPS travel resources.

Key points

- The audit of Minister Wells travel and travel related expenses from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2025 was published on IPEA's website on 8 May 2026.

<u>Structure of the audit</u>

- The audit was conducted in 3 parts:
  - Part 1 - Audit of international travel between 1 January 2022 and 31 December 2025 and an assessment of value for money considerations for all accommodation and return travel to New York in September 2025.
  - Part 2 - Audit of family travel and related expenses from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2025, and
  - Part 3 - Audit of all other travel and related expenses from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2025.

<u>Audit outcome</u>

- Part 1 International travel and Part 3 found that all resources were accessed in a manner consistent with the Parliamentary Business Resource (PBR) Framework, therefore Minister Wells was found to have accessed travel expenses appropriately.
- Part 2 Family travel found that elements of 4 trips did not meet the requirements of the relevant legislation and were therefore inconsistent with the PBR Framework.
  - Travel resources to the value of $8,092.89 were required to be recovered.
  - A penalty loading of 25% was applied to this amount.
  - The total amount requiring repayment was $10,116.11. This amount has been repaid in full.

Date and Location	IPEA Assessment of Travel	Expenses Identified as Contravening sections 25 – 28 of the PBR Act	Total Amount to be Repaid
16 February 2022 (spouse trip #2) Canberra	In regard to a subsequent trip by the Minister's spouse from Brisbane to Canberra return on the afternoon of 16 February 2022 the Minister has advised that, as she had contracted COVID, her spouse returned to Canberra to collect a child that had remained with her. IPEA has been advised that the handover of the child was conducted by a third party at the airport. At no stage of this journey did the spouse join the Minister. Taking in account each of these factors, IPEA finds that while the misinterpretation of the family travel three-part test was understandable, this travel was not for the dominant purpose of accompanying or joining the Minister and therefore does not meet the requirements of section 16 of the PBR Regulations.	The Minister's spouse's second airfare on 16 February 2022. Spouse $1,208.98	$1,208.98
8 May 2025 Canberra	The Minister travelled to Canberra on 8 and 9 May to undertake parliamentary business. On 13 May the Minister attended the swearing in of the new Parliament. The Minister travelled back to Brisbane on 14 May. The Minister advises that she did not conduct parliamentary business on 10 and 11 May. On 10 May the Minister's family travelled to Canberra and returned to Brisbane 13 May. The Minister advises that the dominant purpose of her use of the hire car was not parliamentary business. IPEA finds that the dominant purpose of the Ministers travel to Canberra on 8 May and return on 14 May was parliamentary business as defined in the *Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017)* (the Determination 2025). IPEA finds that the Minister was not conducting parliamentary business on 10 and 11 May. IPEA finds that the travel of the Ministers family to Canberra on 10 May does not meet the definition of family travel as provided for in section 6 of the PBR Regulations because the Minister was not conducting parliamentary business when they joined her. The cost of the family travel on 10 May is recoverable.	Spouse and dependent flights to Canberra 10 May Spouse $1,171.04 Dep 1 $1,171.04 Dep 2 $1,171.04 Dep 3 $1,171.04 Total hours car hired - 74 hours. 63 hours was found not to be parliamentary business. Therefore 85% of total hire car cost to be recovered from total of $975.54. Total to be recovered $829.21.	$5,513.37

Date and Location	IPEA Assessment of Travel	Expenses Identified as Contravening sections 25 – 28 of the PBR Act	Total Amount to be Repaid
	IPEA finds that the cost of the family's return travel to Brisbane on 13 May meets the definition of family travel as provided for in section 6 of the PBR Regulations.		
22 September 2025 Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney	While on her return from official overseas travel, the Minister travelled to Melbourne where she attended and met stakeholders at the AFL Grand Final lunch. The Minister then travelled to Brisbane on 27 September to attend and meet stakeholders at a rugby league final. The dominant purpose of her travel was parliamentary business as defined in the Determination 2025. On 27 September the Minister's spouse travelled to Melbourne to join the Minister. On 28 September the Minister spouse returned from Melbourne to Brisbane. IPEA finds that the travel by the Minister's spouse on 27 September met the definition of family travel in accordance with the provisions of section 6 of the PBR Regulation as he was travelling to join her. IPEA finds that the travel by the Minister's spouse on 28 September to Brisbane did not meet the provisions of section 6 of the regulations as the Minister's parliamentary business in Melbourne had concluded on the previous day.	Spouse flight to Brisbane 28 September. Spouse $726.29	$726.29
3 October 2025 Toowoomba, Sydney and Canberra	On 3 October the Minister met with the Brisbane 2032 Organising Committee in Toowoomba. On the 3 October the Minister hired a car in Toowoomba. The car was returned in Canberra on 6 October. On 5 October the Minister attended and met stakeholders at the NRL and NRLW Grand Finals in Sydney. On 6 October she travelled to Canberra for sittings of the Parliament. The Ministers spouse travelled to Canberra on 9 October returning to Brisbane 10 October. The Minister has advised that on completion of her parliamentary duties on 3 October she drove from Toowoomba to Sydney and Canberra. During this travel the Minister stayed with family members for two nights. IPEA finds that the travel by the Minister's spouse met the definition of family travel in accordance with the provisions of section 6 of the PBR Regulation as he was travelling to join her.	Total hours car hired - 74 hours. 41 hours was found not to be parliamentary business. Therefore 55% of total hire car cost to be recovered from total of $1,171.36. Total to be recovered $644.25.	$644.25

Date and Location	IPEA Assessment of Travel	Expenses Identified as Contravening sections 25 – 28 of the PBR Act	Total Amount to be Repaid
	IPEA finds that the Minister's use of a hire car to travel from Toowoomba to stay with family members at the conclusion of her parliamentary business on 3 October was not for the dominant purpose of Parliamentary Business and therefore contravened section 26 of the PBR Act. IPEA finds that use of the hire car to travel from Yamba to Sydney and subsequently to Canberra was for the dominant purpose of parliamentary business.		

- In addition, the audit made 2 observations:
  - The first resulted in IPEA introducing a new process with the contracted travel services provider whereby higher cost bookings are flagged with IPEA prior to final booking. This enables IPEA to discuss the proposed booking with the parliamentarian to ensure they were fully aware of their personal accountability and for meeting the value for money obligation.
  - The second relates to an expectation that a parliamentarian will manage Comcar bookings in a way that minimises unnecessary costs.

If asked… Why did it take 5 months to complete the audit?

- The Wells Audit was completed 40% faster than any previous IPEA audit despite it having over double the amount of expenses to consider.

If asked… Why did Ms Wells trip on 6 June 2025 meet the dominant purpose test?

- Having considered the parliamentary business identified in relation to the travel, together with the timing and surrounding circumstances of the expenses claimed, IPEA concluded that the relevant travel met the dominant purpose test.
- IPEA is satisfied that the ruling or prevailing reason for accessing travel expenses for this trip was parliamentary business.
- It is also relevant that while parliamentarians may only claim travel when undertaking parliamentary business, this does not preclude incidental personal activities. Under the framework, the existence of incidental personal activity does not of itself determine whether travel meets the dominant purpose test.

Background

- Throughout an audit, IPEA communicates directly with the subject of the audit. The published audit sets out the relevant interactions recorded for the purposes of the audit. Documents relied on in the audit process are reflected in the published material where appropriate.

- IPEA assesses the use of expenses against the obligations set out in the Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017. Travel must be for the dominant purpose of parliamentary business, represent value for money, and comply with any conditions under the legislation. Parliamentarians are also personally responsible and accountable for their use of taxpayer-funded expenses, including being able to publicly justify the dominant purpose of their travel if asked.
- Parliamentarians are required to act in good faith when using and accounting for their travel expenses. IPEA assesses the information provided by the parliamentarian alongside material already on record and any further information sought during the audit. Where necessary, IPEA seeks clarification or supporting information, such as diary entries or invitations. It may also consider other sources, including existing records, published event information, media reporting, social media, and public statements.
- The Parliamentary Business Resources Bill 2017 - Explanatory Memorandum, provides relevant guidance on the application of the dominant purpose principle. It notes the "phrase dominant purpose is undefined and attracts its ordinary meaning" and "[a]n activity would fall within the scope of 'parliamentary business' where undertaken for the 'ruling', 'prevailing' or 'most influential' purpose of conducting parliamentary business".
- IPEA, in considering the dominant purpose for an expense or trip, is therefore seeking to determine that the ruling or prevailing reason for the parliamentarian accessing an expense is parliamentary business.
- In assessing the dominant purpose of a trip, IPEA considers the type of expense claimed, the timing of the expense, and the parliamentary business identified by the accountable parliamentarian. IPEA considers the entire trip based on the information provided, information already on record, and any further information obtained during the audit.
    - For example: if a parliamentarian travels to another city for parliamentary business on one day, and has further parliamentary business the following day, IPEA would consider both the dominant purpose of the activities undertaken and the dominant purpose of the entire trip. IPEA would also consider whether returning home between those activities would have represented better value for money and whether the relevant legislative conditions were met.

Date:	14/05/2026
Group/Branch:	TIL Branch
Cleared by Chief:	Nicole Perason
Contact Officer:	Nicole Pearson
Telephone No:	s22(1) [redacted]

AMOS AUDIT

Subject/Issue

Section 12(1)(i) of the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* allows the conduct of audits relating to MP work resources and MOPS travel resources.

Key points

- The audit of a former staff member in Senator Lambie's office was published on IPEA's website on 8 May 2026.
- The audit relates to appropriate staff use of hire car expenses.

Audit outcome

- IPEA found that 27 instances of the staff members use of hire cars was outside of the provisions of the legislative framework.
- The staff member had instances where a car was hired for more than 10 days and other occasions where a hire car was used for more than just transport between the airport and accommodation.
- Mr Amos has been invoiced for $11,694.49. The amount is still outstanding.

If asked… Why did the audit take so long to complete?

- The time variation to complete audits relates largely to the complexity of the audit, participant response times and ensuring appropriate procedural fairness.

If asked… Was IPEA aware of the relationship breakdown between Senator Lambie and her former staff member?

- IPEA took a fact-based approach to the assessment of the staff member's travel.
- This included giving them the benefit of the doubt surrounding the question of approvals for the hire car use, and applying a reasonable method to querying whether the costs incurred met the framework.

Background

- Personal employees may travel on official business anywhere within Australia as directed by the employing parliamentarian.
- All employees must travel by the most efficient direct route available.
- It is an employee's responsibility (and hence the employee's cost) to transport themselves to and from their work base for normal hours of duty (or between accommodation and work when travelling on parliamentary or electorate business

away from their work base). This includes travel to and from work when the employee’s work base is distant from the employee’s home.

Date:	14/05/2026
Group/Branch:	TIL Branch
Cleared by Chief:	Nicole Perason
Contact Officer:	Nicole Perason
Telephone No:	s22(1) [redacted]

CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026

s22(1) [redacted]

AUDIT AND ASSURANCE UPDATE

Subject/Issue

IPEA audit and assurance activities monitor and examine the use of parliamentarians' work expenses and the travel-related expenses of their staff to assure their consistency with the relevant frameworks.

Key points

- IPEA's powers to audit and report are contained in section 12 of the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* (IPEA Act).
- 'Audit' carries its ordinary meaning of 'an official examination and verification of accounts and records'.
- IPEA's audit function is limited to matters, as defined in the IPEA Act, relating to:
    - 'MP work resources', and
    - 'MOPS travel resources'.
- Day-to-day assurance activities include preliminary assessments, assurance reviews, post payment checks and audits.
- IPEA publishes its assurance reviews on its website at Published assurance reviews | Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
    - 95 assurance reviews are publicly available on the website as of 31 December 2025.
- IPEA also has powers to gather information and recover payments.

Audit and assurance activities

- For the 2025–2026 financial year to 31 March 2026, the status of Audit and Assurance activities was:

Post payment checks	Preliminary assessments	Assurance reviews	Audits
7,063 covering 1,282 Parliamentarians and staff	11 covering 11 Parliamentarians and staff	26 covering 29 Parliamentarians and staff	1 Audit completed 1 Audit under way
Note: 7,100 assurance operations in total, with all parliamentarians' offices subject to at least one assurance operation in the financial year and most offices and Parliamentarians checked several times per year, covering different instances of use of travel expenses.			

- For the 2024–2025 financial year to 30 June 2025, the status of Audit and Assurance activities was:

Post payment checks	Preliminary assessments	Assurance reviews	Audits
5,813 covering 2,207 Parliamentarians and staff	13 covering 82 Parliamentarians and staff	13 covering 84 Parliamentarians and staff	2 Audits completed 1 Audit in progress
Note: 5,842 assurance operations in total, with all parliamentarians' offices subject to at least one assurance operation in the financial year and most offices and Parliamentarians checked several times per year, covering different instances of use of travel expenses.			

If asked… Commenting Publicly

- IPEA operates at arms-length to Government and does not report or comment on allegations that may be under consideration.
- To comment publicly on individual cases, including confirming or denying whether IPEA is considering them, could compromise procedural fairness and in some cases, compromise IPEA's conduct of a review.
- Completed IPEA audits and other IPEA assurance reports are publicly available on the IPEA website.

If asked… How does IPEA deal with allegations of misuse?

- IPEA deals with possible misuse of parliamentary business resources independently from Government, and in accordance with its protocol 'Dealing with Allegations of Misuse of Parliamentary Work Expenses'.
- The protocol, at **Attachment A**, has been established by the Members of the Authority and is available on IPEA's website [www.ipea.gov.au].

- IPEA adopts a triage approach – the first tier involves a preliminary assessment to establish if a parliamentary business resource has been used. The second tier, an assurance review, is a more rigorous and intensive examination of the use of parliamentary business resources. The final tier involves undertaking an audit.
- IPEA's approach is summarised in the Statutory Audit Function factsheet, at **Attachment B**.
- Members of the Authority decide whether to publish an audit.
- Where relevant, IPEA Members may also issue Rulings, determining that conduct engaged in by a parliamentarian or another person in relation to travel expenses or allowances of a parliamentarian was or was not in accordance with the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017.*
    - On 21 October 2025, IPEA issued Ruling 01/2025 – relating to travel expenses used by a former parliamentarian, Dr Sam McMahon.

If asked… Does IPEA have information-gathering powers?

- IPEA has information gathering powers contained in section 53 (Part 5) of the IPEA Act.
- IPEA can issue a ***notice*** requiring a person to produce particular information or documents, in circumstances where it has reason to believe that the information or documents are ***relevant to its auditing and reporting functions***.
- However, consistent with s 58 of the IPEA Act, the recipient of the notice is *not* required to produce information or documents that are protected by parliamentary privilege.
- IPEA has used its statutory information-gathering powers in eleven (11) instances. Five (5) times in 2018, once in 2019 and five (5) times in 2021.

Background

- **Attachment A** – details IPEA's '*Dealing with Allegations of Misuse of Parliamentary Work Expenses*'
- **Attachment B** – provides further information about IPEA's Statutory Audit Function and processes

Date:	6/05/2026
Branch:	TIL
Cleared by Branch Manager:	Nicole Pearson
Contact Officer:	[redacted]
Telephone No:	[redacted]

CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026

s22(1) [redacted]

DATA, REPORTING, CERTIFICATION AND WEBSITE

Subject/Issue

Expenditure reporting continues in accordance with the schedule published on IPEA's website.

Key points

- Parliamentarians certify their expenses were used for the dominant purpose of conducting their parliamentary business.
- Parliamentarians are not asked to certify the specific amount of listed expenses as they may have limited knowledge of certain expenses such as office facilities (e.g. alarm monitoring or cleaning).

Certification information

- As at 30 April 2026:
  - 7 current parliamentarians are yet to certify their 1 October to 31 December 2025 expenditure report, see **Attachment A**.
  - 4 current parliamentarians are yet to certify their 1 July to 30 September 2025 expenditure report, see **Attachment A**.
  - Expenses, certifications, adjustments, repayments and office costs are published on IPEA's website and data.gov.au

Expenditure Reporting

- Since expenditure reports delivered by PEMS went live in November 2023, 14 periods have been published on IPEA's website:

	Reporting Period	Published date
1	July to September 2022	20 December 2023
2	October to December 2022	7 March 2024
3	January to March 2023	4 April 2024
4	April to June 2023	8 May 2024
5	July to September 2023	5 June 2024
6	October to December 2023	3 July 2024
7	January to March 2024	31 July 2024
8	April to June 2024	28 August 2024

	Reporting Period	Published date
9	July to September 2024	12 November 2024
10	October to December 2024	26 February 2025
11	January to March 2025	7 May 2025
12	April to June 2025	30 July 2025
13	July to September 2025	5 November 2025
14	October to December 2025	4 March 2026

Schedule for the next reporting period

- The reporting period 1 January to 31 March 2026 was opened on 5 March 2026, allowing for the review of data to commence.
- Finalised data for this period was available from 8 April 2026 for review and certification. These expenditure reports are expected to be published on IPEA's website and data.gov.au the week commencing 11 May 2026.

Background

- The *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* provides IPEA with the authority to prepare and publish reports:
    - paragraph 12(1)(e)(f)(g)(h): IPEA can prepare and publish reports about matters relating to MP work resources and MOPS travel resources.
- Public expenditure reporting recommenced on 20 December 2023 with the publication of the 1 July to 30 September 2022 period following the Department of Finance's completion of the PEMS expenditure reporting module.
- Public expenditure reporting returned to its quarterly schedule from 28 August 2024 with publication of the 1 April to 30 June 2024 period.

If asked… about moving to more frequent reporting

- To augment transparency, IPEA is considering the frequency of the expenditure reporting cycle.
- Relevant stakeholders will be consulted on this matter.

Date:	6/05/2026
Branch:	Transparency, Integrity and Legal
Cleared by Branch Manager:	s22(1) [redacted]
Contact Officer:	s22(1) [redacted]
Telephone No:	s22(1) [redacted]
Mobile No:	s22(1) [redacted]

Attachment A

Current parliamentarians yet to certify the past 2 reports (as at 30 April 2026)

1 October to 31 December 2025

No.	Office	Party
1	The Hon Dr Anne ALY MP	Australian Labor Party (ALP)
2	The Hon Andrew GEE MP	Independent
3	The Hon Bob Katter MP	Independent
4	Senator Fatima PAYMAN	Independent
5	Ms Alicia PAYNE MP	Australian Labor Party (ALP)
6	Senator David POCOCK	Independent
7	Mr Phillip THOMPSON OAM MP	Liberal Party of Australia

1 July to 30 September 2025

No.	Office	Party
1	The Hon Andrew GEE MP	Independent
2	The Hon Ged KEARNEY MP	Australian Labor Party (ALP)
3	Senator David POCOCK	Independent
4	Mr Phillip THOMPSON OAM MP	Liberal Party of Australia

CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026

Jaan-Clare Witcombe – s22(1) [redacted]

TRAVEL ADVICE, ADMINISTRATION AND EDUCATION

Subject/Issue

This brief provides details and statistics on the following functions:

- Travel Administration and Allowance
- Family Reunion Travel
- Travel Advice
- Education, and
- IPEA Performance against Service Level Standards.

Key points

Travel Administration

IPEA administers a range of travel related allowances and expenses in accordance with relevant legislation:

- IPEA processed **129,576** transactions, with a value of **$58,828,371.45**, from **1 July 2025 to 30 April 2026** (breakdown in table below).
- In the 2024–2025 Financial Year, IPEA processed 136,771 transactions, with a value of $56,089,005.05 (breakdown in table below).
- From 7 September 2025, the Travel Allowance rate (TA) rate for Canberra rose to $322 per overnight stay for Parliamentarians and MOP(S) Act employees.
    - Previously, the TA rate for Canberra was $318.00.
- On 1 July 2025, IPEA aligned MOP(S) employees TA and MVA rates with the rates set by the ATO (excluding Canberra).

Resource type	**2024-2025 FY ***		**2025-2026 FYTD 1 July to 30 April 2026 ***	
	No. of Transactions	Value	No. of Transactions	Value
Parliamentarian Travel Allowance	7,189	$6,034,979.23	6,822	$6,198,253.14

Resource type	2024-2025 FY *		2025-2026 FYTD 1 July to 30 April 2026 *	
	No. of Transactions	Value	No. of Transactions	Value
Staff Travel Allowance	32,925	$17,354,181.94	30,160	$16,667,468.98
International travel expenses	3,360	$4,212,980.76	4,094	$5,737,964.56
Fares	46,269	$25,254,217.31	45,740	$27,615,224.07
Staff Ground Transport	44,381	$2,126,404.19	40,357	$1,933,588.75
Unscheduled Commercial Transport^	2,647	$1,106,241.62	2,403	$745,871.95
Total	**136,771**	**$56,089,005.05**	**129,576**	**$58,898,371.45**

* Expenses have been attributed to the financial year in which they were paid based on the claim status as of the date the data was extracted from PEMS.

^ Unscheduled Commercial Transport includes all transport expenses, other than scheduled commercial transport, for parliamentarians and their family; such as chartered transport, hired cars (and fuel), taxis and regulated ride sharing.

Travel Advice

IPEA's personal advice is confidential and exempt from disclosure under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act). It is our policy not to disclose publicly the details of any personal advice we have provided, and only provide general statistics:

- 6,353 client contacts were logged between 1 July 2025 and 30 April 2026.
- Of these, **3,197** contacts were received by the Advice desk and consisted of:
    - Staff travel (63.8%)
    - **Parliamentarian travel (27.2%)**
    - Reporting (0.5%)
    - PEMS (1.6%)
    - Budget (2.2%)
    - Audit (0.4%)
    - Other (4.3%).

Education

IPEA conducts a range of education activities to inform and support parliamentarians and their staff to access IPEA administered services.

Key facts and figures

Types of education sessions held:	1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025	**1 July 2025 to 30 April 2026**
Expenditure reporting	2	14
General education	20	25
Electorate office visits	32	51
APH office visits	0	8
Online sessions (in lieu of Electorate Office visit)	0	7
PEMS	6	9
New parliamentarian introduction	42	2
Authorised person	N/A	2
TOTAL EDUCATION SESSIONS	102	**118**
Number of clients educated	399	**660**

Key points

- IPEA facilitated **drop-in sessions at Australian Parliament House** (APH) in July 2025, and March and April 2026.
- IPEA has also scheduled in person education sessions, virtual sessions and drop-in sessions during sitting weeks in June and July 2026, with a particular focus on assisting parliamentarians and their staff with the new family reunion provisions.
- IPEA held **PEMS online education** sessions in July, September and November 2025, and January, March and May 2026 for new PEMS users. These sessions are gaining popularity with over 360 registrations for these sessions alone.
- IPEA presented a new education offering for authorised persons. This session provides authorised persons with an understanding of their responsibilities when acting on behalf of their parliamentarian. IPEA held these sessions in February and April 2026, with 72 attendees, and received positive feedback.
- IPEA education sessions for the first half of **2026 have been completed.** Sessions were held in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne during February and March 2026. Further sessions were held in Perth, Adelaide and Darwin in May 2026.

- Parliamentarians and their staff continue to report high levels of satisfaction with the education sessions they attended between 1 July 2025 and 30 April 2026. 97.4% of survey respondents reported being satisfied with their education session with an average rating of 4.83 out of 5.
- IPEA has commenced planning education sessions for July to December 2026. These sessions will be advertised on the IPEA website, promoted by email to all parliamentarians and staff, and published on the PWSS Academy in the coming months.

Performance against planned performance results and Service Level Standards (SLS)

IPEA **met** its published planned performance results and SLS for travel advice, education and claims processing, from 1 July 2025 to 30 April 2026:

SLS	2024-2025 FY	1 July 2025 to 30 April 2026
Advice		
All calls are acknowledged, with 90% of calls acknowledged within one day.	99.5%	99.8%
All requests for advice are resolved, with 90% of requests for advice resolved within 2 days.	98.1%	99%
Quality and accuracy levels for advice are achieved, with 90% of advice provided being accurate and of a high quality	97.9%	96.8%
70% of client survey respondents are satisfied with IPEA's advice as measured in the IPEA client satisfaction survey	91%	93% (80% new target)
Travel Education		
90% of education session requests will be responded to within 7 working days.	100%	100%
Education sessions are offered in all capital cities and virtually, twice per financial year.	100%	100%

SLS	2024-2025 FY	1 July 2025 to 30 April 2026
100% of new parliamentarians are offered and introductory session within 2 months of declaration of polls.	100%	100%
80% of participants are satisfied with the education session they attended.	100%	97%

SLS	2024-2025 FY	1 July 2025 to 31 March 2026
Travel Claims Processing		
80% of travel claims are processed within 7 working days.	98.9%	99.5%
Travel claims are processed with a 90% degree of accuracy.	96.9%	99%
Requests for additional travel claim information (where claim is incomplete) are sent within an average of 4 working days of receiving the initial claim.	1.50 days	2.33 days
70% of client survey respondents are satisfied with IPEA's travel claim processing as measured in the IPEA client satisfaction survey.	85%	81% (80% new target)
Travel Budgets		
90% of travel-related budgets are disseminated by the third week of June and new parliamentarians commencing after 1 July receive their budget/s within 10 working days of official commencement.	100%	94% of budgets disseminated by 3rd week of June 2025.

Background

Administration

- Administering the travel claims of current and former parliamentarians and MOP(S) Act staff is one of IPEA's core functions. IPEA administers both domestic and international travel claims where the travel is undertaken consistent with the Parliamentary Business Resources (PBR) framework and the MOP(S) Act.

- Under the PBR Framework, parliamentarians may undertake travel for the dominant purpose of conducting their parliamentary business.

Travel allowance rates

- Parliamentarians and their staff may claim Travel Allowance (TA) for each overnight stay in accommodation in Australia that is not their home base or work base respectively. TA covers accommodation, meals and incidentals.
- The Remuneration Tribunal sets parliamentarians' TA rates.
- MOP(S) employees receive the same TA rate as Parliamentarians when claiming in Canberra (in accordance with clause 62.6 *Commonwealth Members of Parliament Staff Enterprise Agreement 2024–27* (MOP(S) Enterprise Agreement).

Travel and motor vehicle allowance rates for MOP(S) Act employees

- On 1 July 2025, IPEA aligned MOP(S) employees' TA and Motor Vehicle Allowance (MVA) rates with the rates set by the ATO (excluding Canberra).
- IPEA noted an increasing disparity between the rates provided from the previous provider and those set by the ATO. Client feedback highlighted that the TA rates were not meeting the cost of accommodation in some locations.
- Due to the ATO rates being based on salary (rather than classification level, as per the previous provider), IPEA has applied the first (lowest) salary tier to non-senior employees and the second tier to senior employees (as defined in the MOP(S) EA).
    - IPEA is working towards a long-term solution in PEMS that applies the relevant TA rate according to an employee's salary.

Advice

- IPEA provides personal advice to parliamentarians and their authorised *Members of Parliament Staff Act 1984* (MOP(S) Act) staff on accessing travel resources. IPEA's personal advice is confidential and tailored to each travel circumstance and provides a clear answer on whether specific travel meets or does not meet the relevant legislative framework.
- IPEA does not approve travel or set the legislative conditions for travel. Personal advice relates only to whether a proposed travel scenario falls within the provisions of the relevant framework.

- IPEA responds to phone and email enquiries within published SLS and during standard business hours – Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, Canberra time.
- Since IPEA's inception on 3 April 2017, and to 30 April 2026, IPEA has received 93,077 unique client contacts, consisting of:
    - Staff travel – 46,427
    - Parliamentarian travel – 20,778
    - Reporting – 9,555
    - PEMS – 5,249
    - Elections – 449
    - Budgets – 2,664
    - Audits – 5,953
    - Other issues – 2,002.

General education

- IPEA offers regular education sessions in all Australian capital cities and virtually throughout the calendar year.
- IPEA's general education sessions provide important information about travel related expenses for parliamentarians and their staff. This includes:
    - Parliamentarian and nominated family travel under the PBR framework
    - MOP(S) Act staff travel under their legislative framework
    - Budgets, expenditure reporting and assurance activities.

<u>Authorised person/s (new)</u>

IPEA's authorised person/s sessions support MOP(S) Act Employees who have been authorised by their parliamentarian to approval travel, receive personal advice, view budgets and/or view expenditure reports. These sessions will be held online bi-monthly and ensure employees understand their responsibilities when acting on behalf of their parliamentarian.

<u>PEMS</u>

IPEA's PEMS sessions provide a demonstration on how to claim and approve travel expenses, view budgets and review expenditure reporting in PEMS. These sessions are held online bi-monthly.

<u>Expenditure reporting</u>

IPEA's expenditure reporting sessions support parliamentarians and their staff to understand expenditure reporting of work expenses. They provide an overview of what an expenditure report is, and a demonstration of the PEMS functionality, including how to access, navigate, review, and certify an expenditure report. These sessions are held online by request.

Electorate Office and APH visits

IPEA provides the opportunity for parliamentarians and their staff to request an education session at their electorate or APH office. These sessions are tailored to suit the needs of the office.

Date:	7/05/2026
Branch:	CSB
Cleared by Branch Manager:	Jaan-Clare Witcombe
Contact Officer:	[redacted]
Telephone No:	[redacted]

TABLE 1 - APRIL 2017 TO 30 APRIL 2026

Claim Administration	Transactions	Total value	Transactions per month (average)	Value per month (average)	
All transactions	1,186,557	$483,988,485.26	11,301	$4,609,414.15	
Car Transport - Parliamentarians	2,752	$158,732.00	27	$1,511.73	
Car Parking - Parliamentarians	4,936	$360,926.80	47	$3,437.40	
UCT Cabcharge	12,209	$418,766.56	116	$3,988.25	
UCT Flight and Hire Car	10,544	$11,547,151.33	100	$109,972.87	
Car Transport - Staff	417,095	$18,630,705.46	3,972	$177,435.29	
Fares - Parliamentarians	114,746	$79,665,711.54	1,093	$758,721.06	
Fares - Family	14,791	$7,560,413.06	141	$72,003.93	
Fares - Staff	275,109	$122,474,810.85	2,620	$1,166,426.77	
Allowances - Parliamentarians	70,495	$59,680,242.26	671	$568,383.26	
Allowances - Staff	235,881	$143,560,835.25	2,246	$1,367,246.05	
Overseas Travel	27,999	$39,930,190.16	267	$380,287.53	
IPEA Contact	**Client contact**	**% of total**	**Contact per month (average)**	**Contacts per day (average)**	**Closure rate**
All advice	93,077		853.9	39.3	99.67%
Staff travel	46,427	49.9%	425.9	19.6	
Parl. travel	20,778	22.3%	190.6	8.8	
Reporting	9,555	10.3%	87.7	4.0	
PEMS	5,249	5.6%	48.2	2.2	
Election	449	0.5%	4.1	0.2	
Budget	2,664	2.9%	24.4	1.1	
Audit	5,953	6.4%	54.6	2.5	
Other*	2,002	2.2%	18.4	0.8	

*Other contact includes enquiries relating to education, non-IPEA responsibilities, and former parliamentarian travel.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) POLICY

Subject/Issue

IPEA's use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as CoPilot).

Key points

- IPEA provides its staff with **guidance on the use of AI** and requires all staff to complete the APSC's "**AI in government fundamentals**" course.
- IPEA staff may use internet-based AI tools and **Microsoft CoPilot in accordance with IPEA's AI Guidelines**. These types of tools are accessible via the Department of Finance (Finance) ICT network except DeepSeek, which is blocked.
- If staff wish to use publicly available AI, they must do so in an informed manner, consistent with **IPEA's Generative AI Guidelines**, **Finance's Acceptable Use Policy**, the **APS Values and DTA guidance on use of AI**.
- IPEA has established an internal Community of Practice to share experiences and provide guidance and has appointed a Chief AI Officer to drive adoption and champion strategic change in line with Government guidance to agencies.
- IPEA has signed an agency agreement with GovAI to join the Alpha trial of GovAI Chat to provide another secure AI service to trial.
- IPEA uses the Finance ICT network under an MOU arrangement. IPEA adheres to Finance's ICT policies and procedures.

If asked… whether IPEA has its own guidelines for AI use:

- IPEA has guidelines in place for the responsible and ethical use of AI.
- This has been developed based on the guidance from Finance and the Digital Transformation Agency guidance titled *Using public generative AI tools safely and responsibly*.
- IPEA published its AI Transparency Statement on its website.

Date:	7/05/2026
Branch:	Corporate Branch
Cleared by A/g COO:	Beth Pahl
Contact Officer:	[redacted]
Telephone No:	[redacted]
Mobile No:	[redacted]

CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026

Beth Pahl – s22(1) [redacted]
s22(1) [redacted]

IPEA 2026–27 BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Subject/Issue

IPEA – departmental and administered budget funding and performance measures update.

Key points

Budgets 2026–27

- $11.934 million total **departmental appropriation revenue** and **70 departmental budgeted ASL** in the 2026–27 PBS (page 181).
- Funding has increased in 2026–27 to implement and administer changes stemming from recent Remuneration Tribunal decisions and additional tailored personal advice for office expenses.
- $88.069 million total **administered appropriation** in the 2026–27 PBS.
- Funding has increased in 2026-27 to reflect the estimated increase in parliamentary family travel after Remuneration Tribunal changes to entitlements under PBR Act.

Performance measures 2026–27

- IPEA's performance measures and service level standards are published on IPEA's website through its Corporate Plan.
- IPEA will seek to further mature and expand its performance framework by assessing the application of an efficiency measure and incorporating machinery of government (MOG) office functions into its performance reporting.
- After the MOG, IPEA will review the office functions' performance measures to determine whether changes are required to align them with IPEA's performance approach.
- In line with the MOG's corporate plan publishing requirements, IPEA will update the performance measures in its corporate plan, as necessary, to incorporate acquired new functions.

Background

Departmental Appropriation over the forward estimates is:

	Estimated Actual 2025-26 $m	Budget 2026-27 $m	FE1 2027-28 $m	FE2 2028-29 $m	FE3 2029-30 $m
Departmental Appropriation	10.706	11.934	11.993	12.014	12.092

- Funding increase in 2026–27 for IPEA to implement and administer changes stemming from recent Remuneration Tribunal decisions and additional tailored personal advice for office expenses.

Administered Appropriation and **Special Appropriations** over the forward estimates is:

	Estimated Actual 2025-26 $m	Budget 2026-27 $m	FE1 2027-28 $m	FE2 2028-29 $m	FE3 2029-30 $m
Administered Appropriation Bill 1	47.253	48.341	49.292	50.277	51.434
Special Appropriation – *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*	35.765	39.061	39.921	40.722	41.658
Special Appropriation – *Parliamentary Retirement Travel Act 2002*	0.649	0.667	0.681	0.696	0.712
Total Administered Appropriation	**83.667**	**88.069**	**89.894**	**91.695**	**93.804**

- The Special Appropriation – *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* came in effect on 1 January 2018 to support the Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017 (PBR Regulations).
- From 1 January 2018, management of travel expenditure relating to the *Parliamentary Retirement Travel Act 2002* transferred to IPEA.

Date:	7/5/2026
Group/Branch:	Corporate Branch
Cleared by A/g COO:	Beth Pahl
Contact Officer:	[redacted]
Telephone No:	[redacted]
Mobile No:	[redacted]

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CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026

Beth Pahl – s22(1) [redacted]

HUMAN RESOURCES

Subject/Issue

IPEA's staffing profile and HR information.

Key points

- **Impact of AI on workforce**: IPEA does not anticipate any immediate workforce impacts on staffing numbers because of AI. All IPEA employees have completed the mandatory AI training.
- **Office expenses MoG change:** The Department of Finance (Finance) have identified 15 staff who will be transferring to IPEA. IPEA will work with Finance to support staff through the transition, scheduled to take effect from 1 July 2026. 11 staff will be based in Canberra and 4 will work remotely.
- **Additional ASL from 12 May 2026 Budget:** IPEA has received 5 additional ASL to stand up an Advice function in our Client Services Branch.
- **Impact of flexible work on IPEA:** Flexible work arrangements are working well for the agency. 39 employees currently have regular working from home arrangements (1 to 2 days per week).
- **Staff working remotely:** IPEA does not have any employees who are working permanent remote basis. One employee is temporarily working from Perth. All other employees are in Canberra.

Human Resources Statistics

<u>Staffing information as at 30 April 2026</u>

- 63 head count excluding the CEO
- 65 budgeted ASL.

<u>Flexible work arrangements as at 30 April 2026</u>

- 39 employees have regular WFH arrangements:
  - most arrangements are 1 to 2 days per week
  - one employee works 100% of their part time hours from home, 3 days a week
  - one employee works remotely
- 5 employees access compressed working arrangements.

Worker’s compensation

- one workers compensation claim was submitted to Comcare this financial year but was not accepted.

Commencements and separations

- Commencements and separations from 1 July to 30 April 2026:
    - Commencements: 11
        - 2 temporary transfers
        - 3 ongoing movements from other APS agencies
        - 3 ongoing engagements.
        - 1 non-ongoing engagement
        - 2 promotions
    - Separations: 12
        - 3 movements to another APS agency
        - 8 resignations
        - 1 retirement.

Staff turnover

- The current staff turnover rate for 2025–2026 is 18.75%.
- In the 2024–2025 financial year there was a reduction in staff turnover: 19% compared to 23% in 2023–24.

Staff development and training

Conflict of interest

- All current employees completed conflict of interest training provided by Proximity in June and July 2025.
- The conflict-of-interest training aimed to educate all IPEA employees on identifying and managing conflicts of interest in our workplace.
- The total cost of this training was $10,120 (incl GST).

Leadership development program

- IPEA engaged Yellow Edge to develop and deliver a leadership development program for our leadership and management cohort. 26 staff participated (CEO, 3 SES, 7 EL2 and 16 EL1).
- The program was delivered in person spread over a 6-month period (June to December 2025) with ‘learning circles’ scheduled for half a day each. Participants also undertook a lifestyle Inventory (LSI) self-assessment and a 360-degree feedback, coaching session.

- The cost of the contract with Yellow Edge is $72,192 (inc GST).

Strategic Commissioning Framework

- IPEA's 2025–26 corporate plan commitments under the Strategic Commissioning Framework focus on reducing outsourcing of information and knowledge management, with an expected outsourced expenditure reduction of $50,000.
- Questions about the framework should be directed to the APSC.

Background

Table 1: Staffing Profile of IPEA *Public Service Act 1999* employees

Employment type	As at 30 April 2026
Ongoing	62
Non-ongoing	1
Long-term leave (LSL)	0
Full-time	49
Part-time	14

IPEA also has one contractor performing specialised work, who is not a PS Act employee and does not count towards ASL or headcount.

Table 2: Classification structure of IPEA *Public Service Act 1999* employees

Substantive Classification	As at 30 April 2026
SES1	3
EL2	7
EL1	17
APS6	14
APS5	8
APS4	8
APS3	6 (including 1 non-ongoing)
APS2	0
APS1	0

Table 3: Diversity Information – **including** CEO as at 30 April 2026

Gender	Male: 14 (22.3%) Female: 49 (77.7%)
Average age	41.3 years
Age profile	19 to 30 years: 19 employees (30.1%) 31 to 75 years: 44 employees (69.9%)
Language	9 employees advised they speak a language other than English

Disability	1 employee advised they have a disability
ATSI	No employees identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person

Date:	7/05/2026
Branch:	Corporate Branch
Cleared by A/g COO:	Beth Pahl
Contact Officer:	s22(1) [redacted]
Telephone No:	s22(1) [redacted]
Mobile No:	N/A

CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026
[redacted]

COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA

Subject/Issue

This brief provides details on the relevant media articles and enquiries.

Key points

Media articles from 23 January to 25 May 2026 mainly focused on:

- **Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price travel claim during defamation case** – 79 articles (including syndications). Widespread republication of an AAP story reporting the senator's defence of travel and accommodation claims, explicitly noting compliance with IPEA rules. Coverage is largely neutral for IPEA, routinely citing IPEA as the compliance authority.
- **Minister Don Farrell's Uluru trip** – 32 articles (including syndications) about the minister defending spouse travel to Uluru. The articles focus on compliance with the rules, referencing IPEA's oversight and recent tightening of family travel arrangements.
- **Ministerial travel expenses** – 18 articles. The articles examined ministerial travel, hospitality, and entertainment costs, often scrutinising the rules around parliamentarian spending.
- **Charter flights and fundraising travel** – 7 articles (including syndications) covering Senator Pauline Hanson claiming nearly $9,000 for charter flights and $13,000 for travel coinciding with political fundraisers, a Gina Rinehart event and local party branch openings.
- **Ridicule as watchdog clears MPs' expenses** – multiple AFR articles, including variations regarding parliamentarian travel rules and IPEA clearing parliamentarians' expenses.

Media enquiries for the 23 January to 25 May 2026 period:

- IPEA received 18 enquiries (in comparison, we received 37 for the period 1 December 2025 to 22 January 2026).
- **Other enquiries:**
  - Questions regarding private plated vehicles (PPVs) and office expenses were referred to the Department of Finance.

- IPEA confirmed it does not issue credit cards to parliamentarians or public servants for their expenses.

Significant media articles, not including syndications and similar articles. Hard copies can be provided if required.		
4/2/2026	FOI documents reveal how Anika Wells's New York trip costs escalated ABC Online	https://content.isentia.io/?url=https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-02-04/foi-docs-show-details-of-anika-wells-new-york-trip/106305526&key=b1415909d5fb9c4b07157d03f8256ed2&ver=1&mid=1303226397
15/2/2026	Minister Don Farrell defends taxpayer-funded Uluru trip with wife Daily Telegraph Australia and syndicates	https://content.isentia.io/?url=https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/breaking-news/trade-and-tourism-minister-don-farrell-defends-taxpayerfunded-uluru-trip-with-wife/news-story/2c7a1edac944ce788d3ba821ed687630&key=970747c9449f94352a840f3bc61eb6cd&ver=1&mid=1308489523
5/3/2026	Jacinta Nampijinpa Price charged taxpayers to fly husband to CPAC where she railed against government spending The Guardian	https://content.isentia.io/?url=https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2026/**mar**/05/jacinta-nampijinpa-price-charged-taxpayers-fly-husband-conference-ntwnfb&key=1824dc62e3104f7f2a0b2b8505eacb0b&ver=1&mid=1317592871
5/3/2026	Hanson billed taxpayers $9000 for charter flight to opening of Rinehart-funded building The Age and syndicates	https://content.isentia.io/?url=https://www.theage.com.au/politics/federal/hanson-billed-taxpayers-9000-for-charter-flight-to-opening-of-rinehart-funded-building-20260305-p5o7vh.html&key=9f172b1a4adb68b2249dcbfe126a6c8a&ver=1&mid=1317564935
6/3/2026	Senator defends travel claim during defamation case The Canberra Times and syndicates	https://content.isentia.io/?url=https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/9191879/senator-defends-travel-claim-during-defamation-case/&key=1a19bbbc13486c72ee26a3502d5d6c1e&ver=1&mid=1317905736
14/5/2026	Watchdog dismissed as joke as MPs claim $100k for fundraiser travel AFR	https://content.isentia.io/?url=https://www.afr.com/politics/federal/watchdog-dismissed-as-joke-as-mps-claim-100k-for-fundraiser-travel-20260513-p5zwah&key=98cb6a19f267ae997c29f517cbbe76de&ver=1&mid=1345218129
18/5/2026	Richard Marles and Penny Wong spend $179,401 on US trip	https://content.isentia.io/?url=https://www.smh.com.au/cbd/richard-marles-and-penny-wong-spend-179-401-on-us-trip-20260517-p5zxw0.html&key=1f825d141b0858981a5f

	SMH and syndicates	0a2ce39ae1eb&ver=1&mid=1346410054&uid=195092
25/5/2026	Senator billed public to attend son’s wedding	https://www.watoday.com.au/politics/victoria/senator-billed-public-to-attend-son-s-wedding-20260519-p5zyrk.html

Date: 6/05/2026
Branch: Corporate Branch
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Telephone No: s22(1) [redacted]

IPEA CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY 2025–26

Subject/Issue

In December 2025, IPEA conducted a client satisfaction survey with parliamentarians and their staff.

Key points

- The survey report was published on IPEA's website on 31 March 2026.
- The survey received 266 responses, approximately 10% of all recipients.
- Respondents' satisfaction again improved across most aspects of IPEA's service.
- Results included:
    - overall satisfaction with travel advice: 93% (87% in May 2025)
    - overall satisfaction with travel claims: 81% (82% in May 2025)
    - overall satisfaction with education sessions: 91% (80% in May 2025)
    - overall satisfaction with expenditure reports: 79% (new question)
    - overall satisfaction with post-payment checks: 88% (62% in May 2025)
    - dissatisfaction feedback continued to focus on PEMS and ride-share options.
- Performance outcomes which draw on the survey results will be published in IPEA's 2025–2026 annual report.
- The survey was conducted by Orima Research.
- The cost was $32,668 (GST inclusive).

Background

- IPEA conducts an annual client satisfaction survey to:
    - assess clients' satisfaction against its performance measures
    - assess clients' views of IPEA's service delivery more broadly
    - identify opportunities to improve IPEA's service
    - evaluate client satisfaction over time and whether concerns identified in previous surveys have been addressed.

Date:	7/05/2026
Branch:	Corporate Branch
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CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026

[redacted]

DEBTORS

Subject/Issue

IPEA manages travel-related debts owed to the Commonwealth by current and former parliamentarians and their staff.

Key points

- IPEA's administered travel related debts as at 30 April 2026 total $61,836 made up of 45 separate debtors.
- Most debts arise from changes to travel arrangements following advance payment of travel costs to staff. Where changes result in overpayments, they are recovered.
- Debtors are managed in accordance with IPEA's debtor procedures:
  - Outstanding debtors over 30 days are sent a first reminder, unless the debtor has chosen to have the debt repaid from future travel.
  - After 60 days, debtors are sent a second reminder.
  - After 90 days, debtors are sent a final reminder letter stating the debt will be referred to a debt collector, noting there is discretion as to which debtors are referred to a debt collecting agency.
- $6,844.35 worth of outstanding debts, comprising 4 debts of former MOPS staff, are with IPEA's debt collection agency.
- $3,720.94 worth of outstanding debt relates to a former parliamentarian (Dr Samantha McMahon).

Background

- IPEA's discretion to refer a debt to a debt collector is guided by the Finance Minister's directions specified in the delegations under the PGPA Act. IPEA's current debt collection agency is Recoveries Corp and this service is on a commission basis.
- This includes the discretion to enter into a payment arrangement where there is financial hardship or the discretion to not pursue debts where it is uneconomical to do so.

Date:	11/05/2026
Branch:	Corporate Branch
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IPEA Members of the Authority

Mr John Fernon SC
(Chair & Public administration & governance)
Appointment 03/10/25 to 02/10/30

The Hon Annabelle Bennett AC SC
(Former Judge)
Appointment 13/03/25 to 12/03/30

Dr Julianne Jaques KC
(Audit)
Appointment 01/07/22 to 30/06/2026

The Hon Gary Gray AO
(Former Member of Parliament)
Reappointed 01/07/22 to 30/06/27

Ms Holly Kramer
(President of the Remuneration Tribunal)
Commenced 01/06/24

CEO BRIEF

Budget Estimates – May 2026

Nicole Pearson
J-C Witcombe

DOMINANT PURPOSE

Subject/Issue

IPEA's role in administering the 'dominant purpose' test under the Parliamentary Business Resources Act framework.

Key points

- Parliamentarians' travel under the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (PBR Act) must satisfy all the PBR Act obligations.
- These are dominant purpose, value for money, conditions, good faith and personal responsibility and accountability.
- Parliamentarians are responsible for meeting their PBR Act obligations – this includes acting in good faith and being prepared to publicly justify their travel if asked.
- IPEA's functions in relation to the PBR Framework are outlined in the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* (IPEA Act) and include administering and providing advice on travel expenses, and reporting and conducting administrative audits on parliamentarian work expenses.

If asked… How does the dominant purpose test apply?

- Parliamentarians can only claim travel under the PBR framework when they are travelling for the dominant purpose of conducting their parliamentary business.
- This means that the main, or prevailing reason for undertaking the activity must be parliamentary business.
- Parliamentary business does not include an activity that has the dominant purpose of providing the parliamentarian or other person with a personal benefit or pursuing a commercial purpose.
- Personal activities during parliamentary business are not precluded under the PBR framework, but they must be incidental to the purpose of the travel.
- When IPEA is asked for advice or is undertaking an assurance activity, we consider all the circumstances of the person's travel.
    - The existence of incidental personal activity (such as a family dinner) does not necessarily mean an activity will not meet the dominant purpose test.

[If asked] What is the definition of 'dominant purpose'

- There is no definition of 'dominant purpose' in the PBR Act or the *Independent Parliamentary Expanses Authority Act 2017*.
- The term takes its ordinary meaning as the main or prevailing reason an activity is undertaken.

If asked… What if a trip combines personal and parliamentary business?

- Where there is planned travel that includes personal and parliamentary business, IPEA recommends that the parliamentarian seeks personal advice to ensure that the travel meets the provisions of the PBR framework.
- IPEA will consider all circumstances of the travel and provide advice on the basis of the information that is provided to us.
- Personal advice is exempt from disclosure under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and attracts safe harbour under the *PBR Act*.

If asked… Does travel to a fundraising event meet the dominant purpose test?

- IPEA can only provide advice on planned travel where all the circumstances can be taken into consideration – we cannot provide advice on hypotheticals
- Fundraising activities for a political party or candidate is not parliamentary business as it provides a personal benefit for another person and can also be a commercial purpose.
- A 'commercial purpose' is defined in the PBR Act as a purpose relating to the derivation of financial gain or reward.
- See **CEO Brief 04 – Fundraising Events Travel.**

Background

- IPEA assesses the use of expenses against the obligations set out in the PBR Act.
- Travel must be for the dominant purpose of parliamentary business, represent value for money, and comply with any conditions under the legislation. Parliamentarians are personally responsible and accountable for their use of taxpayer-funded expenses and are required to act in good faith when using and accounting for their travel expenses.
- IPEA assesses the information provided by the parliamentarian alongside material already on record and any further information sought. Where necessary, IPEA seeks clarification or supporting information, such as diary entries or invitations. It may also consider other sources, including existing records, published event information, media reporting, social media, and public statements.
- In assessing the dominant purpose of a trip, IPEA considers the type of expense claimed, the timing of the expense, and the parliamentary business identified by the accountable parliamentarian. IPEA considers the entire trip based on the information provided, information already on record, and any further information obtained during the audit.
- For example: if a parliamentarian travels to another city for parliamentary business on one day, and has further parliamentary business the following day, IPEA would consider both the dominant purpose of the activities undertaken and the dominant purpose of the entire trip. IPEA would also consider whether returning home between those activities would have represented better value for money and whether the relevant legislative conditions were met.

Definition of Dominant Purpose

- There is no definition of ‘dominant purpose’ in the PBR Act or the IPEA Act.
- The Parliamentary Business Resources Bill 2017 - Explanatory Memorandum, provides relevant guidance on the application of the dominant purpose principle:
    - the “phrase dominant purpose is undefined and attracts its ordinary meaning” and “[a]n activity would fall within the scope of ‘parliamentary business’ where undertaken for the ‘ruling’, ‘prevailing’ or ‘most influential’ purpose of conducting parliamentary business”.
    - the test is whether, “but for the parliamentary business, the member would have undertaken the activity; or incurred or claimed the expense, allowance or other public resource”.
- In the *Commonwealth of Australia v Spotless Services LTD (1996) 186 CLR 404* the High Court held that “dominant Purpose” should be understood according to its ordinary meaning. In its ordinary meaning dominant indicates that purpose which was ruling, prevailing or most influential purpose.
- ‘Purpose’ of conduct is the end which is sought to be accomplished and there can be only one dominant purpose.
- The High Court interpretation was reinforced in *Laming v Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (2024) FCA 172*.

Date:	18/05/2026
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