



Background on Expenditure Reporting

From 1 July 2017, the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) became responsible for publishing parliamentarians' expenditure reports. As part of the move to more regular reporting, IPEA commenced publishing quarterly expenditure reports from the period 1 January to 31 March 2017. Previous reporting occurred on a six monthly basis and these reports remain available on the [Department of Finance](#) website.

1. Certification of Work Expenses

Parliamentarians and former Parliamentarians (including former Prime Ministers, surviving spouses / de facto partners of former Prime Ministers and Post Retirement Travellers) are asked to certify that their work expenses are within the legislated purpose.

For information regarding Parliamentarians' and former Parliamentarians' certification from the period 1 January to 31 March 2017 see: [Additional Expenditure Report Information](#). Certifications prior to this period are published on the [Department of Finance](#) website.

2. Process of Compilation

In accordance with current practice, IPEA prepares the draft reports capturing data from business systems used to process and administer work expenses for:

- Parliamentarians
- former Prime Ministers
- Post Retirement Travellers
- Surviving spouses or de facto partners of former Prime Ministers

Preliminary reports are provided to individuals to confirm their transactional information. If an amendment is advised, it is checked against the source data (such as invoices and records of payment). Following a reconciliation of the data, an amendment (if appropriate) is made and records are adjusted. If required, copies of amendments are provided to the individual.

3. Use of COMCAR

Parliamentarians may use COMCAR for transport within Australia to conduct their parliamentary business. The principles contained in the [Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017](#) apply to the use of Commonwealth Transport. Ministers and Shadow Ministers (including Parliamentary Secretaries and Shadow Parliamentary Secretaries) may use COMCAR for personal safety reasons ([Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017](#)). For further information on this topic please see the [Travel by Commonwealth Transport](#) page.

4. Why Do Some Offices Have Higher Travel Expenditure?

When comparing parliamentarians travel expenditure it is important to note the following:

- Ministers are likely to have more staff and a greater requirement to travel (depending on the nature of their portfolio). This may have an impact on the volume and cost of travel for their office.
- The location and size of a parliamentarian's electorate may also have an impact on the overall cost of travel for an office. For example, flights between Perth or Darwin and Canberra are often more expensive than flights between Sydney or Melbourne and Canberra and this will have an impact on the total travel expenditure for that office. This is also the case for electorates in more remote locations as the cost of travel to Canberra may include multiple flights and/or ground transport costs.
- Some parliamentarians may have a greater requirement to travel overseas depending on their role for example the Minister for Foreign Affairs or the Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment and this is likely to result in a higher volume of overseas travel for their office.
- As part of their parliamentary business, some parliamentarians are involved with Committees. Committees are an important part of the business of Parliament and allow more detailed scrutiny of specific matters of policy or government and parliamentary administration or performance. Some Committees, for example those considering matters impacting rural, regional or remote communities may, by their very nature, incur additional travel and travel related expenses. More information on [Committees](#) is available.

5. Historical Changes to Expenditure Reporting

On 27 September 2001, the then Prime Minister announced that expenditure by former Governors-General, former Prime Ministers, other Life Gold Pass holders, severance travel beneficiaries and surviving spouses or de facto partners of certain eligible former Parliamentarians arising from benefits granted to them in recognition of public service, would be publicly disclosed.

The statement further indicated that this disclosure would be done on a six-monthly basis in conjunction with the Parliamentarians' expenditure. The document would contain the same level of detail, in the relevant category, as for Parliamentarians.

From the July to December 2009 reporting period, the reports were enhanced for Senators, Members and certain former Parliamentarians to include the following:

- office administrative costs, including:
 - office consumables and services
 - printing and communications
 - publications
- office facilities costs
- travel allowances and travel expenses for both domestic and overseas travel, including family travel costs.

The 2016 [An Independent Parliamentary Entitlements System Review](#) identified a number of recommendations to improve transparency:

- Office costs (Recommendation 28): From the January to June 2016 reporting period, expenditure on the establishment, relocation and refurbishment of offices is reported separately as Commonwealth expenditure administered by Finance. These costs are no longer reported against individual parliamentarians.

- More frequent reporting (Recommendation 25): From the April to June 2017 reporting period, aggregate employee travel costs (domestic and overseas) have been included in the expenditure reports.

From the April to June 2018 reporting period, signage costs for mobile electorate offices have been included under office facilities in the expenditure reports.

6. Reporting of Publications Expenses

As a result of administrative changes within the Department of Finance, detailed reporting of publications expenses was unavailable for the period 1 January to 31 March 2018 at the time of publishing those reports. For detailed publication information relating to this period, please contact [Ministerial and Parliamentary Services](#) in the Department of Finance.

More Information?

- Media enquiries regarding expenditure reporting may be directed to mediaenquiries@ipea.gov.au
- Parliamentarians and their staff may obtain advice on reporting by calling 6215 3000 or by emailing enquiries@ipea.gov.au
- Further information on the work expenses framework can be found on the [Legislative Framework](#) page of the IPEA website.