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Australian Government
 Independent Parliamentary
 Expenses Authority

PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT – [2021/026]

The office of the Hon Christian Porter MP, Member for Pearce, travel to Sydney in November 2021.

Date: 7 January 2022

To: § 47F
 Director, Audit & Assurance

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that you:

- i. Note the contents of this preliminary assessment and accept the matter as closed with no further action required.

NOTED & ACCEPTED AS CLOSED

PLEASE DISCUSS

§ 47F

Date: 7 January 2022

§ 47F

Director, Audit & Assurance
 Transparency, Assurance & Legal Branch

Prepared by:

Date: 7 January 2022

§ 47F
 Assistant Director, Audit & Assurance
 Transparency, Assurance & Legal Branch

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PURPOSE

This preliminary assessment aims to:

1. Assess whether the Hon Christian Porter MP accessed parliamentary business resources in Sydney, NSW during the period 15 to 21 November 2021 (the relevant period).

BACKGROUND

2. On 19 November 2021, The Age published an article '[Media union blindsided by presidential election \(theage.com.au\)](https://www.theage.com.au)' (**Attachment A**), where they reported spotting Mr Porter being at Coogee Beach, Sydney from midday Thursday (18 November 2021).
3. It should be noted that Mr Porter has been subject to a previous assurance activity in relation to travel to Sydney NSW (2021/022).
4. In accordance with IPEA's protocol on dealing with misuse of parliamentary work expenses, a Preliminary Assessment into the Hon Christian Porter's travel to Sydney, NSW in November 2021 commenced on 5 January 2022.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

5. Relevant legislation includes:
 - *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*
 - *Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017*
 - *Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017*
 - *Parliamentary Business Resources (Commonwealth Transport) Determination 2017*

ANALYSIS

6. Upon investigation, it was found that no public business resources were used by Mr Porter to travel to Sydney, NSW for the relevant period.
7. Mr Porter claimed travel allowance in Canberra on 21 November 2021 (for 4 nights) and 28 November 2021 (for 4 nights). The travel allowance claim notes that Mr Porter departed Sydney for Canberra, but that the mode of transport was 'Other' (**Attachment B**).

CONCLUSION

8. On the basis of the findings of this preliminary assessment it is recommended that IPEA accepts this matter as closed and proceeds with no further action.

BEACH TIME

SPOTTED: Former attorney-general **Christian Porter** slipping down to Coogee Beach in Sydney for a quick dip just after midday on Thursday. The West Australian MP is an easy spot given his *Star Wars*' X-Wing Starfighter tattoo. Sydney is a long way from his electorate of Pearce north of Perth but CBD readers will recall he's got a link to the city. His girlfriend, criminal lawyer **Karen Espiner**, lives nearby.



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**PEMS Parliamentarian Travel
Allowance Claim - Certification**

Senator/Member name **The Hon Christian PORTER MP**

Parliamentarian Travel Allowance Claim
Claimant: The Hon Christian PORTER MP

Leg 0001
 Departure Date: 21.11.2021
 Departure Location: Sydney CCZ
 Arrival Location: Canberra CCZ
 Mode of Transport: Other
 Location Stayed: Canberra CCZ
 Type of accommodation: Commercial
 No. of nights TA
 being Claimed: 4
 Dominant Purpose Nights
 Parliamentary Duties: 21/11/2021,22/11/2021,23/11/2021,24/11/2021

Leg 0002
 Departure Date: 28.11.2021
 Departure Location: Sydney CCZ
 Arrival Location: Canberra CCZ
 Mode of Transport: Other
 Location Stayed: Canberra CCZ
 Type of accommodation: Commercial
 No. of nights TA
 being Claimed: 4
 Dominant Purpose Nights
 Parliamentary Duties: 28/11/2021,29/11/2021,30/11/2021,01/12/2021

Parliamentarian  06.12.21 Date

Terms and Conditions

1. I certify that my claim for the expense, allowance or public resource complies with sections 25, 26, 27 and 28 of the Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017.
2. I acknowledge that I am personally responsible and accountable for my use of public resources and that if section 26, 27 or 28 of the Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017 is contravened any amount not repaid within 28 days attracts a 25% penalty and is a debt due to the Commonwealth.
3. I understand that knowingly giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995.
4. I have read and understood the Privacy Collection Notice.

Privacy Collection Notice

Consistent with the Privacy Act 1988, the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) uses the personal information provided in this form to facilitate the administration and monitoring of work expenses and allowances for Parliamentarians and their employees under the parliamentary work expenses framework. Details of the related expenditure may be tabled in Parliament, published on the IPEA website, or provided to the Special Minister of State, the Department of Finance, relevant service providers, or publicly, as authorised by law. Further details on the collection, storage and use of personal information is available in the full Privacy Notice at www.ipea.gov.au/privacy-policy

Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017

s25 Obligations in relation to the use of public resources for conducting parliamentary business
 s26 Dominant purpose test
 s27 Obligation to ensure value for money in incurring expenses or claiming allowances or other public resources