



Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

ASSURANCE REVIEW MEMORANDUM – [2021/024]

The Hon Jason Wood MP – Member for La Trobe
Travel Claim Certification Forms

Date: 8 November 2021
To: Marc Roberts
A/Branch Manager, Transparency, Assurance & Legal

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that you:

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

NOTED & ACCEPTED AS CLOSED / PLEASE DISCUSS

s 47F
[Redacted Signature]

Date: 9 November 2021
Marc Roberts
A/Branch Manager
Transparency, Assurance & Legal Branch

Prepared by:
s 47F
[Redacted Name]

Date: 4 November 2021
s 47F
Assistant Director, Audit & Assurance
Transparency, Assurance & Legal Branch

Reviewed by:
s 47F
[Redacted Name]

Date: 8 November 2021
s 47F
Director, Audit & Assurance
Transparency, Assurance & Legal Branch

SCOPE

1. The scope for the Assurance Review (the review) is certification forms (travel resource, expenditure report certification and post payment check certification), where there is a requirement for the parliamentarian to authorise and sign.

PURPOSE

2. This assurance review aims to assess the authenticity of various travel resource claim forms submitted by the Hon Jason Wood MP.

BACKGROUND

3. On 27 October 2021, the Audit and Assurance Team received information from Travel Education and Advice Branch concerning Mr Jason Wood's use of travel resource claim forms. The form in question related to staff motor vehicle allowance.
4. In accordance with IPEA's protocol on dealing with potential or alleged misuse of parliamentary work expenses, a preliminary assessment was conducted. The assessment found a number of forms upon which it appeared a copy of Mr Wood's signature was appended by way of a sticker or similar method.
5. On 28 October 2021, in accordance with the protocol, an Assurance Review into this matter was commenced.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

6. The relevant legislative framework is:
 - *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984*
 - *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*
 - *Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017*

ANALYSIS

7. IPEA obtained a number of staff travel claim forms for the office of the Hon Jason Wood MP, and assessed each form to determine if Mr Wood had signed the form personally, or if what appeared to be a sticker of Mr Wood's signature was used.
8. A number of forms were identified (**IDOC/13926**).
9. IPEA discussed this matter internally, where processing procedures were clarified and further clarification was sought on each of the relevant forms to this matter.
10. On 28 October 2021, IPEA wrote to Mr Wood raising concerns about the use of his signature and seeking advice in relation to the manner in which the forms had been completed (**IDOC/139234**). A sample set of forms (which had used Mr Wood's signature) were provided to Mr Wood to review in association with the letter.
11. This was followed up with a phone call to Mr Wood, where IPEA discussed the content of the letter and nature of IPEA's concerns in relation to this matter. Mr Wood also stated he would appreciate any advice to manage the certification and authorisation of forms within his office going forward (**IDOC/139238** and **IDOC/139239**).

12. On 28 October 2021, Mr Wood provided a response, noting that he had reviewed the claim forms provided in IPEA's initial letter and that he was "*satisfied they are genuine*". Mr Wood also asked for assistance in relation to authorised persons in his office (IDOC/139240).
13. IPEA intends to write to Mr Wood to finalise this matter, providing information in relation to authorised persons and emphasizing the obligations imposed upon parliamentarians under the provisions of the PBR Act, that require Members are personally responsible and accountable for their use of public resources.

CONCLUSION

14. On the basis of Mr Wood's response, IPEA is satisfied that the use of Mr Wood's signature is consistent with the obligations imposed under the provisions of the PBR Act.