



# Travel during an election - Parliamentarians



Australian Government  
Independent Parliamentary  
Expenses Authority



## Am I able to undertake travel during an election period at Commonwealth expense?

As a current Parliamentarian seeking re-election at the upcoming Federal election, noting that Parliament has been dissolved, what should I be considering when I seek to travel?

- Is the travel for the **dominant purpose** of Parliamentary Business (refer *Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017*); that is
  - Would I travel **'but for'** this Parliamentary Business?
  - Is the Parliamentary Business the **'ruling', 'prevailing'** or **'most influential'** purpose of the travel?
- Have I sought to undertake the travel with **value for money** as a key consideration?
- Am I prepared to **justify publicly** the travel expenses and have I acted in **good faith**?

The Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017 (PBR Act) is available on the IPEA website ([www.ipea.gov.au](http://www.ipea.gov.au)).

### IPEA considerations:

- IPEA can provide personal advice when considering travel at Commonwealth expense.
- Providing IPEA with all of the facts and information relating to the travel will assist in providing definitive advice.
- When assessing the nature of the travel, the definition of Parliamentary Business includes Electorate duties, Parliamentary duties, Party Political duties and Official duties (which only applies to Ministers and Office holders).
- When formally examining the dominant purpose for the travel claim, the onus is on the parliamentarian to justify the expense in the context of all the circumstances including providing objective evidence for the claim.
- When assessing value for money, consideration is given to actual costs, importance and relevance of the business to be undertaken and the effectiveness of the alternatives to travel.

As a current Parliamentarian seeking re-election at the upcoming Federal election, noting that Parliament has been dissolved, can I undertake travel at Commonwealth Expense?



I need to ensure that I meet **all** of the obligations and principles of the PBR Act:

- Am I travelling for **Parliamentary Business**?
- Does the travel meet the **dominant purpose** test?
- Does the travel represent **value for money**?
- Am I prepared to **justify publicly** the travel expenses and am I acting in **good faith**?



**Yes**



Travel may be undertaken at Commonwealth expense.



**No**



Travel **must not** be undertaken at Commonwealth expense.

More specific scenarios are available at [www.ipea.gov.au](http://www.ipea.gov.au).  
IPEA is available to provide advice to Parliamentarians and their staff on travel on 02 6215 3000 or [enquiries@ipea.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@ipea.gov.au)