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Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

ASSURANCE REVIEW MEMORANDUM – [2021/05]

Senator Sam McMahon, Senator for Northern Territory:

- (i) Travel during the Northern Territory and Queensland Election.
- (ii) Nominated Home Base.

Date: 20 May 2021

To: Marc Roberts

A/g Branch Manager, Transparency, Assurance & Legal

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that you:

1. Note IPEA will invoice Senator McMahon for the 25 per cent loading in relation to an earlier repayment.
2. Accept the matter as closed with no further investigation required.

NOTED & ACCEPTED AS CLOSED

/ PLEASE DISCUSS

Date: 20 May 2021

Marc Roberts

A/g Branch Manager

Transparency, Assurance & Legal Branch

Prepared by:

§ 47F

Date: 20 May 2021

§ 47F

Assurance Support Officer, Audit & Assurance
Transparency, Assurance & Legal Branch

Reviewed by:

§ 47F

Date: 20 May 2021

§ 47F

A/g Director, Audit & Assurance
Transparency, Assurance & Legal Branch

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SCOPE

1. The scope of this assurance review is:
 - i. Senator McMahon's use of parliamentary business resources for travel during the period 1 to 31 August 2020 (around the 2020 Northern Territory (NT) election held on 22 August 2020) and 25 October to 2 November 2020 (around the 2020 Queensland (Qld) State election held on 31 October 2020); and
 - ii. Senator McMahon's travel allowance (TA) claimed in Girraween, NT (suburb of Darwin, NT) from her commencement as a Senator of the NT on 18 May 2019 to 11 December 2020.

PURPOSE

2. This assurance review aims to:
 - assess whether Senator McMahon's travel within the scope of this review meets the dominant purpose test in section 26 of the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (PBR Act 2017)
 - confirm that the home base for Senator McMahon is Katherine, NT, consistent with the records currently held with the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority's (IPEA) records.
3. Value for money and other conditions (sections 27 and 28 of the PBR Act 2017) were not assessed.

BACKGROUND

4. IPEA became aware of allegations relating to TA claimed by Senator McMahon, particularly, Senator McMahon's high number of TA claims during the July-September 2020 quarter compared to other members of parliament. During this time, there was an NT election and also alleged was that Senator McMahon regularly posted on her social media that "*she was campaigning for the NT election for the Country Liberal Party*".
5. The allegations included that there was "*anecdotal evidence*" that Senator McMahon's home base was Girraween, NT. Senator McMahon had specified Katherine, NT as her nominated home base.
6. In accordance with IPEA's protocol on dealing with misuse of parliamentary work expenses (**Attachment A**), on 15 December 2020 IPEA commenced an assurance review into Senator McMahon's use of public resources during the periods within the scope of this review.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

7. Relevant legislation includes:
 - *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (PBR Act 2017)
 - *Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017* (the Regulations)
 - *Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017* (the Determination).

Obligations

8. The principles based legislative framework imposes a number of obligations on parliamentarians in relation to their use of public resources. In summary, parliamentarians are personally responsible and accountable for their use of public resources. They must be prepared to publicly justify their use of public resources for conducting their parliamentary business and must act ethically and in good faith in using, and accounting for the use of, those resources. Specifically, a parliamentarian must not claim public resources unless they are claimed for the dominant purpose of conducting their parliamentary business.

Definitions

9. 'Parliamentary business' is defined in section 6 of the PBR Act 2017. Activities that fall within the four duty streams of parliamentary business are set out in the Determination as 'parliamentary duties', 'electorate duties', 'party political duties', and 'official duties' (Attachment B).
10. Subsection 6(2) of the PBR Act further provides that an activity is not the parliamentary business of the member if it is carried out for the dominant purpose of providing a personal benefit to the member or another person or pursuing commercial purposes of the member or another person (or both).
11. 'Home base' is defined in section 4 of the Regulations. In the case of a member of parliament, a home base is defined as '*the member's principal place of residence as nominated to IPEA by the member*'.

ANALYSIS

2020 NT and Qld Elections

12. IPEA reviewed all vFire records (which record IPEA's communication with parliamentarians and their staff) for relevant information/advice provided in relation to travel undertaken by Senator McMahon. IPEA found two vFire records within the scope of the assurance review.
 - One vFire record was a request for advice regarding travel during the lead up to the NT election held on 22 August 2020. The request for advice was made prior to travel commencing.

On 6 August 2020, Senator McMahon emailed IPEA:

"The specific situation involves the Northern Territory election and the remote polling schedule in the 2 weeks lead up to the election. I propose to travel to some of these communities on or around polling day as this is a time when people gather in these communities to vote. I plan to use this as an opportunity to meet with as many constituents as possible to provide my contact details and information on federal programs in general but specifically related to COVID support available."

On 7 August 2020, IPEA advised Senator McMahon:

“Yes. Travel may be undertaken within your electorate to undertake parliamentary business, including to meet with constituents, and discuss matters of importance to them. If your travel requires an overnight stay away from your home base, you are able to claim travel allowance.

Parliamentarians remain personally responsible and accountable for their travel and use of public resources and must be prepared to justify publicly their expenditure.”

- The second vFire record was a request for advice regarding travel on the day of the QLD election held on 31 October 2020. The request for advice was made after travel had been completed.

On 16 December 2020, Senator McMahon called IPEA and requested advice on *“travel in QLD to campaign for party political reasons during the QLD election held on 22 October 2020”*. IPEA advised that travel to Queensland would not be included under Schedule 3 of the Determination [Schedule 3 describes party political duties]. IPEA advised that Senator McMahon may wish to consider if the travel was for parliamentary business, and provided the relevant Schedule (1) of the Determination via email [Schedule 1 describes parliamentary duties].

Senator McMahon replied to IPEA’s email the same day stating:

‘Whilst I can confirm that meetings attended and activities undertaken were definitely Parliamentary duties, there was some other time spent that was outside this scope. I would therefore prefer to have this billed to me personally to avoid any potential conflict’.

IPEA then responded requesting confirmation from Senator McMahon that the return flights from Darwin to Townsville from 29 October to 1 November 2020 were to be invoiced.

On 5 January 2021, Senator McMahon confirmed those flights were to be invoiced.

On 15 January 2021, IPEA invoiced Senator McMahon for the costs of flights (including GST). The invoice did not include a loading of 25 per cent as a penalty, in accordance with section 38 of the PBR Act 2017.

On 29 January 2021, the invoice was paid.

Senator McMahon did not claim any other travel expenses in Qld during the period 25 October to 2 November 2020.

13. IPEA reviewed Senator McMahon’s social media pages (**Attachment C**), and found:

- Senator McMahon appeared in three posts during the NT election campaign with Country Liberal Party candidates. As advised by Senator McMahon, she had used the NT election as an opportunity to meet with as many constituents as possible to provide her contact details and information on Federal programs.

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TA claimed in Darwin/Girraween, NT

14. IPEA looked into the validity of the allegation of *'anecdotal evidence'* that Senator McMahon lives in Girraween, NT. IPEA notes that of the 47 nights claimed in Girraween, NT, all were claimed as non-commercial accommodation.
15. IPEA's analysis shows that Senator McMahon spent the majority of her time in her nominated home base of Katherine, NT:
 - During the period, 516 nights were in scope of this review. The total nights of TA claimed in all locations during the period was 328. 131 of those nights were claimed in Darwin, NT or Girraween, NT. The total nights during the period where TA was not claimed was 188. The reasonable assumption has been made that these nights (59 per cent of the 516 nights within the period) were spent in Senator McMahon's nominated home base of Katherine, NT.
 - The report does not show an increase in TA nights claimed in the NT during the period 1 August to 31 August 2020.
16. IPEA records indicate that Senator McMahon and her spouse nominated Katherine as their home base.
17. On Facebook posts, dated 9 September 2020 and 28 December 2020, Senator McMahon referred to Katherine, NT as her *'home town'*.

Information sought from Senator McMahon

18. Senator McMahon was contacted on 16 February 2021 and the following questions, together with a list of the Senator's travel-related work expenses, were presented to her for consideration and response (**Attachment D**):
 - *'Please confirm, for our records, the location of your current home base.'*
 - *'What was the dominant purpose of your travel to Mataranka on 8 August 2020?'*
 - *'What was the dominant purpose of your travel to Daly Waters on 11 August 2020?'*
 - *'What was the dominant purpose of your travel to Top Springs from 17 to 18 August 2020?'*
 - *'Please confirm that the dominant purpose of your [return] flights [between Darwin and Townsville from 29 October 2020 and 1 November 2020] was not for parliamentary business.'*
19. On 10 March 2021, Senator McMahon responded to IPEA (**Attachment E**).

20. Senator McMahon confirmed that the dominant purpose for travel to Mataranka on 8 August 2020 was parliamentary business. Senator McMahon advised the parliamentary business was '*... visiting North and South town camps to inspect housing issues raised by s 47F speaking with pastoralists on various issues including water infrastructure, dinner with local pastoralists, discussing issues with residents around closing of the cement factory and local tourism operators such as Territory Manor about the impacts of COVID*'.
21. Senator McMahon confirmed that the dominant purpose for travel to Daly Waters on 11 August 2020 was parliamentary business. Senator McMahon advised the parliamentary business was '*... meeting with the owners/managers of local roadhouses regarding the effect of COVID on their businesses, travel to Elliott to speak to pastoralists regarding various issues including land tenure, weather radar services, visiting town camps to inspect housing and provide information on COVID assistance to roadhouses and local businesses*'.
22. Senator McMahon confirmed that the dominant purpose for travel to Top Springs Waters from 17 to 18 August 2020 was parliamentary business. Senator McMahon advised the parliamentary business was '*... visiting site of VRD quarries and meet with s 47F to discuss indigenous employment and tender structure, meeting with s 47F (civil contractor) to discuss work progression on the Buntine Highway, providing information on assistance and contact details to the Top Springs Hotel, travel to remote communities including Lingara, Kalkarindgi and Lajamanu to meet with council management, stores, businesses and residents to inspect housing, roads, services and provide information and contact details*'.
23. Senator McMahon confirmed that the dominant purpose of flights between Darwin and Townsville from 29 October 2020 and 1 November 2020 was '*initially for parliamentary business, however due to cancellation of some meetings, I made this a personal trip instead*'.
24. Senator McMahon confirmed that her home base is still Katherine, NT.

CONCLUSION

25. After analysis of the records held by and available to IPEA, and Senator McMahon's responses to IPEA's questions, IPEA is of the view that the travel and travel related resources accessed during the 2020 NT election met the dominant purpose test set out in section 26 of the PBR Act.
26. IPEA notes Senator McMahon's advice confirming her home base is Katherine, NT.
27. IPEA notes Senator McMahon's advice that travel during the QLD election between Darwin and Townsville was for personal reasons.
28. IPEA notes that the costs of the flights repaid by Senator McMahon on 19 January 2021 did not include a 25 per cent penalty. As Senator McMahon has confirmed that the travel was personal and not for the dominant purpose of parliamentary business, IPEA will invoice

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Senator McMahon the 25 per cent loading penalty for the cost of her return flights between Darwin, NT and Townsville, Qld from 29 October to 1 November 2020.



Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

Protocol—Dealing with Allegations of Misuse of Parliamentary Work Expenses

The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) was established to provide greater accountability and transparency of the Parliamentary Work Expenses Framework (the Framework). IPEA provides assurance that parliamentarians' work resources and *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (MOP(S) Act) employees' travel resources are spent in compliance with the Framework.

IPEA deals with possible misuse of work or travel resources at arm's length from Government. The *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* (IPEA Act) provides legislative powers for the auditing and reporting of parliamentarians' work and travel resources and MOP(S) Act travel resources.

When IPEA becomes aware of information that indicates possible non-compliance with the Framework, IPEA may conduct a preliminary assessment. The assessment scrutinises the use of the work or travel resource and determines if a parliamentary business resource has been used.

Possible misuse

In the event of possible misuse, IPEA decides whether to undertake an assurance review or audit of the matter. IPEA does not undertake assurance reviews or audits at the request of parliamentarians or MOP(S) Act employees.

- Under the IPEA Act, IPEA may audit any parliamentarian's work or travel resource or MOP(S) Act travel resource as it considers appropriate.
- IPEA may conduct an assurance review where a preliminary assessment indicates that a Commonwealth resource was used for a parliamentarian's work expense or MOP(S) Act employee's travel expense.
- IPEA may conduct an audit where there are allegations of systemic or substantial misuse of work expenses or where there is an educative benefit.
- An audit may also be a systematic and comprehensive examination of the use by all parliamentarians and/or MOP(S) Act employees of a specific category of work expense.
- The Members of the Authority or the Chief Executive Officer may issue a notice requiring a person to provide information that is relevant to an audit by IPEA, as provided for under Part 5 of the IPEA Act. Criminal penalties apply for failure to comply with a notice, or for providing false or misleading information.
- In the event of an audit, the parliamentarian or MOP(S) Act employee is accorded procedural fairness to provide comment on any findings.

Members of the Authority decide whether a matter is referred to the Australian Federal Police (AFP)

- The Minister responsible for the AFP and the Minister responsible for the Framework are notified of a referral to the AFP.

Publication of audits

- Members of the Authority decide whether, or not, to publish their decision(s).

As approved by the Members of the Authority: October 2020



Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017

I, Mathias Cormann, Minister for Finance, make the following determination.

Dated 14 December 2017

Mathias Cormann
Minister for Finance

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1 Name

This instrument is the *Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences at the same time as the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*.

3 Authority

This instrument is made under section 6 of the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*.

4 Interpretation

(1) In this instrument:

Act means the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017*.

Note: A number of expressions used in this instrument are defined in the definitions section of the Act, including the following:

- (a) *constituent*;
- (b) *member*;
- (c) *office holder*, and
- (d) *vice regal function*.

(2) For the avoidance of doubt, an activity specified in a Schedule to this determination is specified whether it takes place within Australia or overseas.

5 Parliamentary business of members

- (1) For the purposes of paragraph 6(4)(a) of the Act, the *parliamentary duties* of a member are the activities specified in Schedule 1 for that member.
- (2) For the purposes of paragraph 6(4)(b) of the Act, the *electorate duties* of a member are the activities specified in Schedule 2 for that member.
- (3) For the purposes of paragraph 6(4)(c) of the Act, the *party political duties* of a member are the activities specified in Schedule 3 for that member.
- (4) For the purposes of paragraph 6(4)(d) of the Act, the *official duties* of a member are the activities specified in Schedule 4 for that member.

Schedule 1—Parliamentary duties

(Act s 6(4)(a))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Parliamentary duties
All members who are a senator or member of the House of Representatives	<p>In the member's capacity as a member of the Parliament:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Preparing for, participating in and attending to business arising from proceedings of the Parliament, whether by committee of the whole or otherwise;b) Developing, reviewing or amending legislation or proposed legislation, and activities engaged in for that purpose;c) Undertaking research, communication (including with stakeholders) or administration connected with the business of the Parliament, the member's policy portfolio, or their role as a member;d) Preparing for, participating in, or attending to matters arising from an official government, parliamentary or vice regal meeting, event or function;e) Preparing for, participating in and attending to matters arising from a meeting (including with stakeholders), event or function for the purposes of their role as a member, including in relation to the member's policy portfolio;f) Preparing for, participating in, or attending to business arising from a non-Parliamentary committee, taskforce or other formal group in which the member participates;g) Representing the Parliament, in accordance with an approval of the Parliament or a House of the Parliament, and engaging in associated activities for that purpose;h) Representing a Minister or office holder in their official capacity, at the request of that Minister or office holder, at a meeting, event or function;i) Representing the Government or Australia, with the approval of the Prime Minister. <p><i>Note: For Ministers representing the Government or Australia in their capacity as a Minister, this would be part of the member's official duties (see Schedule 4).</i></p>

Schedule 2—Electorate duties

(Act s 6(4)(b))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Electorate duties
All members who are a senator or member of the House of Representatives	In the member's capacity as their constituent's elected representative: a) Facilitating and participating in debate, discussion, a meeting, event or function, or undertaking research or administrative functions relating to matters of importance or interest to constituents (including matters that do not relate exclusively to constituents, such as matters of national importance); b) Otherwise communicating with constituents; c) Representing the views and interests of constituents.

Schedule 3—Party political duties

(Act s 6(4)(c))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Party political duties
All members who are a senator or member of the House of Representatives	In respect of the political party to which the member belongs, participating in any of the following in their capacity as an elected Senator or member of the House of Representatives: a) a formal meeting of the political party (including a meeting of the party executive, a committee or a subcommittee); b) a national, state or territory conference.

Schedule 4—Official duties

(Act s 6(4)(d))

Column 1	Column 2
Member (or class)	Official duties
All office holders and Ministers of State	In the member's official capacity (being their capacity as a Minister or office holder, as the case may be): <ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Exercising the powers or functions, or performing the duties, of the member's office, or activities engaged in for the purposes of doing so;b) Attending an event to which the member has been invited in their official capacity;c) Other activities directly related to, and engaged in for the purposes of, performing the member's official role.

Facebook Posts relating to NT election:




Dr Sam McMahon  June 19 · 

Recently I joined [Jo Hersey - Country Liberals for Katherine](#) at her roadside 'office' on the Victoria Hwy. Jo is very keen to represent the people of Katherine and promises to deliver much more than the current sitting member has done.

[Country Liberal Party](#)



  61 4 Comments 4 Shares

 Like  Comment  Share

Most Relevant ▾




Dr Sam McMahon  August 15 · 

Fred's Pass Rural Markets are a great place to do some shopping, have a feed, catch up with mates and quiz your rural CLP candidates.

[Gerard Maley - Country Liberals for Nelson](#)
[Phil Battye - Country Liberals for Goyder](#)
[Ian Sloan - Country Liberals for Daly](#)
Country Liberal Party



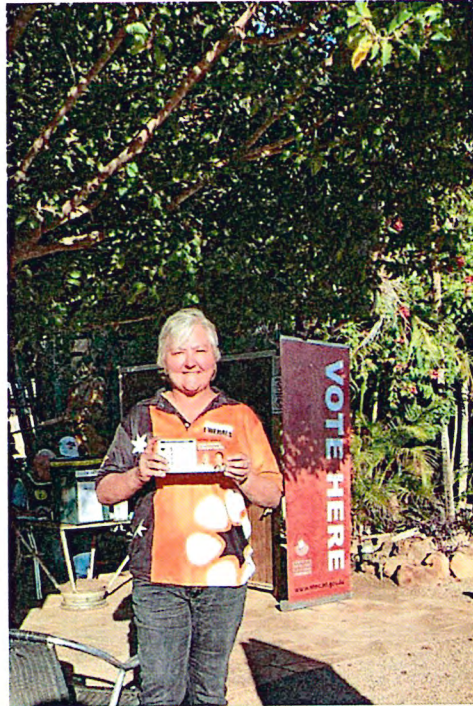
 21 5 Comments 1 Share

 Like  Comment  Share

Most Relevant ▾

Dr Sam McMahon  August 11 · 

RAMP today at [Daly Waters Pub](#) for [Steve Edgington - Country Liberal Party for Barkly](#)



  25 1 Comment 2 Shares

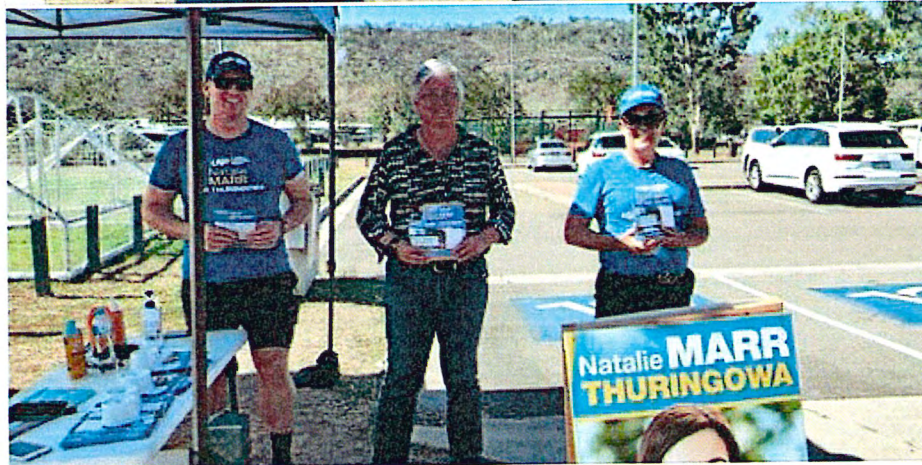
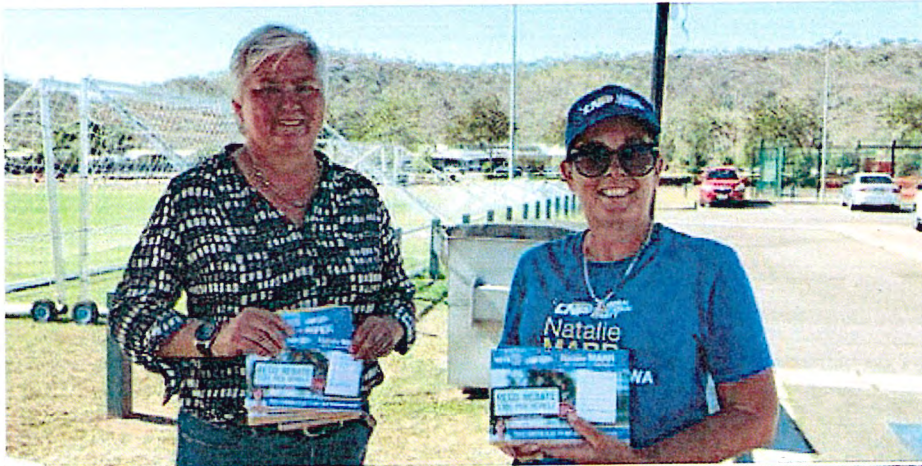
Facebook Post relating to QLD election:



Dr Sam McMahon

29 October · 🌐

Over here in Townsville today, supporting the LNP to flush Labor out of QLD.
#pmlive
Country Liberal Party



👍❤️ 46

9 comments 2 shares

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

Facebook Post relating to Katherine, NT:



Dr Sam McMahon ✓

9 September 2020 · 🌐

Nobody is prouder of my home town of Katherine than I am. It was therefore a privilege to show the Minister for Defence Senator Linda Reynolds and US Ambassador to Australia Arthur B. (A.B.) Culvahouse Jr. around RAAF Base Tindal on the outskirts of Katherine.

Thanks to Wing Commander Tim Ferrell for his continued outstanding hospitality.

Defence Australia

Royal Australian Air Force





Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

15 February 2021

Senator Sam McMahon
Senator for Northern Territory

PO Box 40021
Casuarina, NT, 0811

Email: senator.mcmahon@aph.gov.au

Dear Senator

Assurance Review of travel-related expenses and home base

The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) has responsibility under the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* to review work expenses accessed by parliamentarians.

IPEA is undertaking an Assurance Review of travel-related expenses incurred by you in relation to travel within the Northern Territory and Queensland during the lead up to the 2020 territory and state general elections.

Listed at **Attachment A** are your travel-related expenses during the lead up to these elections and related questions. Where we have asked about the nature of your parliamentary business, please provide copies of documentation to support your response, such as diary notes, invitations or media reporting.

In addition to the above, IPEA would like to confirm the location of your home base. Section 4 of the *Parliamentary Business Resources Regulation 2017* defines a parliamentarian's 'home base' as the '... principal place of residence as nominated to IPEA by the [parliamentarian]'. IPEA's records indicate that on 11 June 2019, you nominated your home base as Katherine, Northern Territory.

Recent social media posts suggest that your home base may currently be Girraween, Northern Territory. This suggestion is made on the basis of the number of nights for which you have claimed travel allowance at that location. IPEA notes that you would ordinarily claim travel allowance in Darwin and Girraween when travelling to that region on parliamentary business and notes also that Darwin is the location of your Electorate Office.

Please confirm, for our records, the location of your current home base.

Please provide a written response via email to assurance@ipea.gov.au by close of business on 8 March 2021, or advise us prior to the date if you need more time.

Should you wish to discuss this matter, please contact s 47F on 02 6215 3000.

Yours sincerely

s 47F

s 47F

A/g Director Audit & Assurance

1. Travel Allowance: 8 August 2020 to 17 August 2020

Work Expense	Arrival Date	Arrival Location	Number of Nights	Accommodation Type	Reason for Travel	Amount (GST Exclusive)
Travel Allowance	8/08/2020	Mataranka, NT	1	Commercial	Electorate Duties	\$276.00
Travel Allowance	11/08/2020	Daly Waters, NT	1	Commercial	Electorate Duties	\$276.00
Travel Allowance	17/08/2020	Top Springs, NT	2	Commercial	Electorate Duties	\$552.00

On 6 August 2020, you sought advice on travelling during the lead up of 2020 Northern Territory General Election. You wrote:

'The specific situation involves the Northern Territory election and the remote polling schedule in the 2 weeks lead up to the election. I propose to travel to some of these communities on or around polling day as this is a time when people gather in these communities to vote. I plan to use this as an opportunity to meet with as many constituents as possible to provide my contact details and information on Federal programs in general but specifically related to COVID support available.'

On 7 August 2020, IPEA responded with personal advice:

'Yes. Travel may be undertaken within your electorate to undertake parliamentary business, including to meet with constituents, and discuss matters of importance to them. If your travel requires an overnight stay away from your home base, you are able to claim travel allowance. Parliamentarians remain personally responsible and accountable for their travel and use of public resources and must be prepared to justify publicly their expenditure.'

1.1 What was the dominant purpose of your travel to Mataranka on 8 August 2020?

1.2 What was the dominant purpose of your travel to Daly Waters on 11 August 2020?

1.3 What was the dominant purpose of your travel to Top Springs from 17 to 18 August 2020?

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Attachment A

Senator McMahan
Senator for Northern Territory

2. Flights: 29 October to 1 November 2020

Cost Type	Departure Date	Departure Time	Departure Location	Arrival Date	Arrival Time	Arrival Location	Amount (GST Exclusive)
Travel Fares – AIRNORTH REGIONAL	29/10/2020	10:45 AM	Darwin	29/10/2020	1:55 PM	Townsville	\$594.45
Travel Fares – AIRNORTH REGIONAL	1/11/2020	10:35 AM	Townsville	1/11/2020	12:55 PM	Darwin	\$395.45
Repayment of airfare - (includes GST)	29/10/2020						-\$655.00
Repayment of airfare - (includes GST)	1/11/2020						-\$435.00

On 16 December 2020, you contacted the IPEA Advice Team seeking advice on whether travel to Queensland to campaign for the state general election could be for Party Political reasons.

On 16 December 2020, you were advised that travel to Queensland for that purpose would not be included under Schedule 3 of the *Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017* (the Determination). IPEA advised that you to consider if the travel was for Parliamentary Business.

IPEA then sent you the relevant schedule (Schedule 1) of the Determination for parliamentary business.

Your response to the email was:

Whilst I can confirm that meetings attended and activities undertaken were definitely Parliamentary duties, there was some other time spent that was outside this scope. I would therefore prefer to have this billed to me personally to avoid any potential conflict.

IPEA raised Invoice 1396926 on 15 January 2021, which was paid by you on 29 January 2021.

2.1 Please confirm that the dominant purpose of your flights was not for parliamentary business.

OFFICIAL: Sensitive



SENATOR Dr SAM McMAHON

SENATOR FOR THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Dear **s 47F**

In response to your questions raised in the assurance review, 15 February 2021, I provide the following responses.

- 1.1 Dominant purpose for travel to Mataranka was parliamentary business. Tasks included visiting North and South town camps to inspect housing issues raised by **s 47F** speaking with pastoralists on various issues including water infrastructure, dinner with local pastoralists, discussing issues with residents around closing of the cement factory and local tourism operators such as Territory Manor about the impacts of COVID.
- 1.2 Dominant purpose for travel to Daly Waters was parliamentary business. Tasks included meeting with the owners/managers of local roadhouses regarding the effect of COVID on their businesses, travel to Elliott to speak to pastoralists regarding various issues including land tenure, weather radar services, visiting town camps to inspect housing and provide information on COVID assistance to roadhouses and local businesses.
- 1.3 Dominant purpose for travel to Top Springs Waters was parliamentary business. Tasks included visiting site of VRD quarries and meet with **s 47F** to discuss indigenous employment and tender structure, meeting with **s 47F** (civil contractor) to discuss work progression on the Buntine Highway, providing information on assistance and contact details to the Top Springs Hotel, travel to remote communities including Lingara, Kalkarindgi and Lajamanu to meet with council management, stores, businesses and residents to inspect housing, roads, services and provide information and contact details.
- 2.1 The dominant purpose of flights to Townsville was initially for parliamentary business, however due to the cancellation of some meetings, I made this a personal trip instead.

I also confirm that my home base is still Katherine. My office is in Darwin and all interstate flights are out of Darwin so I do stay there on a frequent basis. Please note that Girraween is a suburb of Darwin.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. McMahon'.

Senator Dr Sam McMahon
Senator for the Northern Territory

brugava - extreme isolation but
like to live no hunting - 3 families.
Travel to Yaurvaku for services

Kalk - ~~Rob~~ - can't get any locals
to work. Crime is becoming bigger
issue. Tour community, meatworks,
store, health clinic, council.

Darg - not many people there, very
run down. Most services at Kalk

Larjama - great store & servo,
do not know many services being
offered federally. Health clinic
having staff turnover issues. Roads
are a concern. Spoke to majority
residents - want improved housing,
jobs, roads & health → provided
contact lists to most.

Toppie

s 47F

- VRO Quannies → needs packages broken down to smaller packages. Training in basic living skills for workers of use of washing machine

s 47F

- roads going well, no real issues out this way.

Hotel - no huge impact, if anything poss ↑ trades

Sickerton - further roads incl to pt
Post office, many residents not there.

Grange - visit to Umbakumba - vet program
& Ec oval. HA Meeting - guest
GAP - LGA meeting, road & access main issues

Mataranka - Issues raised by [redacted] s 47F
[redacted] s 47F housing [redacted] s 47F - water

Storage. North & South camps → housing
closure of cement factory will cause
major dent in economy. Territory M -
terrisin covid assist, jobs.

[redacted] s 47F - financial impact
dt could. Diff to get workers.

stopped in on Ramp. Hi Way Inn →
could assist & effects dt ↓ road traffic

[redacted] s 47F - housing is major issue for
camps. [redacted] s 47F → beds & banks concern
also radar for TC. Roadhouse -
covid assistance