



Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

Assessment Report

Reference number: 2017-12

The Hon Julie Bishop MP – Adelaide Travel 2014 and 2016

Assessment Summary

Based on the information provided by Ms Bishop and her Chief of Staff in response to my enquiries, I recommend that you agree with the assessment that the primary purpose of Ms Bishop's travel to Adelaide on 17 July 2014 and 16 July 2016 was to engage in activities that may be appropriately regarded as official business as a Minister.

Section 47F

Section 22

Date: 11 April 2018

AGREED / PLEASE DISCUSS

Section 22

CEO IPEA: Annwyn Godwin

Date: 11 April 2018

On 4 January 2018, you asked that I contact the office of the Hon Julie Bishop MP seeking information in relation to the Minister's travel to Adelaide in July 2014 and July 2016. Your request followed your review of a preliminary assessment conducted by the IPEA Assurance team in response to media scrutiny and commentary on the travel.

Issue

During 2017, media reports claimed that on trips to Adelaide in July 2014 and July 2016, the Hon Julie Bishop MP Member for Curtin, Minister for Foreign Affairs, celebrated her birthday at her sister's house in the Adelaide suburb of Medindie. Ms Bishop's birthday is 17 July .

According to these media reports, a spokesperson for Ms Bishop claimed the 2016 trip included "parliamentary meetings and portfolio-related meetings". IPEA assessed the travel expenses used during the 2016 trip and, from the information held by IPEA or available through public resources, was not able to verify this claim.

On the basis of its preliminary assessment, the Assurance team recommended that Ms Bishop be asked to provide further information regarding the purpose of her travel to Adelaide in July 2016 and, because the pattern of travel was similar, July 2014.

Process

I met with Ms Bishop's Chief of Staff, ^{Section 47F} [redacted] at Parliament House on 6 February 2018. Following a general discussion of IPEA and its role, I provided ^{Section 47F} [redacted] with worksheets detailing Ms Bishop's use of work expenses on travel to/through Adelaide on 17 to 18 July 2014 and 16 to 17 July 2016 (attachments A & B). I asked ^{Section 47F} [redacted] if further information could be provided as to the nature of the Minister's official business over these periods. ^{Section 47F} [redacted] undertook to raise the matter with Ms Bishop.

^{Section 47F} [redacted] rang me on 13 February to advise that he'd raised the matter with Ms Bishop who wished to meet with me to discuss her travel on the dates under review. He said a meeting would be established upon the Minister's return from overseas travel in late February.

I met with Ms Bishop, in the company of ^{Section 47F} [redacted] in her Parliament house office on 28 February 2018. ^{Section 47E(d), Section 47F} [redacted]

^{Section 22} [redacted]

On 9 March, ^{Section 47F} [redacted] emailed me setting out the primary purpose(s) of Ms Bishop's travel to Adelaide on the dates under review. I received this email on 15 March and rang ^{Section 47F} [redacted] to cross-reference elements of the information against details given by Ms Bishop during our meeting. I

asked Section 47F if he could provide some supplementary information in relation to the location of certain meetings. He provided me with a further email on 20 March (attachment C).

Assessment

It was not a requirement of the framework then existing that Ms Bishop provide details of the nature of her official business at the time of accessing these work expenses, or at any time after. Under the provisions of the Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017, effective from 1 January 2018, Members must be prepared to justify publicly their use of public resources for conducting their parliamentary business. The Act does not prescribe the information that should be made available when seeking to justify use of resources.

The preliminary assessment carried out by IPEA reached the view that there was little evident opportunity to conduct official business during the two trips under review. This was based on IPEA's knowledge at the preliminary assessment stage of Ms Bishop's activities, which was limited to the various legs of transport that were undertaken at Commonwealth expense.

Section 47F email of 20 March provides information on the nature, subject, location and timing of Ms Bishop's official business during the two trips. The information does not in all cases include specific detail of identities or addresses, for reasons presented by Ms Bishop during our meeting. However, at that meeting, some of that additional detail was given to me in confidence.

On the basis of the information set out in Section 47F email of 20 March and the additional detail provided in confidence by Ms Bishop during our meeting of 28 February, I believe IPEA can be satisfied that the primary purpose of Ms Bishop's travel to Adelaide on 17 July 2014 and 16 July 2016 was to engage in activities that may be appropriately regarded as official business as a Minister.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY
 Travel: BISHOP, Julie Isabel - 2014

Entitlement Name	Departure Date	Departure Time	Departure Location	Arrival Date	Arrival Time	Arrival Location	# Nights	Amount (GST Exclusive + Cabcharge Service Fee)	Reason for travel	Clause Code	Accommodation Type
COMCAR Travel	17/07/2014	5:22 PM	Capital Hill - CAN		5:44 PM	Pialligo		\$64.19			
IPEA - Fares - Parliamentarians (ATFA01)	17/07/2014	5:55 PM	Canberra	17/07/2014	7:15 PM	Adelaide		\$777.95			
COMCAR Travel	17/07/2014	7:27 PM	Adelaide Airport - ADL		7:48 PM	Medindie		\$41.80			
IPEA - TA - General (ATTA01)				17/07/2014		Adelaide	1	\$126.00	Minister - Official Business	8b	Non-commercial
COMCAR Travel	18/07/2014	5:11 AM	Medindie - ADL		5:38 AM	Adelaide Airport		\$49.78			
IPEA - Fares - Parliamentarians (ATFA01)	18/07/2014	6:05 AM	Adelaide	18/07/2014	9:00 AM	Brisbane		\$1,464.05			

Attachment A

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY
 Travel: BISHOP, Julie Isabel - 2016

Entitlement	Departure Date	Departure Time	Departure Location	Arrival Date	Arrival Time	Arrival Location	# Nights	Amount (GST Exclusive + Cabcharge Service Fee)	Reason for travel	Clause Code	Accommodation Type
COMCAR Travel	16/07/2016	7:57 AM	Crawley - PER		8:32 AM	Perth Airport		\$79.50			
IPEA - Fares - Parliamentarians (ATFA01)	16/07/2016	9:10 AM	Perth	16/07/2016	1:30 PM	Adelaide		\$1,341.15			
COMCAR Travel	16/07/2016	1:36 PM	Adelaide Airport - ADL		2:04 PM	Medindie		\$80.40			
IPEA - TA - General (ATTA01)				16/07/2016		Adelaide	1	\$128.00	Minister - Official Business	8b	Non-commercial
COMCAR Travel	17/07/2016	5:22 AM	Medindie - ADL		5:41 AM	Adelaide Airport		\$78.60			

Attachment B

Section 47F

From:

Section 47F

Sent:

Tuesday, 20 March 2018 7:23 AM

To:

Section 47F

Subject:

Foreign Minister travel [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi ^{Section 47F}

Updated information as requested.

I confirm that the primary purpose of the Foreign Minister's travel to Adelaide on 17 July 2014 was to address a function hosted by the South Australian chairman of the Australian British Chamber of Commerce which was also attended by a number of leading South Australian business people. The dinner was held at a private residence in North Adelaide and the Minister travelled in a private vehicle to and from the meeting with other guests/participants.

I confirm that the primary purpose of the Foreign Minister's travel to Adelaide on 16 July 2016 was to meet on several portfolio-related matters, ^{Section 47E(d)} the DFAT Ambassador for Women and Girls, and to conduct an employment interview with a potential policy adviser. ^{Section 47E(d)}

^{Section 22}

Kind regards

^{Section 47E(d)}

| Chief of Staff

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