



Australian Government
**Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority**

Assurance Review 2023/025

Mr Rowan Ramsey MP, Member for Grey – staff use of car
transport in Canberra

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Executive summary

1. The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) conducted an Assurance Review of use of car transport in Canberra between 13 June to 14 September 2023 by a staff member in Mr Rowan Ramsey's office. The Assurance Review forms part of IPEA's 3 Year Assurance Plan.

Assurance Review Findings

2. The Assurance Review found the use of car transport in Canberra to travel to and from Parliament House in the period 13 June to 14 September 2023 did not meet the requirements of Determination 2023/010 – Staff Travel and Relief Staff Arrangements. An invoice was raised to recover the inappropriate use of resources and the invoice has been paid in full.

Scope and Purpose

3. The scope of this Assurance Review is staff use of car transport in Canberra to travel to and from Parliament House during the period 13 June to 14 September 2023. The purpose was to determine whether the use of parliamentary business resources was consistent with the legislative provisions.

Engagement with Mr Ramsey

4. On 10 October 2023, IPEA wrote to Mr Ramsey in relation to staff use of car transport in Canberra. Mr Ramsey was asked to examine each trip identified by IPEA and confirm how it complies with items 2 and 16 of the Determination, including that the travel was directed by Mr Ramsey or an authorised person in his office.
5. Mr Ramsey responded on 20 October 2023. Mr Ramsey's response did not answer the questions raised in IPEA's letter of 10 October 2023.
6. On 25 October 2023, IPEA wrote to Mr Ramsey seeking additional information to assist in the assessment of the travel. Mr Ramsey was asked to review each transaction and confirm how each trip complies with items 2 and 16 of the Determination, including that the travel was directed by him or an authorised person in his office.
7. Mr Ramsey responded on 1 November 2023 effectively thanking IPEA for the advice and confirming all staff have been informed of the ruling.
8. On 8 November 2023, IPEA wrote to Mr Ramsey advising the conclusion that the use of car transport by his staff member was not in accordance with the legislative framework and an invoice had been raised to recover the full amount of these expenses. An invoice for \$309.39 was sent to the staff member and was paid in full.

Audit and Assurance function

IPEA's statutory audit function

10. IPEA audits parliamentarians' work expenses and the travel expenses of their staff under section 12 of the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* (IPEA Act). IPEA conducts Assurance Reviews to assess the use of parliamentary business resources against the legislative framework to determine whether there has been a misuse.
11. Potential outcomes of an Assurance Review include:
 - a. no further action in circumstances where the review has concluded the use of parliamentary business resources was not inconsistent with the legislative framework, or
 - b. administrative remedial action, including penalty where the review has concluded there is evidence the use of parliamentary business resources was not consistent with the legislative framework, or
 - c. an IPEA initiated Ruling or Audit, where there is evidence of systemic or substantial misuse of parliamentary business resources, or
 - d. referral to the Australian Federal Police where compelling prima facie evidence of fraud or other criminal conduct is identified.

Legislative framework

12. The legislation relevant to this Assurance Review is:
 - a. *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (MOP(S) Act)
 - b. Determination 2023/10 – Staff Travel and Relief Staff Arrangements (the Determination)
 - c. Ministerial and Parliamentary Services Guideline – Domestic Travel
13. In relation to Domestic Travel, item 2 of the Determination provides:

Subject to item 16, it is an employee's responsibility (and hence the employee's cost) to transport him or herself to and from work for his or her normal hours of duty. This responsibility includes travel between accommodation and the office when travelling on parliamentary or electorate business away from the employee's work base. This also includes travel to attend work when the employee's work base is distant from the employee's home.
14. Item 17 of the Determination provides:

Employees, when travelling as directed on official business, or under one of the exceptions at item 16, may use:

 - (a) taxis;
 - (b) regulated ridesharing services;
 - (c) hire cars; and
 - (d) short-term self-drive cars hired through the travel services provider, or with any car hire company...

15. Employees may not use car transport at Commonwealth expense for private use, other than as set out in item 16 of the Determination which provides:

As set out in item 2 of this Schedule, it is an employee's responsibility (and hence the employee's cost) to transport him or herself to and from work for his or her normal hours of duty. Exceptions to this rule apply to the use of car transport in the following circumstances:

- (a) the trip is approved for personal safety reasons (for example, where the risk to personal safety is significantly increased due to the requirement to work late); or
- (b) the employee is travelling on official business and scheduled public transport services are not readily available; or
- (c) the employee is travelling on official business and is carrying luggage to and/or from the office for the purpose of the trip.

Assurance Review methodology

Background

16. IPEA conducts ongoing systematic checking of expenses through regular sampling of transactions or identifying anomalies in the processing of transactions, including the use of Cabcharge, taxis and regulated ridesharing services.
17. On 25 September 2023, IPEA's Travel, Advice and Education team referred a claim made by a staff member in Mr Ramsey's office to Audit and Assurance for further review. IPEA's Audit and Assurance team conducted a Preliminary Assessment which found that parliamentary business resources were used by the staff member which appeared to be inconsistent with the legislative framework.
18. On 4 October 2023, IPEA decided to conduct an Assurance Review on all use of car transport in Canberra by the staff member.

Scope of Assurance Review

19. The scope of this Assurance Review is Mr Ramsey's staff use of car transport in Canberra for travel to and from Parliament House during the period 13 June to 14 September 2023.

Assessment of work expenses

Summary of findings

Analysis

20. IPEA considered the legislative framework and applied the following questions to staff use of car transport in Canberra:
 - a. Was the staff member travelling as directed on official business?
 - b. Did the staff member's use of car transport in Canberra meet the rules in items 2 and 16 of the Determination?
21. IPEA conducted the Assurance Review by examining and assessing:
 - a. information held by IPEA in the Parliamentary Expenses Management System
 - b. information provided by Mr Ramsey
 - c. the relevant legislation and supporting policies and guidelines
22. In September 2023, IPEA identified that a staff member in Mr Ramsey's office used car transport between 13 June and 14 September 2023 for the purpose of travel to and from Parliament House.
23. An employee's eligibility to use car transport is set out in the Determination which provides that staff members may only use car transport (Cabcharge, taxis, regulated ridesharing services, or short-term self-drive hire cars) when directed to do so by the parliamentarian or an authorised person for official business. It remains an employee's responsibility to transport him or herself to and from work for his or her normal hours of duty.
24. On 10 October 2023, IPEA wrote to Mr Ramsey in relation to staff use of car transport in Canberra (**Attachment A**). Mr Ramsey was asked to examine each transaction identified by IPEA and confirm how the trip complies with items 2 and 16 of the Determination, including that the travel was directed by Mr Ramsey or an authorised person in his office.
25. Mr Ramsey responded on 20 October 2023 (**Attachment B**) advising:

Thank you for your advice regarding staff travel whilst in Parliament. I have informed my staff of the ruling.
26. As Mr Ramsey's response did not answer the questions raised in IPEA's letter of 10 October 2023, on 25 October 2023, IPEA wrote to Mr Ramsey seeking additional information to assist in the assessment of the travel (**Attachment C**). Mr Ramsey was asked to review each transaction and confirm how each trip complies with items 2 and 16 of the Determination, including that the travel was directed by him or an authorised person in his office.

27. Mr Ramsey responded on 1 November 2023 (**Attachment D**), advising:

Thanks for your follow up. The use of the car for morning transport was approved on the basis of that the 7.30am start in my Canberra office required on sitting weeks falls well outside my staff's normal required attendance times in my electorate offices.

I was not aware of the recent declarations on "normal hours" and accept that if error has occurred the fault was mine.

Since you raised this with me a few weeks ago I have circulated the latest rulings to all of my staff and only travel meeting those requirements will be approved in the future.

Please advise if remedial action is required.

28. On 7 November 2023, IPEA raised an invoice for \$309.39 to recover expenses which were identified as being inconsistent with the legislative framework (**Attachment E**).
29. On 8 November 2023, IPEA wrote to Mr Ramsey advising that, having regard to the information available, IPEA had concluded the use of car transport by his staff member to travel to and from Parliament House does not meet the requirements in items 2 and 16 of Schedule A of the Determination. Mr Ramsey was advised that an invoice had been raised to recover the expenses which were not consistent with the legislative framework (**Attachment F**).

Conclusion

30. Having considered the available information, including the responses provided by Mr Ramsey, IPEA concluded the staff member was directed to use car transport in Canberra to travel to and from Parliament House during the period 13 June to 14 September 2023. IPEA found the use of car transport did not meet the requirements in items 2 and 16 of the Determination and raised an invoice to recover the full amount of these expenses. This invoice has been paid in full.

[REDACTED]

From: Assurance
Sent: Tuesday, 10 October 2023 11:23 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Assurance Review of staff use of car transport [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: 3000 - IPEA letter to Mr Ramsey - October 2023.PDF; Attachment A Determination 2023-10 Staff Travel and Relief Staff Arrangements.pdf

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Mr Rowan Ramsey MP
Member for Grey

Good morning Mr Ramsey

Please find attached correspondence from the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority in relation to an Assurance Review of staff use of car transport.

Should you wish to discuss this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
A/g Assistant Secretary
Transparency, Assurance and Legal Branch
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
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Classification: OFFICIAL
Classified by: assurance@ipea.gov.au on: 10/10/2023 11:22:41 AM

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Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

REF: IPEA23/1/17 IDOC/235548

10 October 2023

Mr Rowan Ramsey MP
Member for Grey
PO Box 296
PORT PIRIE SA 5540

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Ramey

Assurance Review of staff use of car transport

The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) has responsibility under the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* to review work resources accessed by parliamentarians and travel resources access by staff employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (MOP(S) Act).

IPEA is conducting an Assurance Review of MOP(S) Act staff member, [REDACTED] use of car transport (taxis, regulated ride-sharing services and Cabcharge) for travel in Canberra to and from Parliament House.

The circumstances in which car transport may be used MOP(S) Act staff are set out in Determination 2023/10 – Staff Travel and Relief Staff Arrangements. Item 2 and 16 of the Determination provide:

2. Subject to item 16, it is an employee's responsibility (and hence the employee's cost) to transport him or herself to and from work for his or her normal hours of duty. This responsibility includes travel between accommodation and the office when travelling on parliamentary or electorate business away from the employee's work base. This also includes travel to attend work when the employee's work base is distant from the employee's home.
16. As set out in item 2 of this Schedule, it is an employee's responsibility (and hence the employee's cost) to transport him or herself to and from work for his or her normal hours of duty. Exceptions to this rule apply to the use of car transport in the following circumstances:
 - (a) the trip is approved for personal safety reasons (for example, where the risk to personal safety is significantly increased due to the requirement to work late); or
 - (b) the employee is travelling on official business and scheduled public transport services are not readily available; or
 - (c) the employee is travelling on official business and is carrying luggage to and/or from the office for the purpose of the trip.

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An employee's normal hours are broadly defined as hours agreed to by the employee and parliamentarian worked between the ordinary hours of 8:00 am and 6:00 pm Monday to Friday. Hours worked by employees may be partially or wholly worked outside of these hours. In accordance with clause 33.1 and 32.4 of the MOPS Enterprise Agreement, allowances are payable to employees in recognition of, and compensation for, additional hours worked and in lieu of overtime. On this basis, a staff member arriving at Parliament House around 6:00 am or 7:00 am is considered normal, in particular during parliamentary sitting periods.

Employees may only use car transport when directed to do so by their employing parliamentarian or an authorised person for the purposes of the official business of the parliamentarian. Employees must not use car transport for private use. Private use includes travel to and from the place of work for normal hours of duty, including a temporary place of work such as Parliament House for electorate-based employees. Parliamentarians and authorised persons may direct an employee to use car transport to travel to or from work only in the limited circumstances set out in paragraphs 16(a), (b) and (c) of the Determination. A copy of the Determination is at **Attachment A** for your reference.

Members are personally responsible and accountable for their use of public resources for conducting parliamentary business. This responsibility extends to the use of public resources by staff employed by members.

The Commonwealth funded car transport used by [REDACTED] which is relevant to this Assurance Review is detailed at **Attachment B**. To assist with the Assurance Review, please examine each trip and confirm how it complies with items 2 and 16 of the Determination, including that the travel was directed by you or an authorised person.

Please provide your response via email to assurance@ipea.gov.au by close of business on **Tuesday 24 October 2023**. If you require additional time to provide a response or if you would like to discuss this matter, please contact [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Acting Branch Manager, Transparency, Assurance and Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
T: 02 6215 3000

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Attachment B
Car transport transactions – [REDACTED]

Departure Day	Date	Departure Time	Departure Location	Arrival Time	Arrival Location	Amount	Comments
Monday	11/09/2023	07:12 AM	Curtin	07:19 AM	Capital Hill	\$35.18	
Monday	11/09/2023		City	08:14 PM	Hughes	\$31.50	
Tuesday	12/09/2023	07:10 AM	Curtin	07:19 AM	Capital Hill	\$35.18	
Tuesday	12/09/2023		Train/Bus	08:17 PM	Hughes	\$31.50	
Wednesday	13/09/2023	07:15 AM	Curtin	07:22 AM	Capital Hill	\$35.18	
Thursday	14/09/2023	07:15 AM	Curtin	07:24 AM	Capital Hill	\$35.18	

Departure Day	Date	Departure Time	Departure Location	Arrival Time	Arrival Location	Amount	Comments
Tuesday	13/06/2023	07:01 AM	Curtin	07:13 AM	Canberra	\$35.23	
Wednesday	14/06/2023	07:03 AM	Curtin	07:11 AM	Canberra	\$35.21	
Thursday	15/06/2023	06:34 AM	Curtin	06:47 AM	Capital Hill	\$35.23	

Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984

STAFF TRAVEL AND RELIEF STAFF ARRANGEMENTS

I, DON FARRELL, Special Minister of State, for and on behalf of the Prime Minister, determine under subsection 13(2) and subsection 20(2) of the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (the MOP(S) Act) that, with effect on and from 1 July 2023:

- Determination 2020/15 made on 29 June 2020 is revoked with effect from 30 June 2023;
- the travel arrangements set out in Schedule A of this determination apply to the staff of Senators and Members employed under Part III and Part IV of the Act;
- the relief staff arrangements set out in Schedule B of this determination apply; and
- the Electorate Support Budget is calculated as set out in Schedule C of this determination.

Dated this 24 ^{June} day of ~~May~~ 2023


DON FARRELL
Special Minister of State

SCHEDULE A

Domestic Travel

1. Employees may only travel by the most efficient direct route available.
2. Subject to item 16, it is an employee's responsibility (and hence the employee's cost) to transport him or herself to and from work for his or her normal hours of duty. This responsibility includes travel between accommodation and the office when travelling on parliamentary or electorate business away from the employee's work base. This also includes travel to attend work when the employee's work base is distant from the employee's home.
3. All personal employees may travel as directed anywhere within Australia on official business.
4. Subject to available funds in the Electorate Support Budget (where applicable), electorate employees may travel as directed anywhere within Australia on official business. All travel costs under this determination and associated travelling allowance and motor vehicle allowance under the *Commonwealth Members of Parliament Staff Enterprise Agreement 2020-2023* or successor agreements (Enterprise Agreement) are debited against the Electorate Support Budget (where applicable).
5. One nominated electorate employee working for a parliamentarian may travel as directed anywhere within Australia on official business without debit against the Electorate Support Budget.
 - (a) The nomination of an electorate employee is to be determined, where practical, at the commencement of the financial year with effect from 1 July .
 - (b) The expectation is that the nomination would not change more than three times within a financial year period. These three changes accommodate for any unforeseen circumstances or staffing arrangement changes that arise throughout the financial year.
 - (c) The name of the nominated employee must be notified to the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) in writing¹ where possible, at the commencement of the financial year. All travel under this Schedule by the nominated employee that was undertaken prior to the date that the nomination took effect will be debited against the Electorate Support Budget.
 - (d) The general travel conditions set out in this Schedule continue to apply, where appropriate, to the nominated employee.
 - (e) All travel undertaken by electorate employees of the Senator or Member, other than the nominated employee, will be debited against the Electorate Support Budget, subject to item 6.
6. A Presiding Officer, including a Deputy Presiding Officer, Parliamentary Secretary², Whip or a Shadow Minister, other than an Opposition Office Holder, may nominate a personal employee whose travel will be debited against the Electorate Support Budget, in place of a nominated electorate employee, whose travel will not be debited against the Electorate Support Budget.

¹ Using the *Electorate Employee Travel Nomination* form on the IPEA website.

².

- (a) The nomination for a swap of the travel entitlements of a personal employee with an electorate employee is to be determined, where practical, at the commencement of the financial year with effect from 1 July
 - (b) The nomination of a personal and electorate employee would not change more than three times within a financial year period. These three changes accommodate for any unforeseen circumstances or staffing arrangement changes that arise throughout the financial year.
 - (c) The names of the nominated personal and electorate employees must be notified to IPEA in writing³. All travel by the nominated electorate employee that was undertaken prior to the date that the nomination took effect will be debited against the Electorate Support Budget.
7. Official travel is restricted to Australia (excluding the external territories) unless the employing Senator or Member has a specific work expense for travel to an Australian external territory.
 8. Travel may not be undertaken at Commonwealth expense for the personal benefit of an employee.
 9. With the approval of the employing Senator or Member, an employee is permitted to make a stopover for personal reasons in the course of travel on official business by the most efficient direct route available, provided:
 - (a) the stopover is for a maximum of two nights only;
 - (b) no annual leave is taken by an employee as part of the stopover; and
 - (c) any additional costs for fares or costs related to the stopover are paid by the employee at the time of booking the travel.
 10. Travel allowance is not payable during a personal stopover. A personal stopover is defined as personal time spent at a destination where an employee has been directed to travel on official business⁴ or a break in travel at a usual point en route to the final travel destination⁵.
 11. An employee may only use charter services when accompanying their employing Senator or Member under the Senator's or Member's charter work expense or where scheduled transport services (including air, rail, sea and bus) are not available.
 - (a) If the charter service also carries other passengers, the Commonwealth will only pay the pro rata cost of the travel of the employee.
 - (b) Charter services may not be used for the sole reason that scheduled services are fully booked, or are not available at the most convenient time.
 - (c) Some regions of Australia have infrequent scheduled services and/or no scheduled air services. Employees travelling to these locations should plan their travel with regard to these constraints.

³ Using the *Electorate Employee Travel Nomination* form on the IPEA website.

⁴ For example, a Canberra-based employee travels to Brisbane on official business on Friday. The employee stays in Brisbane on Saturday and Sunday nights and returns on Monday. In this case, the Saturday and Sunday are counted as a personal stopover and return airfare will be covered by the Electorate Support Budget. However, if the employee returns on Tuesday or later, it is at their own expense.

⁵ For example, travel from Hobart to Canberra may have a usual stop in Melbourne en route.

12. Employees are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure, where applicable, that departure and destination travel arrangements are compatible with scheduled transport services.

Class of Travel

13. Senior staff (employees above the level of Adviser) who are required by the employing Senator or Member to travel on official business by air, rail, road or sea are limited to a fare which shall not exceed the cost of a business class airfare for the most reasonable and usual route between the departure and destination points. Where a business class airfare is not published for the destination point, the cost to the Commonwealth of travel by air, rail, road or sea must not exceed the economy class airfare for the most reasonable and usual route, between the departure and destination points.
14. Employees, other than senior staff, who are required by the employing Senator or Member to travel on official business by air, rail, road or sea shall travel at economy class for the most reasonable and usual route between the departure and destination points, unless otherwise determined by the Special Minister of State.
15. A Minister, Parliamentary Secretary, Opposition Office Holder or Presiding Officer (but not a Deputy Presiding Officer) may direct a member of his or her staff who is on the same aircraft to travel at the same class as him or her, where there is a working need to do so. It is expected that no more than one employee will do so on any particular trip.

Car Transport

16. As set out in item 2 of this Schedule, it is an employee's responsibility (and hence the employee's cost) to transport him or herself to and from work for his or her normal hours of duty. Exceptions to this rule apply to the use of car transport in the following circumstances:
 - (a) the trip is approved for personal safety reasons (for example, where the risk to personal safety is significantly increased due to the requirement to work late); or
 - (b) the employee is travelling on official business and scheduled public transport services are not readily available; or
 - (c) the employee is travelling on official business and is carrying luggage to and/or from the office for the purpose of the trip.
17. Employees, when travelling as directed on official business, or under the exceptions at item 16, subject to the restrictions at items 1 to 9, may use⁶:
 - (a) taxis;
 - (b) regulated ridesharing services;
 - (c) hire cars; and
 - (d) short-term self-drive cars hired through the travel services provider, or with any car hire company, provided that:

⁶ Motor vehicle allowance (MVA) may also be payable under Enterprise Agreement where an employee travels under the provisions of this determination in their privately owned vehicle or self-drive hire vehicle, at their own expense.

- (i) the hire is of no more than 10 days duration;
 - (ii) the vehicle is not used for journeys within Canberra (other than to collect and/or return the vehicle);
 - (iii) the vehicle is not used for journeys within a city/town where the employer's electorate or other office is located (other than to collect and/or return the vehicle), except by employees of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, or the leader of a minority party;
 - (iv) for the purposes of short-term self-drive car hire under this determination, a capital city, other than Canberra, is defined by the boundaries of the electorates identified as urban on the Federal Electoral Boundaries map published from time to time by the Australian Electoral Commission. Canberra includes locations within a 30km radius of Parliament House; and
 - (v) the cost of insurance will be met by the Commonwealth where it is purchased as part of the vehicle hire. It is the responsibility of employees to ensure that they arrange the appropriate level of insurance for the circumstances of the hire. To reduce liability to the Commonwealth in case of loss or damage to the vehicle, this will usually be the highest level of insurance cover available.
18. Self drive- hire cars should be used on weekdays only unless exceptional circumstances apply and the Senator or Member has approved the use. Employees may not use taxis, regulated ridesharing services, hire cars or shortterm self- drive-hire cars at Commonwealth expense for private use, other than as set out at item 16.

Tolls and Parking Costs

- 19. Employees authorised by the employing Senator or Member to travel on official business may be reimbursed their toll and parking costs. Such costs must be reasonable to be eligible for full reimbursement⁷.
- 20. Toll and parking costs will not be reimbursed where incurred during a personal stopover or a period of leave. Administrative charges or penalties for late payment or non-payment of tolls and parking costs will not be reimbursed.
- 21. Employees will not be reimbursed for valet parking costs, with the exception of valet parking costs incurred at the accommodation occupied by the employee for travel on official business involving an overnight stay away from their work base.

Travel for Training

- 22. Senators and Members whose electorate offices are outside the greater metropolitan area of capital cities (including satellite cities), as defined by the Australian Electoral Commission, or within the Northern Territory or Tasmania, have access to four trips per financial year (five trips per financial year where the Member has a second official electorate office or six trips per financial year where the Member has a third official electorate office) for their electorate employees to travel to the nearest capital city to attend training under the Professional Development Program or approved ad hoc training and professional development opportunities, IT training or

⁷ For example, it is generally expected that long-stay parking will be used at an airport.

training for Work Health and Safety roles (including travel for Health and Safety Representatives (HSR) to attend accredited HSR training).

- (a) For electorate offices located in the Northern Territory, employees may also use the trips to travel to Adelaide or Brisbane.
- (b) For electorate offices located in Tasmania, employees may also use the trips to travel to Melbourne.

23. The Senators and Members whose employees are eligible for the trips in item 22 will be listed on the Ministerial and Parliamentary Services (M&PS) website.

Travel for ECG Representatives and WHS Committee Members

24. Associated travel costs⁸ of employees who are Employee Consultative Group⁹ (ECG) representatives and Work Health and Safety (WHS) Committee¹⁰ members, and whose travel is subject to the Electorate Support Budget, will not be debited against the Electorate Support Budget when the employee travels for the purpose of attending an ECG meeting or WHS Committee meeting, provided that the travel to the meeting location is not also for other official business.
25. Where the travel is also for other official business, only the *additional* travel costs associated with the ECG meeting or WHS Committee meeting will not be debited against the Electorate Support Budget.

COMCAR Services for Employees of the Prime Minister

26. All employees of the Prime Minister may use a COMCAR to travel to or from Defence Establishment Fairbairn when embarking or returning from travel with or on behalf of the Prime Minister.
27. With prior notification to the COMCAR Client Liaison Manager, the Prime Minister's employees may also travel in a COMCAR, when the car would otherwise be travelling without passengers, in the following circumstances:
- (a) if a COMCAR is travelling out of zone to meet the Prime Minister¹¹, and employees need to travel along the same route to meet the Prime Minister; or
 - (b) if a COMCAR is travelling as part of the Prime Minister's advance party and employees need to travel along the same route.
28. In using COMCAR for these purposes, the COMCAR booking will be based solely on the Prime Minister's requirements. Employees must make their own way to and from any pick up/drop off point that COMCAR advise, which will be on the direct intended route. The COMCAR schedule cannot be altered to incur waiting time on behalf of an employee.

⁸ 'Associated travel costs' are costs under this determination (or its successor determinations), including domestic flights and car travel, and as provided under the Enterprise Agreement, including travelling allowance and motor vehicle allowance.

⁹ As described at clause 5 of the Enterprise Agreement.

¹⁰ A Health and Safety Committee for MOP(S) Act employees for the purposes of Division 4 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

¹¹ For example, from Canberra to Merimbula.

SCHEDULE B

Relief Staff Arrangements

29. Each Senator and Member may engage relief staff as electorate employees with a work base of the electorate office, Parliament House office, or office holder's office as described at item 30, in accordance with the Enterprise Agreement, up to the limit of his or her Electorate Support Budget. The Special Minister of State may approve an alternative work base for a person employed against the Electorate Support Budget in special circumstances.
30. For the purpose of item 29, an office holder's office is an office, other than the electorate office/s and Parliament House office, provided at Commonwealth expense to the employing Senator or Member within the state or territory of their electorate and who is:
- (a) a Minister;
 - (b) an Opposition Office Holder;
 - (c) a Leader of a Minority Party; or
 - (d) a Presiding Officer.
31. The employment of electorate staff against an established position will not be debited against the Electorate Support Budget under the following circumstances:
- (a) filling of positions that are vacant due to resignation, retirement or termination;
 - (b) filling of positions that are temporarily vacant due to an employee being temporarily progressed to a personal employee position;
 - (c) absences of one week¹² or more on personal leave¹³;
 - (d) all absences on the following types of leave:
 - (i) unpaid carer's leave;
 - (ii) compassionate leave;
 - (iii) community service leave;
 - (iv) miscellaneous or other leave paid in accordance with the Enterprise Agreement (including Defence Force service, participation in major international sporting events, war service sick leave, political exchange leave, and other special purposes, but not including study leave);
 - (v) long service leave;
 - (vi) maternity leave¹⁴;
 - (vii) adoption leave;

¹² The term 'one week' means an absence of 38 hours regardless of whether the employee is full-time or part-time.

¹³ Where an employee who is absent due to personal illness or injury or carers duties has exhausted their paid personal leave and therefore uses annual or long service leave, they may be replaced without debit against the Electorate Support Budget.

¹⁴ Where other forms of paid leave are used within the 52 week maternity leave period, the Electorate Support Budget provisions that apply to maternity leave take precedence over the Electorate Support Budget provisions that apply to the type of leave used.

- (viii) supporting partner leave;
 - (ix) unpaid parental leave; and
 - (x) leave without pay.
32. Where an electorate employee is partially incapacitated (i.e. working fewer than their usual weekly hours on the basis of medical advice), working up to but not exceeding 20 hours per week, that employee will be treated as totally incapacitated and full-time relief arrangements will apply (to the maximum of the usual weekly hours of the employee) for a maximum period of six months without debit against the Electorate Support Budget. After six months, or when the affected employee's work hours exceed 20 hours per week (but are less than their usual weekly hours), relief staff may be engaged part-time in order to fully staff the position without debit against the Electorate Support Budget.
33. Senators and Members who hold a 'relevant office', as defined under section 3 of the Act, engage relief staff as electorate employees against the Electorate Support Budget under Part III of the Act. Senators and Members who do not hold a 'relevant office' engage relief staff as electorate employees against the Electorate Support Budget under Part IV of the Act.

SCHEDULE C

Calculation of the Electorate Support Budget

34. Subject to items 35 to 38, the Electorate Support Budget is calculated at the commencement of each financial year as the sum of:
 - (a) the electorate staff travel component; and
 - (b) the relief staff component.
35. The Electorate Support Budget is calculated pro rata, on the basis of the number of calendar days remaining, for the financial year in which a Senator or Member commences his or her term.
36. The relief staff component will be adjusted in line with changes to the base salary point of the Electorate Officer B classification.
37. The relief staff component will be adjusted pro rata where a Member is allocated, or ceases to be allocated, an additional position for a second and/or third official electorate office.
38. The Special Minister of State may approve changes to the Electorate Support Budget for any Senator or Member.
39. If the Electorate Support Budget for a year is exhausted, a Senator or Member may not draw from the Electorate Support Budget for the following year. All costs beyond the Electorate Support Budget are a debt owed to the Commonwealth and must be repaid by the Senator or Member. Unused funds may not be carried over to the following year.

Electorate staff travel component

40. Except as provided at items 41, 42 and 43, the electorate staff travel component is calculated on the basis of:
 - (a) 20 return economy airfares (fully flexible) between the primary electorate office and Canberra;
 - (b) 110 nights of travelling allowance at the rate applicable to Canberra;
 - (c) taxi fares and/or motor vehicle allowance to and from the relevant airports for the 20 flights above; and
 - (d) an amount for other travel as follows:

Senator/Member	Electorate Size	\$
Member	0-199 km ²	\$300
Member	200-999 km ²	\$500
Member	1,000-9,999 km ²	\$700
Member	10,000-99,999 km ²	\$1,000
Member	100,000-199,999 km ²	\$8,132
Member	200,000-499,999 km ²	\$10,132
Member	500,000 km ² or greater	\$12,132
Senators for the NT	–	\$9,000
All other Senators	–	\$500

41. Where a Senator or Member's primary electorate office is located within 150km of Canberra by road, the electorate staff travel component is calculated at the commencement of each financial year on the basis of:
- the value of motor vehicle allowance payable for 20 return motor vehicle trips between the primary electorate office and Canberra;
 - 110 nights of travelling allowance at the rate applicable to Canberra; and
 - an amount for other travel as set out at item 40(d).
42. The electorate staff travel component for each financial year for the Member for Bean and Senators for the ACT is calculated on the basis of:
- three return economy airfares (fully flexible) between Canberra and Norfolk Island;
 - eight nights of travelling allowance at the commercial rate applicable to Norfolk Island; and
 - an amount of \$2,000 for other travel.
43. The electorate staff travel component for each financial year for the following Senators and Members is calculated as follows:

Senator/Member	\$
Member for Canberra	\$2,000
Member for Fenner	\$2,000
Member for Eden-Monaro	\$5,000
Senator whose electorate office is in Queanbeyan	\$5,000

Relief staff component

44. The relief staff component is calculated on the basis of:
- 150 days' salary at the base salary point of the Electorate Officer B classification; and
 - an additional 50 days' salary at the base salary point of the Electorate Officer B classification where a Member is allocated an additional position for a second official electorate office; and
 - an additional 50 days' salary at the base salary point of the Electorate Officer B classification where a Member is allocated an additional position for a third official electorate office.

Terms and Definitions

45. In this determination, terms have the meaning set out in the Enterprise Agreement. In addition, the terms below have the following meanings:

Opposition Office Holder means:

- the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives; or
- the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate.

Leader or Deputy Leader of a Minority Party means the Leader or Deputy Leader of a recognised non-Government party of at least five members, but does not include an Opposition Office Holder.

Professional Development Program means a scheduled program of training courses for MOP(S) Act employees, administered by the Department of Finance.

Regulated ridesharing services means a ridesharing service operating under regulation in the State or Territory in which the travel occurs.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Assurance](#)
Subject: RE: Assurance Review of staff use of car transport [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Friday, 20 October 2023 4:58:52 PM
Attachments: [image001.gif](#)

Thank you for your advice regarding staff travel whilst in Parliament. I have informed my staff of the ruling.

Rowan Ramsey

From: Assurance <Assurance@ipea.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 10:53 AM
To: Ramsey, Rowan (MP) [REDACTED]
Subject: Assurance Review of staff use of car transport [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Mr Rowan Ramsey MP

Member for Grey

Good morning Mr Ramsey

Please find attached correspondence from the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority in relation to an Assurance Review of staff use of car transport.

Should you wish to discuss this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

A/g Assistant Secretary

Transparency, Assurance and Legal Branch

Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority

One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603

T: +61 2 6215 3000

Assurance@ipea.gov.au

W: www.ipea.gov.au

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Classified by: assurance@ipea.gov.au on: 10/10/2023 11:22:41 AM

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[REDACTED]

From: Assurance
Sent: Wednesday, 25 October 2023 2:07 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Assurance Review - staff use of car transport - [REDACTED] [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: IPEA letter to Mr Rowan Ramsey - 25 October 2023.pdf

OFFICIAL

Mr Rowan Ramsey
Member for Grey

Good afternoon Mr Ramsey

Please see attached correspondence from the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority in relation to an Assurance Review into the use of car transport by [REDACTED].

Should you wish to discuss this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

A/g Assistant Secretary
Transparency, Assurance and Legal Branch
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
T: +61 2 6215 3000
Assurance@ipea.gov.au
W: www.ipea.gov.au & www.ipea.gov.au/ed

Classification: OFFICIAL
Classified by: assurance@ipea.gov.au on: 25/10/2023 2:06:42 PM

OFFICIAL



Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

REF: IPEA23/1/17 IDOC/239107

25 October 2023

Mr Rowan Ramsey MP
Member for Grey
PO Box 296
PORT PIRIE SA 5540

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Ramsey

Assurance Review of staff use of car transport

Thank you for your email of 20 October 2023 responding to the Assurance Review being conducted by the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority in relation to [REDACTED] use of car transport for travel in Canberra. Unfortunately, your response does not answer the questions raised in the second last paragraph of IPEA's letter to you of 10 October 2023.

As indicated in IPEA's letter, IPEA is concerned the use of taxis and regulated ride-sharing services by [REDACTED] may be inconsistent with the legislation. These concerns relate to travel to and from accommodation to [REDACTED] place of work at Parliament House. IPEA requires additional information to assist in the assessment of this travel.

An employee's eligibility to use car transport is set out in Determination 2023/010. In accordance with the Determination, [REDACTED] may only use taxis, Cabcharge, regulated ride-sharing services or self-drive hire cars when directed to do so by you, or a person authorised by you, for official business. The Determination provides that it is an employee's responsibility to transport him or herself to and from work for his or her normal hours of duty. This responsibility includes travel between accommodation and the office when travelling on business away from the normal work base.

Neither you, nor an authorised person, are able to direct [REDACTED] to use taxis, Cabcharge, regulated ride-sharing services or self-drive hire cars for transport to and from work other than in one of the exceptions set out at item 16 of the Determination. In circumstances where the use of car transport was not directed by a parliamentarian or authorised person and was not in accordance with the Determination, IPEA is obliged to recover the full amount of these expenses.

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Please review the attached Commonwealth-funded travel used by [REDACTED] and confirm how each trip complies with items 2 and 16 of the Determination, including that the travel was directed by you or an authorised person. Please provide your response via email to Assurance@ipea.gov.au by close of business on **Wednesday 8 November 2023**.

If you require additional time to provide a response or if you would like to discuss this matter, please contact [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Acting Branch Manager, Transparency, Assurance and Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
T: 02 6215 3000

OFFICIAL
Attachment A
Car transport transactions – [REDACTED]

CLAIM 8246538

Departure Day	Date	Departure Time	Departure Location	Arrival Time	Arrival Location	Amount	Comments
Monday	11/09/2023	07:12 AM	Curtin	07:19 AM	Capital Hill	\$35.18	
Monday	11/09/2023		City	08:14 PM	Hughes	\$31.50	
Tuesday	12/09/2023	07:10 AM	Curtin	07:19 AM	Capital Hill	\$35.18	
Tuesday	12/09/2023		Train/Bus	08:17 PM	Hughes	\$31.50	
Wednesday	13/09/2023	07:15 AM	Curtin	07:22 AM	Capital Hill	\$35.18	
Thursday	14/09/2023	07:15 AM	Curtin	07:24 AM	Capital Hill	\$35.18	

CLAIM 8186989

Departure Day	Date	Departure Time	Departure Location	Arrival Time	Arrival Location	Amount	Comments
Tuesday	13/06/2023	07:01 AM	Curtin	07:13 AM	Canberra	\$35.23	
Wednesday	14/06/2023	07:03 AM	Curtin	07:11 AM	Canberra	\$35.21	
Thursday	15/06/2023	06:34 AM	Curtin	06:47 AM	Capital Hill	\$35.23	

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Assurance](#)
Subject: RE: Assurance Review - staff use of car transport - Ms Fiona Duffield [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Wednesday, 1 November 2023 12:46:14 PM
Attachments: [image001.gif](#)

Dear [REDACTED]

Thanks for your follow up. The use of the car for morning transport was approved on the basis of that the 7.30am start in my Canberra office required on sitting weeks falls well outside my staff's normal required attendance times in my electorate offices.

I was not aware of the recent declarations on "normal hours" and accept that if error has occurred the fault was mine.

Since you raised this with me a few weeks ago I have circulated the latest rulings to all of my staff and only travel meeting those requirements will be approved in the future.

Please advise if remedial action is required.

ROWAN RAMSEY

Member for Grey

From: Assurance <Assurance@ipea.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, October 25, 2023 1:37 PM
To: Ramsey, Rowan (MP) [REDACTED]
Subject: Assurance Review - staff use of car transport - [REDACTED] [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Mr Rowan Ramsey

Member for Grey

Good afternoon Mr Ramsey

Please see attached correspondence from the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority in relation to an Assurance Review into the use of car transport by Ms Fiona Duffield.

Should you wish to discuss this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

A/g Assistant Secretary
Transparency, Assurance and Legal Branch
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603

T: +61 2 6215 3000

Assurance@ipea.gov.au

W: www.ipea.gov.au & www.ipea.gov.au/ed

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[REDACTED]

From: Assurance
Sent: Tuesday, 7 November 2023 12:01 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Assurance Review - staff use of car transport in Canberra [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: PEMS_claim_xx0020130727.pdf; 12_display_and_manage_debt.pdf

OFFICIAL

Good morning [REDACTED]

The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority conducted an Assurance Review into your use of car transport in Canberra to travel to and from Parliament House during the period 13 June to 14 September 2023.

As part of the review, IPEA sought advice from Mr Ramsey in relation to your travel. Mr Ramsey has advised that he directed you to use car transport in Canberra, however IPEA has concluded the travel was not consistent with the requirements in items 2 and 16 of Determination 2023/10 – Staff Travel and Relief Staff Arrangements which provides that it is your responsibility and therefore your cost to transport yourself to and from work, including when on parliamentary or electorate business away from your work base. In circumstances where the use of parliamentary business resources is inconsistent with the legislative framework, IPEA is obliged to recover the expenses.

Please find attached an invoice to recover these expenses which creates a debt to the Commonwealth. Further details on this debt can be found in the PEMS debt tile, where you can also manage your debt repayment options. Please refer to the attached PEMS guidance on displaying and managing debts. In relation to repayment options, you may opt to:

- deduct the debt from your future travel claims
- pay your invoice directly using the details on the bottom of the invoice
- have the debt deducted from your salary

Alternatively, please email enquiries@ipea.gov.au with your preferred method of debt recovery and IPEA will update in PEMS. Should a recovery method not be selected within 30 days of this email, IPEA will automatically select to deduct from your future travel claims.

Should you wish to discuss this matter, please contact [REDACTED]

Sincerely

[REDACTED]
A/g Assistant Secretary
Transparency, Assurance and Legal Branch
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
T: +61 2 6215 3000
Assurance@ipea.gov.au
W: www.ipea.gov.au & www.ipea.gov.au/ed

Classification: OFFICIAL
Classified by: assurance@ipea.gov.au on: 7/11/2023 12:01:09 PM



TAX INVOICE

Invoice To:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Invoice Date: 06.11.2023
Phone number: (02) 6215 3000
Invoice Reference: 20130727
Payment Reference: 3100002615
Customer No: 86923729
Payment Due Date: 06.11.2023
Email: finance@ipea.gov.au

On any correspondence,
please quote the Invoice Reference.

Please pay within 30 days of the invoice date

Item Description	Net Amount	GST Amount	Total Amount
001 *Recovery of Regulated Rideshare 12 Sep 23	\$31.98	\$3.20	\$35.18
002 *Recovery of Regulated Rideshare 13 Jun 23	\$32.02	\$3.20	\$35.22
003 *Recovery of Taxi 11 Sep 23	\$28.64	\$2.86	\$31.50
004 *Recovery of Regulated Rideshare 15 Jun 23	\$32.03	\$3.20	\$35.23
005 *Recovery of Regulated Rideshare 11 Sep 23	\$31.98	\$3.20	\$35.18
006 *Recovery of Taxi 12 Sep 23	\$28.64	\$2.86	\$31.50
007 *Recovery of Regulated Rideshare 14 Jun 23	\$32.01	\$3.20	\$35.21
008 *Recovery of Regulated Rideshare 14 Sep 23	\$31.98	\$3.20	\$35.18
009 *Recovery of Regulated Rideshare 13 Sep 23	\$31.98	\$3.21	\$35.19

Total: **\$281.26** **\$28.13** **\$309.39**



1. Payment by Direct Debit

IPEA Administered Receipts A/C

BSB: [REDACTED] Account No: [REDACTED] Payment Ref: 3100002615

2. Mailing your payment

All cheques and money orders should be made payable to the IPEA.

Mail payment together with this stub to:

IPEA
1 Canberra Avenue FORREST, ACT, 2603

3. Payment by Credit Card

Complete the following and return by email to finance@ipea.gov.au or contact the IPEA Help Desk on (02) 6215 3000 with your credit card details.

Card Type: Mastercard Visa

Card Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____ CCV _____

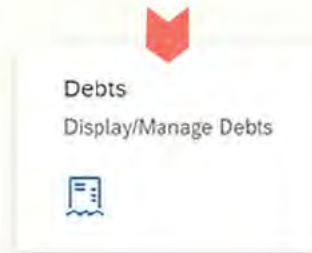
Name of Card Holder: _____ Signature: _____

Payment Amount: _____ Date: _____ Payment Ref: 3100002615

Display and Manage Debts

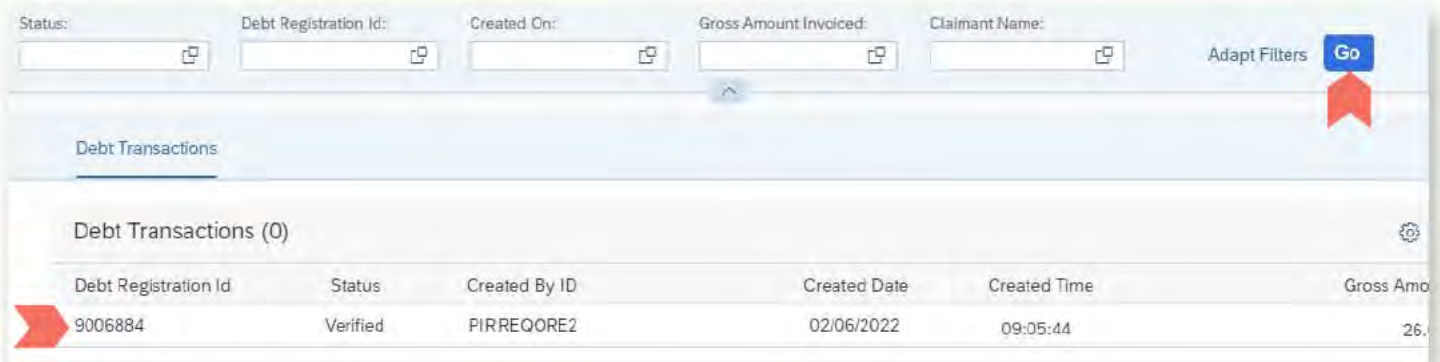
1 Open the Debt Transactions Dashboard

- Select the Debts tile
- Transaction Dashboard opens



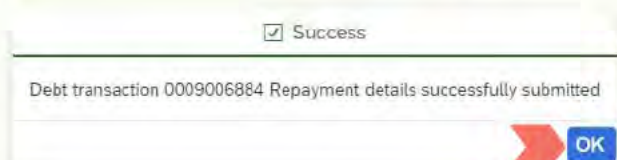
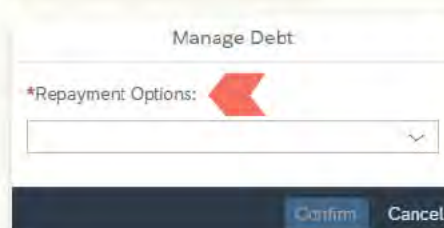
2 Find the Debt invoice

- Use filters, or
- Select the debt transaction



3 View or Manage the debt

- Select View Invoice PDF button, or
- Select the Manage Debt button
- Choose repayment option
- Select Proceed



[REDACTED]

From: Assurance
Sent: Wednesday, 8 November 2023 3:46 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Assurance Review - staff use of car transport in Canberra [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: 3010 - Final letter to Mr Ramsey - 8 November 2023.pdf

OFFICIAL

Mr Rowan Ramsey MP
Member for Grey

Good afternoon Mr Ramsey

Please find attached correspondence from the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority in relation to the Assurance Review into staff use of car transport in Canberra.

Should you wish to discuss this matter, please contact [REDACTED]

Sincerely

[REDACTED]
A/g Assistant Secretary
Transparency, Assurance and Legal Branch
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
T: +61 2 6215 3000
Assurance@ipea.gov.au
W: www.ipea.gov.au & www.ipea.gov.au/ed

Classification: OFFICIAL
Classified by: assurance@ipea.gov.au on: 8/11/2023 3:46:20 PM

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Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

REF: IPEA23/1/17 IDOC/240054

8 November 2023

Mr Rowan Ramsey MP
Member for Grey
PO Box 296
PORT PIRIE SA 5540

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Ramsey

Assurance Review of staff travel and travel-related expenses

Thank you for your email of 1 November 2023 responding to the Assurance Review being conducted by the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) in relation to [REDACTED] use of car transport for travel in Canberra.

Having regard to the legislative framework and the information provided by you, IPEA has concluded the use of car transport by [REDACTED] to travel to and from Parliament House does not meet the requirements in items 2 and 16 of Schedule A of Determination 2023/10.

In circumstances where the use of car transport was not in accordance with the legislative framework, IPEA is obliged to recover the full amount of these expenses. An invoice has been raised and sent to [REDACTED], along with payment options.

This concludes the Assurance Review into [REDACTED] use of car transport in Canberra. Please note that IPEA publishes completed Assurance Reviews on the website at www.ipea.gov.au.

If you would like to discuss this matter, please contact [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Acting Branch Manager, Transparency, Assurance and Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
T: 02 6215 3000

OFFICIAL