



Australian Government
**Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority**

Assurance Review 2023/010

Office of the Hon Bob Katter MP, staff use of short-term
self-drive hire car

13-23 December 2022

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Executive summary

Assurance Review Findings

1. The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) conducted an Assurance Review into the use of short-term self-drive hire car in Queensland during the period 13 to 23 December 2022 by a staff member of the Hon Bob Katter, Member for Kennedy.
2. The Assurance Review found the staff member, who is based in Canberra, was directed to travel to the electorate on official business during the period 13 December 2022 to 3 January 2023. However, IPEA found the use of a short-term self-drive hire car by the staff member was not entirely consistent with the legislative framework.
3. IPEA requested an invoice for recovery of the expense for that part of the car hire which was not consistent with the legislative framework.

Scope and Purpose

4. The scope of this Assurance Review is use of a short-term self-drive hire car by a staff member in Mr Katter's office. The car was hired in Townsville on 13 December 2022 and was dropped off in Townsville on 23 December 2022. The purpose of the Assurance Review was to determine whether the use of the short-term self-drive hire car by the staff member was consistent with the legislative framework.

Engagement with Mr Katter

5. On 31 May 2023 IPEA wrote to Mr Katter requesting completion of a Short-Term Self-Drive Hire Car Certification form. A reminder was sent to Mr Katter on 8 June 2023.
6. On 15 June 2023 IPEA wrote to Mr Katter seeking advice on the reasons for the car hire. Mr Katter provided a response on 19 June 2023.
7. On 29 June 2023 IPEA wrote to Mr Katter requesting further explanation as to the details of the official business undertaken by the staff member which required the use of a hire car. Mr Katter was also asked to confirm whether the staff member drove him on official business at any time during the period.
8. On 3 July 2023 Mr Katter's office provided IPEA with a new Certification and a copy of Mr Katter's previous response. On 11 July 2023, IPEA wrote to Mr Katter advising the Assurance Review will be closed and an Invoice will be raised to recover the expense for one day of the car hire which was not consistent with the legislative framework.

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). Assurance Reviews determine if there has been a misuse of a parliamentary business resources. IPEA assesses the use of parliamentary business resources against the legislative framework to determine whether there was misuse.
11. Potential outcomes of an Assurance Review include:
 - no further action in circumstances where the review has concluded the use of parliamentary business resources was not inconsistent with the legislative framework, or
 - 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
 - an IPEA initiated Ruling or Audit, where there is evidence of systemic or substantial misuse of parliamentary business resources, or
 - 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:
 - *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (MOP(S) Act)
 - Determination 2020/15 – Staff Travel and Relief Staff Arrangements (the Determination)
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:

...

 - (d) short-term self-drive cars hired through the travel services provider, or with any car hire company, provided that:
 - (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 Electorate 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.
15. Employees may not use short-term self-drive hire cars at Commonwealth expense for private use, other than as set out in item 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.

Assurance Review methodology

Background

16. IPEA conducts ongoing systematic checking of expenses through regular sampling of transactions, including staff short-term self-drive hire cars. Mr Katter has electorate offices in Innisfail, Mareeba and Mount Isa in Queensland. On 31 May 2023 IPEA wrote to Mr Katter as part of the regular sampling of transactions requesting Certification of short-term self-drive hire car used by a member of his staff. On 13 June 2023, the authorised officer provided a signed certification form.
17. As the Certification form provided did not contain sufficient information, on 15 June 2023 in accordance with IPEA's Statutory Audit Function Sheet, IPEA commenced a Preliminary Assessment in relation to the staff members use of a short-term self-drive hire car during the period 13 to 23 December 2022.
18. The Preliminary Assessment found that the available information appeared to indicate the staff member's use of the short-term self-drive hire car was not as detailed in the Certification.

Scope of Assurance Review

19. The scope of this Assurance Review is Mr Katter's staff member's use of a short-term self-drive hire car in Queensland during the period 13 to 23 December 2022.

Summary of findings

Analysis

20. IPEA considered the legislative framework and applied the following questions to the short-term self-drive hire car:
- Was the staff member travelling as directed on official business?
 - Did the car hire meet the rules in the Determination?
21. IPEA conducted the Assurance Review by examining and assessing:
- Information held by IPEA in the Parliamentary Expenses Management System
 - Information provided by Mr Katter and his office
 - Publicly available information
22. In May 2023, IPEA identified that a staff member in Mr Katter's office used a short-term self-drive hire car in December 2022 which appeared to contravene the requirements in the Determination.
23. On 31 May 2023, IPEA wrote to Mr Katter as part of the ongoing systematic checking of expenses. IPEA requested that a Short-Term Self-Drive Hire Car Certification form (Certification) be completed. The Certification asks for details of travel during the duration of hire, including destinations. As a response had not been received, IPEA sent a reminder to Mr Katter on 8 June 2023.
24. On 13 June 2023, the authorised officer in Mr Katter's office provided a signed Certification which detailed the use of the hire car as:

13/12/22	From Townsville to Mission Beach
14/12/22	As directed by Mr Katter
15/12/22	From Mission Beach to Cairns (drove Mr Katter)
16-23/12/22	As directed by Mr Katter

25. As the Certification did not provide sufficient information to determine whether the use of the hire car was in accordance with the legislative framework, on 15 June 2023, IPEA wrote to Mr Katter advising that an Assurance Review was being undertaken into the travel expenses incurred by his staff member. IPEA requested Mr Katter advise the purpose of hiring the car and the official business undertaken as per the Determination. On 29 June 2023, Mr Katter advised:

I directed [staff member] to be in the electorate for the period of 13 December to Friday 23 December.

My electorate is vast and my [staff member] has no options to attend necessary meetings or events on my behalf without the use of a vehicle. As such she used a hire car over this period.

It is further noted there were no public transport options available.

26. The travel arrangements for Mr Katter and the staff member were reviewed by IPEA which indicated some discrepancy in the information provided. The apparent movements of the hire car as advised were inconsistent with the actual travel arrangements of Mr Katter.
27. On 29 June 2023, IPEA wrote to Mr Katter requesting further explanation as to the details of the official business undertaken by his staff member which required the use of a short-term self-drive hire car in the electorate. IPEA also requested Mr Katter's advice on whether the staff member drove him on official business at any time during this period.
28. On 3 July 2023, the authorised officer in Mr Katter's office advised the original Certification form submitted to IPEA on 13 June 2023 contained an error. A new certification form was provided which detailed the travel by the staff member as follows:
- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 13.12.22 | From Townsville to Mission Beach |
| 14.12.22 | As directed by Mr Katter |
| 15.12.22 | Mission Beach to Cairns / Edmonton |
| 15.12.22 | Edmonton (drove Mr Katter) to Innisfail (dropped off Mr Katter) |
| 15.12.22 | Innisfail to Mission Beach |
| 16-23.12.22 | As directed by Mr Katter |
29. As Mr Katter advised he directed the staff member to travel on official business, IPEA accepted that the use of a short-term self-drive hire car was not inconsistent with the legislative framework. However, there is no discretion in the Determination to allow a parliamentarian to direct a staff member to use a short-term hire car for periods longer than 10 days.
30. On 11 July 2023, IPEA wrote to Mr Katter advising the Assurance Review would be closed and an invoice raised to recover the one day of the hire car which was not consistent with the Determination.

Conclusion

31. IPEA found that the staff member was directed by Mr Katter to travel to Queensland on official business during the period 13 December 2023 to 3 January 2024. IPEA found the car hire did not meet the requirements outlined in subparagraph 17(d)(i) of the Determination as the hire was more than 10 days duration.

Attachments

- A. IPEA email to Mr Katter of 31 May 2023 regarding Post-Payment Check – Staff short-term self-drive hire car
- B. IPEA reminder email to Mr Katter of 8 June 2023 regarding the Post-Payment Check.
- C. Office of Mr Katter email to IPEA with Short-term self-drive hire car Certification of 13 June 2023
- D. IPEA letter to Mr Katter regarding the Assurance Review into staff use of short-term self-drive hire car in Queensland of 15 June 2023
- E. Mr Katter letter to IPEA of 19 June 2023
- F. IPEA letter to Mr Katter of 29 June 2023 seeking additional information on reasons for use of the hire car by the staff member
- G. Office of Mr Katter email to IPEA with new Short-term Self-Drive hire car Certification of 3 July 2023
- H. IPEA letter to Mr Katter of 11 July 2023 advising the Assurance Review would be closed and an invoice raised

From: Assurance
Sent: Wednesday, 31 May 2023 9:43 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: HPE CM: 230531 - Post-Payment Check - Staff Hire Car - April 2023 - REF 1789857
 [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: Short-term self-drive hire car certification form.PDF
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

OFFICIAL

The Hon Bob Katter MP

Member for Kennedy

Classification: OFFICIAL

Classified by: assurance@ipea.gov.au on: 31/05/2023 9:43:14 AM

Dear Mr Katter

The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) undertakes post-payment checks on travel related work expenses of parliamentarians and their staff. The self-drive vehicle hire set out below has been identified through these checks as requiring further information to confirm the use was consistent with the provisions of [Determination 2020/15 Staff - Travel and Relief Staff Arrangements](#) (the Determination).

Claim ID	Employee	Pick-up Date	Pick-up Location	Drop-off Date	Drop-off Location	Amount (GST excl.)
20050867	[REDACTED]	13/12/2022	Townsville	23/12/2022	Townsville	\$2,172.94

Clause 17 (d) of the Determination provides that an employee may use short-term self-drive cars when travelling as directed on official business, provided that:

- the hire is of no more than 10 days duration;
- the vehicle is not used for journeys within Canberra; and
- the vehicle is not used for journeys within a city/town where the employer's electorate or other office is located, except by employees of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, or the leader of a minority party.

Please complete and return the attached Short-term Self-drive Hire Car Certification (Form 127) within 7 days to assurance@ipea.gov.au quoting Ref: 1789857.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]
 Assistant Director
 Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
 One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
 T: +61 2 6215 3000
 E: Assurance@ipea.gov.au
www.ipea.gov.au & www.ipea.gov.au/ed



SHORT-TERM SELF-DRIVE HIRE CAR CERTIFICATION

For staff employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984*.

Employees, when travelling as directed on official business, may use short-term self-drive cars hired through the travel services provider, or with any car hire company, provided that:

- (i) the hire is of no more than 10 days duration;
- (ii) the vehicle is not used for journeys within Canberra;
- (iii) the vehicle is not used for journeys within a city/town where the employer's electorate or other office is located, except by employees of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, or the leader of a minority party; and
- (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.

Return your completed form
Scan and Email to: assurance@ipea.gov.au

Enquiries: Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
Phone: (02) 6215 3000

EMPLOYER DETAILS	▶ Employer name	<input type="text"/>
	▶ Employer state	<input type="text"/>

EMPLOYEE DETAILS	▶ Full name	<input type="text"/>
-------------------------	-------------	----------------------

TRAVEL DETAILS	▶ Pick up location	<input type="text"/>	Return location	<input type="text"/>
	▶ Pick up date	<input type="text"/>	Return date	<input type="text"/>

Date	Details of travel during the duration of hire (including destinations)	
	From	To

CERTIFICATION	▶ I certify that the self-drive hire car use identified above was in accordance with Determination 2020/15: Staff Travel and Relief Staff Arrangements. By signing this form, I acknowledge that:
----------------------	---

- * I understand that knowingly giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995*.
- * I have read and understood the Privacy Collection Notice (see below).

Note: Where use of a self-drive hire car is not in accordance with the Determination IPEA is obliged to recover the costs.

Signature of Employee	<input type="text"/>	Date	<input type="text"/>
Signature of Employer	<input type="text"/>	Date	<input type="text"/>
Name (if Authorised Person)	<input type="text"/>		

[REDACTED]

From: Assurance
Sent: Thursday, 8 June 2023 12:17 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Post-Payment Check - Staff Hire Car - April 2023 - REF 1789857 [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: Short-term self-drive hire car certification form.PDF

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

OFFICIAL

The Hon Bob Katter MP
Member for Kennedy

Dear Mr Katter

This is a reminder that a response to this matter has not been received.

Please respond to this request by close of business **Thursday 15 June 2023** quoting Ref: 1789857.

We look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]

Assistant Director
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
T: +61 2 6215 3000
E: Assurance@ipea.gov.au
www.ipea.gov.au & www.ipea.gov.au/ed

Classification: OFFICIAL
Classified by: assurance@ipea.gov.au on: 31/05/2023 9:43:14 AM

From: Assurance
Sent: Wednesday, May 31, 2023 9:43 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Post-Payment Check - Staff Hire Car - April 2023 - REF 1789857 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

The Hon Bob Katter MP
Member for Kennedy

Classification: OFFICIAL
Classified by: assurance@ipea.gov.au on: 31/05/2023 9:43:14 AM

Dear Mr Katter

The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) undertakes post-payment checks on travel related work expenses of parliamentarians and their staff. The self-drive vehicle hire set out below has been identified through

these checks as requiring further information to confirm the use was consistent with the provisions of [Determination 2020/15 Staff - Travel and Relief Staff Arrangements](#) (the Determination).

Claim ID	Employee	Pick-up Date	Pick-up Location	Drop-off Date	Drop-off Location	Amount (GST excl.)
20050867	[REDACTED]	13/12/2022	Townsville	23/12/2022	Townsville	\$2,172.94

Clause 17 (d) of the Determination provides that an employee may use short-term self-drive cars when travelling as directed on official business, provided that:

- the hire is of no more than 10 days duration;
- the vehicle is not used for journeys within Canberra; and
- the vehicle is not used for journeys within a city/town where the employer’s electorate or other office is located, except by employees of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, or the leader of a minority party.

Please complete and return the **attached** Short-term Self-drive Hire Car Certification (Form 127) within 7 days to assurance@ipea.gov.au quoting Ref: 1789857.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]

Assistant Director
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
T: +61 2 6215 3000
E: Assurance@ipea.gov.au
www.ipea.gov.au & www.ipea.gov.au/ed

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 13 June 2023 12:59 PM
To: Assurance
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Post-Payment Check - Staff Hire Car - April 2023 - REF 1789857 [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: SEO19019P0423061309340.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Categories: [Redacted]

Good morning,

Please find attached signed form.

Kind regards,

[Redacted]

Electorate Director / Personal Assistant
to Hon Bob Katter MP | Federal Member for Kennedy

Innisfail | Phone: 07 4061 6066 | Fax: 07 4061 6566 | Freecall 1300 301 942 |
Mount Isa | Phone: 07 4743 3534 | Fax: 07 4743 0189 |
Canberra | Phone: 02 6277 4978 | Fax: 02 6277 8558 |
Mareeba | Phone: 07 4092 1632 | Fax: 07 4092 6114 |
Email: [Redacted] | **Website:** www.bobkatter.com.au |



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From: Assurance <Assurance@ipea.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, June 8, 2023 12:17 PM
To: Katter, Robert (MP) [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: FW: Post-Payment Check - Staff Hire Car - April 2023 - REF 1789857 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

The Hon Bob Katter MP
Member for Kennedy

Dear Mr Katter

This is a reminder that a response to this matter has not been received.

Please respond to this request by close of business **Thursday 15 June 2023** quoting Ref: 1789857.

We look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely

[Redacted]
Assistant Director
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
T: +61 2 6215 3000
E: Assurance@ipea.gov.au
www.ipea.gov.au & www.ipea.gov.au/ed

Classification: OFFICIAL
Classified by: assurance@ipea.gov.au on: 31/05/2023 9:43:14 AM

From: Assurance
Sent: Wednesday, May 31, 2023 9:43 AM
To: [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: Post-Payment Check - Staff Hire Car - April 2023 - REF 1789857 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

The Hon Bob Katter MP
Member for Kennedy
Classification: OFFICIAL
Classified by: assurance@ipea.gov.au on: 31/05/2023 9:43:14 AM
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Claim ID	Employee	Pick-up Date	Pick-up Location	Drop-off Date	Drop-off Location	Amount (GST excl.)
20050867	[Redacted]	13/12/2022	Townsville	23/12/2022	Townsville	\$2,172.94

Clause 17 (d) of the Determination provides that an employee may use short-term self-drive cars when travelling as directed on official business, provided that:

- the hire is of no more than 10 days duration;
- the vehicle is not used for journeys within Canberra; and
- the vehicle is not used for journeys within a city/town where the employer's electorate or other office is located, except by employees of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, or the leader of a minority party.

Please complete and return the **attached** Short-term Self-drive Hire Car Certification (Form 127) within 7 days to assurance@ipea.gov.au quoting Ref: 1789857.

Sincerely

[Redacted]
Assistant Director
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority

One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603

T: +61 2 6215 3000

E: Assurance@ipea.gov.au

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

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SHORT-TERM SELF-DRIVE HIRE CAR CERTIFICATION

For staff employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984*.

Employees, when travelling as directed on official business, may use short-term self-drive cars hired through the travel services provider, or with any car hire company, provided that:

- (i) the hire is of no more than 10 days duration;
- (ii) the vehicle is not used for journeys within Canberra;
- (iii) the vehicle is not used for journeys within a city/town where the employer's electorate or other office is located, except by employees of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, or the leader of a minority party; and
- (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.

Return your completed form

Enquiries: Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority

Scan and Email to: assurance@ipea.gov.au

Phone: (02) 6215 3000

EMPLOYER DETAILS		▶ Employer name	Hon Bob Katter MP		
		▶ Employer state	Qld		
EMPLOYEE DETAILS		▶ Full name	[REDACTED]		
TRAVEL DETAILS		▶ Pick up location	Townsville	Return location	Townsville
		▶ Pick up date	13.12.23	Return date	23.12.23
Details of travel during the duration of hire (including destinations)					
Date	From	To			
13.12.22	Townsville	Mission Beach			
14.12.22	As directed by Mr Katter				
15.12.22	Mission Beach	Cairns (Drove Mr Katter)			
16 - 23.12.23	As directed by Mr Katter				

CERTIFICATION		▶ I certify that the self-drive hire car use identified above was in accordance with Determination 2020/15: Staff Travel and Relief Staff Arrangements. By signing this form, I acknowledge that:	
		* I understand that knowingly giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the <i>Criminal Code Act 1995</i> .	
		* I have read and understood the Privacy Collection Notice (see below).	
<i>Note: Where use of a self-drive hire car is not in accordance with the Determination IPEA is obliged to recover the costs.</i>			
Signature of Employee	[REDACTED]	Date	13/6/2023
Signature of Employer	[REDACTED]	Date	13/6/23
Name (If Authorised Person)	[REDACTED]		

Privacy Collection Notice — Consistent with the Privacy Act 1988, the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA), collects, uses and discloses the personal information provided in this form to administer and monitor work expenses of Parliamentarians and their employees under the parliamentary work expenses framework. Expenditure information may be tabled in Parliament, published on the IPEA website, or provided to the Special Minister of State, the Department of Finance, relevant service providers as authorised by law. Further details on the IPEA's collection, use and disclosure of personal information is available in the full Privacy Policy at www.ipea.gov.au/privacy-policy. Any inquiries can be submitted to privacy@ipea.gov.au.

OFFICIAL

Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

REF: IPEA22/2/28 IDOC/229140

15 June 2023

The Hon Bob Katter MP
Member for Kennedy
PO Box 1638
INNISFAIL QLD 4860

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Katter

Assurance Review of travel and travel-related expenses

The Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) is responsible for monitoring the use of travel resources used in connection with travel by staff employed under the Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984 (MOP(S) Act).

IPEA is undertaking an Assurance Review of travel expenses incurred by [REDACTED] for a short-term self-drive hire car in Queensland between 13 and 23 December 2022. Please note that IPEA publishes completed Assurance Reviews on the website www.ipea.gov.au.

Schedule A of Determination 2020/15 – Staff Travel and Relief Staff Arrangements (Determination) details the circumstances under which car transport may be used by MOP(S) Act employees. Relevant sections of the Determination provides:

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 use...
 - (d) short-term self-drive cars hired through the travel services provider, or with any car hire company, provided that:
 - (i) the hire is of no more than 10 days duration...
 - (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)...
18. Self-drive hire cars should be used on weekdays only unless exceptional circumstance apply and the Senator or Member has approved the use. Employees may not use taxis, regulated ridesharing services, hire cars or short-term self-drive hire cars at Commonwealth expense for private use, other than as set out at item 16.

A copy of the Determination is at **Attachment A** for your reference.

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Our records indicate that the self-drive hire car was hired at your direction for the period concerned. To assist with this Assurance Review, please advise the purpose of hiring the car and detail the official business undertaken as per the Determination.

I would be grateful if you could provide your response via email to assurance@ipea.gov.au by close of business on Friday **30 June 2023**. If you require additional time to provide a response or if you would like to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact [REDACTED] on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Nicole Pearson

Branch Manager, Transparency Audit & Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603

[REDACTED]



Hon Bob Katter MP
Federal Member for Kennedy

19 June 2023

To whom it may concern,

I directed [REDACTED] to be in the electorate for the period of 13 December to Friday 23 December.

My electorate is vast and my [REDACTED] has no options to attend necessary meetings or events on my behalf without the use of a vehicle. As such [REDACTED] used a hire car over this period.

It is further noted there were no public transport options available.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Hon Bob Katter MP
Federal Member for Kennedy

OFFICIAL

Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

REF: IPEA22/2/28 IDOC/

29 June 2023

The Hon Bob Katter MP
Member for Kennedy
PO Box 1638
INNISFAIL QLD 4860

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Katter

Assurance Review of travel and travel-related expenses - staff

Thank you for your engagement with the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) in relation to the Assurance Review of travel expenses incurred by [REDACTED] for short-term self-drive hire car in Queensland between 13 and 23 December 2022.

On 31 May 2023 IPEA wrote to you requesting Certification of the Short-term self-drive hire car hire for [REDACTED]. On 13 June 2023, the authorised officer returned the signed form certifying the self-drive hire car identified was in accordance with Determination 2020/15 – Staff Travel and Relief Staff Arrangements (the Determination). Details of travel during the duration of the hire was provided as follows:

13/12/22	From Townsville to Mission Beach
14/12/22	As directed by Mr Katter
15/12/22	From Mission Beach to Cairns (Drove Mr Katter)
16-23/12/23	As directed by Mr Katter

The Certification did not provide sufficient information to determine whether the use of the short-term self-drive hire car was in accordance with the legislative framework.

On 15 June 2023 IPEA wrote to you seeking advice of the purpose of [REDACTED] hiring the car and requesting details of the official business undertaken. In your response, you advised you directed [REDACTED] to be in the electorate to attend necessary meetings or events on your behalf, so a hire car was used over this period. You also noted there were no public transport options available.

Your travel arrangements and [REDACTED] travel arrangements were reviewed by IPEA. Details are at **Attachment A**. There appears to be some discrepancy in the information provided to IPEA as the apparent movements of the hire car as advised are inconsistent with actual travel arrangements.

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

As previously advised, schedule A of the Determination provides that employees, when travelling as directed on official business may use short-term self-drive hire cars provided:

- the hire is of no more than 10 days duration; and
- the vehicle is not used for journeys within a city/town where the electorate office is located; and
- the vehicle is not used for private use.

In accordance with Item 2 of the Determination, it is an employee's responsibility to transport themselves to and from work for their normal hours of duty. This also includes travel to attend work when the employee's work base is distant from the employee's home. IPEA is satisfied that you directed [REDACTED] to work in your electorate between 13 December 2022 and 3 January 2023. However, it remains [REDACTED] responsibility to transport [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] accommodation location to [REDACTED] normal place of work at your electorate offices.

In addition, the Determination does not contain any discretion to allow a staff member to use a short-term self-drive hire car for periods longer than 10 days. In circumstances where use of a self-drive hire car is not in accordance with the Determination IPEA is obliged to recover the costs.

To assist with this Assurance Review, IPEA requires further explanation as to the details of the official business undertaken by [REDACTED] which required the use of a short-term self-drive hire car from 13 to 23 December 2022. Please also advise whether [REDACTED] drove you on official business at any time during this period.

Please respond via email to assurance@ipea.gov.au by close of business on Friday **14 July 2023**. If you require additional time to provide a response or if you would like to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

Nicole Pearson
Branch Manager, Transparency Audit & Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
[REDACTED]

OFFICIAL**The Hon Bob Katter MP, Member for Kennedy
Travel between 15 and 17 December 2022**

Work Expense	Departure Location	Departure Date	Departure Time	Arrival Location	Arrival Date	Arrival Time	Amount (GST excl.)
COMCAR	Grand Secret Charters	15/12/2022	6:30 AM	Garbutt Townsville	15/12/2022	8:50 AM	\$432.73
Travel Fares – Qantas Airways	Townsville	15/12/2022	9:20 AM	Cairns	15/12/20232	10:15 AM	\$322.03
COMCAR	Cairns	15/12/2022	10:40 AM	Edmonton	15/12/2022	1:40 PM	\$482.76
Domestic Travel Allowance	Townsville	15/12/2022		Innisfail			\$311.00
Charter/Hire (Taxi)	Tully	16/12/2022	8:50 PM	Atherton	15/12/2022	11:45 PM	\$673.65
Domestic Travel Allowance	Innisfail	16/12/2022		Atherton			\$296.00
Charter/Hire (Taxi)	Atherton	17/12/2022	8:20 AM	Atherton	17/12/2022	9:00 AM	\$36.27
Charter/Hire (Taxi)	Wongaling Beach	17/12/2022		Tully	17/12/2022		\$187.50
COMCAR	Tully	17/12/2022		Garbutt Townsville	17/12/2022		\$918.60
COMCAR	Garbutt Townsville	17/12/2022	11:35 PM	Grand Secret Charters	15/12/2022	4:00 AM	\$585.45

OFFICIAL

Office of the Hon Bob Katter MP
Travel between 13 and 23 December 2022

Work Expense	Departure Location	Departure Date	Departure Time	Arrival Location	Arrival Date	Arrival Time	Amount (GST excl.)
Cabcharge	Ngunnawal	13/12/2022	8:30 AM	Canberra Airport	13/12/2022	8:30 AM	\$82.55
Travel Fares – Virgin Australia	Canberra	13/12/2022	10:50 AM	Brisbane	13/12/2022	10:15 AM	\$154.42
Travel Fares – Virgin Australia	Brisbane	13/12/2022	11:40 AM	Townsville	13/12/2022	1:40 PM	\$154.43
Car Hire	Townsville	13/12/2022		Townsville	23/12/2022		\$1,975.40
Domestic Travel Allowance		13/12/2022		Mission Beach			\$85.00
Domestic Travel Allowance		14/12/2022		Wongaling Beach			\$2,277.60
Domestic Travel Expenses – Fuel		17/12/2022		Mission Beach			\$142.44
Domestic Travel Expenses – Fuel		23/12/2022		Townsville			\$37.44
Travel Fares – Qantas Airways	Townsville	23/12/2022	12:50 PM	Cairns	23/12/2022	1:45 PM	\$322.03
Motor Vehicle Allowance	Cairns	23/12/2022		Innisfail	23/12/2022		\$61.77

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 3 July 2023 5:13 PM
To: Assurance
Subject: HPE CM: RE: Assurance Review - Staff use of self-drive hire car [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: SEO19019P0423070317430.pdf; SRF123M0123062211220.pdf

Categories: [REDACTED]

Good afternoon,

It has just come to our attention that the original certification form submitted had an error.

Please find attached updated form, please disregard the original one submitted. I've also reattached the letter from Mr Katter confirming he directed [REDACTED] to be in the electorate.

We trust this matter can now be resolved.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
 Electorate Director / Personal Assistant
to Hon Bob Katter MP | Federal Member for Kennedy

Innisfail | Phone: 07 4061 6066 | Fax: 07 4061 6566 | Freecall 1300 301 942 |

Mount Isa | Phone: 07 4743 3534 | Fax: 07 4743 0189 |

Canberra | Phone: 02 6277 4978 | Fax: 02 6277 8558 |

Mareeba | Phone: 07 4092 1632 | Fax: 07 4092 6114 |

[REDACTED] | Website: www.bobkatter.com.au |



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From: Assurance <Assurance@ipea.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, June 29, 2023 4:45 PM
To: Katter, Robert (MP) [REDACTED]
Subject: Assurance Review - Staff use of self-drive hire car [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

The Hon Bob Katter MP
 Member for Kennedy

Dear Mr Katter

Please find attached correspondence from the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority in relation to an Assurance Review of staff use of self-drive hire car between 13 and 23 December 2022.

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

Yours sincerely

Nicole Pearson

Branch Manager, Transparency, Assurance and Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603

E: assurance@ipea.gov.au

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

Classification: OFFICIAL

Classified by: assurance@ipea.gov.au on: 29/06/2023 4:45:06 PM

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SHORT-TERM SELF-DRIVE HIRE CAR CERTIFICATION

For staff employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984*.

Employees, when travelling as directed on official business, may use short-term self-drive cars hired through the travel services provider, or with any car hire company, provided that:

- (i) the hire is of no more than 10 days duration;
- (ii) the vehicle is not used for journeys within Canberra;
- (iii) the vehicle is not used for journeys within a city/town where the employer's electorate or other office is located, except by employees of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, or the leader of a minority party; and
- (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.

Return your completed form

Scan and Email to: assurance@ipea.gov.au

Enquiries: Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority

Phone: (02) 6215 3000

EMPLOYER DETAILS		Employer name	Hon Bob Katter MP
		Employer state	Qld
EMPLOYEE DETAILS		Full name	[REDACTED]
TRAVEL DETAILS		Pick up location	Townsville
		Return location	Townsville
		Pick up date	13.12.22
		Return date	23.12.22

Date	Details of travel during the duration of hire (including destinations)	
	From	To
13.12.22	Townsville	Mission Beach
14.12.22	As directed by Mr Katter	
15.12.22	Mission Beach	Cairns / Edmonton
15.12.22	Edmonton (drove Mr Katter)	Innisfail (dropped off Mr Katter)
15.12.22	Innisfail	Mission Beach
16-23.12.22	As directed by Mr Katter	

CERTIFICATION I certify that the self-drive hire car use identified above was in accordance with Determination 2020/15: Staff Travel and Relief Staff Arrangements. By signing this form, I acknowledge that:

* I understand that knowingly giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995*.

* I have read and understood the Privacy Collection Notice (see below).

Note: Where use of a self-drive hire car is not in accordance with the Determination IPEA is obliged to recover the costs.

Signature of Employee	[REDACTED]	Date	3.7.23
Signature of Employer	[REDACTED]	Date	3.7.23
Name (if Authorised Person)	[REDACTED]		

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Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

REF: IPEA22/2/28 IDOC/230504

July 2023

The Hon Bob Katter MP
Member for Kennedy
PO Box 1638
INNISFAIL QLD 4860

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Katter

Assurance Review of staff travel and travel-related expenses

Thank you for your engagement with IPEA's Assurance Review in relation to travel expenses incurred by [REDACTED] for the use of a hire car in the electorate between 13 and 23 December 2022.

As previously advised, Determination 2020/15 Staff Travel and Relief Staff Arrangements does not contain any discretion to allow a staff member to use a short-term self drive hire car for periods longer than 10 days. The car hire which is the subject of this Assurance Review is for 11 days and IPEA is therefore obliged to recover the cost of one day of the hire which is outside the legislative framework. An invoice will be raised for [REDACTED] and forwarded to [REDACTED]

Having considered the available information, including the responses provided by you and your office, we will be closing this matter.

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

Yours sincerely

Nicole Pearson
Branch Manager, Transparency Audit & Legal
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
One Canberra Avenue, FORREST ACT 2603
[REDACTED]

OFFICIAL