



Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

ASSURANCE REVIEW MEMORANDUM – [2021/011]

Senator Pauline Hanson: travel to Hamilton Island on 2 to 5 October 2020 and to Newcastle on 15 to 16 May and 19 to 26 May 2021

Date: 6 September 2022

To: Nicole Pearson
Branch Manager, Transparency, Assurance & Legal

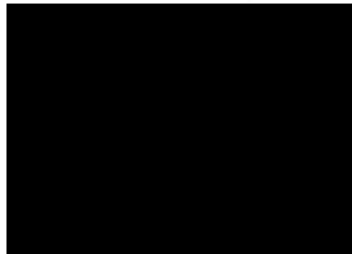
RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that you:

- i. Note the contents of this assurance review and accept the matter as closed.

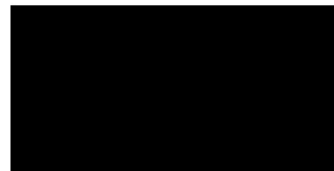
NOTED & ACCEPTED AS CLOSED /

PLEASE DISCUSS



Date: ~~14~~ September 2022
Nicole Pearson
Branch Manager
Transparency, Assurance & Legal Branch

Prepared by:



Assistant Director (A/g)
Transparency, Assurance & Legal Branch

SCOPE

1. The Assurance Review aims to assess Senator Hanson's use of parliamentary business resources to undertake the following travel (relevant periods):
 - travel to Hamilton Island, QLD from 2 to 5 October 2020
 - travel to Newcastle, NSW on 15 to 16 May 2021 and 19 to 26 May 2021

PURPOSE

2. This assurance review aims to determine the dominant purpose of the travel that was undertaken by Senator Hanson for the relevant periods.

BACKGROUND

3. On 6 April 2021, The Age published the article *Hanson on Hamilton* (**Attachment A**).
4. The article particularly focused on flights undertaken by Senator Hanson on 2 October 2020 from Brisbane to Hamilton Island, Queensland and claimed that "Hanson's representatives did not respond to repeated questions about the purpose of the trip".
5. In accordance with IPEA's protocol on dealing with misuse of parliamentary work expenses (the protocol), a preliminary assessment was conducted. The assessment found that travel resources were used to travel to Hamilton Island, QLD during the relevant period.
6. On 31 August 2021 in accordance with the protocol, an Assurance Review into this matter was commenced.
7. On 15 September 2021 it was identified through assurance matter **2021/021** that Senator Hanson had undertaken travel to and from Newcastle during May 2021. A tweet was also posted on Twitter in relation to the relevant period of travel, referencing Senator Hanson's travel to Newcastle during the Upper-Hunter NSW State By-election (**Attachment B**).
8. On 15 September 2021 the scope of the Assurance Review was expanded to include Senator Hanson's travel to Newcastle on 15 to 16 May 2021 and 19 to 26 May 2021.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

9. The relevant legislative Framework (the Framework) is:
 - *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (PBR Act)
 - *Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017* (the Regulations)
 - *Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2017* (the Determination)

Obligations

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

Definitions

11. "Parliamentary business" has the meaning given by section 6 of the PBR Act. Activities that fall within the four duty streams of parliamentary business are set out in the Determination as "parliamentary duties", "electorate duties", "party political duties", and "official duties"
12. Subsection 6(2) of the PBR Act further provides that an activity is not the parliamentary business of the member if it is carried out for the dominant purpose of providing a personal benefit to the member or another person or pursuing commercial purposes of the member or another person (or both).

ANALYSIS

13. IPEA obtained data in relation to travel for Senator Hanson, covering the relevant periods.
14. Based on available information, Senator Hanson used parliamentary business resources to travel to Hamilton Island and Newcastle for the relevant periods. IPEA notes that she did not claim travel allowance during these periods.
15. IPEA reviewed Senator Hanson's social media and found that she appeared in multiple posts with One Nation Candidate, [REDACTED] during the Upper-Hunter State By-election campaign. There were no social media posts in relation to the Senator's travel to Hamilton Island.
16. On 8 October 2021, IPEA wrote to Senator Hanson asking that she describe the nature of her parliamentary business in relation to the travel for each location and relevant periods.
17. On 10 November 2021, Senator Hanson provided a response, including evidence of the engagements and meetings for the travel to Hamilton Island (**Attachment C**).
18. In Senator Hanson's response in relation to the travel to Hamilton Island, she stated she *"Met with various groups regarding tourism, commercial fishing and Queensland border closure impacts on the industries of the Whitsundays. I have attached the relevant dates from the diary of my Chief of Staff, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] arranged these meetings and accompanied me"*.
19. Senator Hanson also responded in relation to her travel to Newcastle, advising the dominant purpose of travel was 'party political duties', and that the party business was to attend the Upper Hunter By-Election.
20. On 14 December 2021, IPEA wrote to Senator Hanson requesting additional information and supporting documentation in relation to her travel. Extensions were granted due to staff leave during the January 2022 period and significant rain and flooding in February 2022, with a due date of 25 March 2022.
21. On 6 April 2022, IPEA wrote again to remind Senator Hanson that her response was overdue, with a new due date of 14 April 2022.
22. A response was received on 14 April 2022, advising that diary notes would follow when they were found.

23. On 10 June 2022, a further response was received from [REDACTED] detailing the Senator's travel in Newcastle, including meetings she attended. No supporting evidence was attached to the response.
24. The Senior Assurance Officer attempted to call Senator Hanson's office on Friday 28 June to discuss what was required to finalise the matter, and left a message.
25. On 6 July 2022, IPEA wrote to Senator Hanson requesting that she confirm that the activities listed in [REDACTED]'s response of 10 June 2022 constituted the dominant purpose of her travel and how the activities set out in the travel satisfy the definition in the Determination. A due date of 14 July 2022 was given, with an extension granted until 1 August 2022.
26. On 2 August 2022, a letter was received from Senator Hanson outlining the details of her travel, meetings attended and how these satisfy the definition in the Determination (**Attachment D**). However, no supporting evidence was included.
27. On 11 August 2022, the Senior Assurance Officer spoke with [REDACTED] to discuss what was required in order to finalise the matter, and advised that the supporting documentation was still outstanding.
28. On 22 August 2022, the Senior Assurance Officer (A/g) called [REDACTED] following a request from Senator Hanson's office to discuss what was required in order to finalise the matter. He was again advised that IPEA requires supporting documentation to finalise the matter. The same day, IPEA was sent diary notes for the relevant period (**Attachment E**).
29. Although brief, the diary notes were accepted as suitable evidence.

CONCLUSION

30. On the basis of Senator Hanson's response, in relation to her travel to Hamilton Island from 2 to 5 October 2021, IPEA is satisfied that the dominant purpose was parliamentary business and was not inconsistent with the Framework.
31. Although there was significant back and forth communication with Senator Hanson's office regarding her travel to Newcastle, on the basis of the evidence provided, IPEA accepts the Senator's assertion that this travel was for the dominant purpose of conducting parliamentary business and was not inconsistent with the Framework.
32. IPEA notes that under the principles-based legislative framework, parliamentarians "must be prepared to justify publicly their use of public resources for conducting their parliamentary business" (section 25(3), PBR Act).

[CBD](#) [National](#) [Victoria](#) [City life](#)

This was published 4 months ago

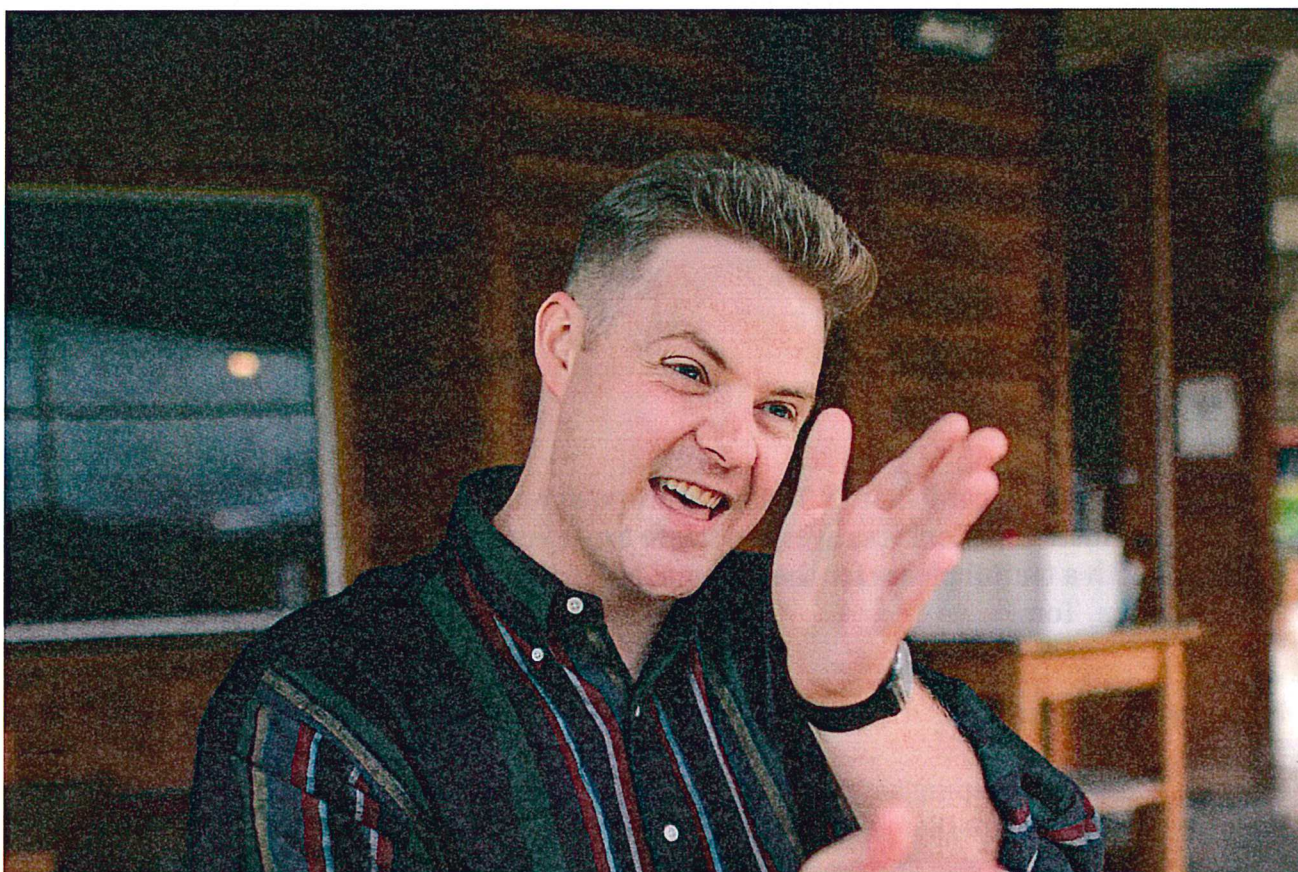
'They're not people': ABC cancels Ballard again over Liberal Party jabs

By [Stephen Brook](#) and [Samantha Hutchinson](#)

April 6, 2021 – 12.01am

Once again, comedian **Tom Ballard** has proved himself too hot for the ABC to handle.

Ballard featured at the opening night gala of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival with a blistering set aimed at one of his favourite targets: the Liberal Party and its voters. In an approach that will surprise nobody, he turned his diatribe up to 11.



Tom Ballard is in hot water again. EDDIE JIM

"I'm not saying Liberal voters are bad people. I'm saying they're not people. They're cold-blooded lizards ruining the country who should go back to the hellmouth from where they came," he said.

Ballard also referenced COVID-19, which “killed a lot of people in nursing homes – but I checked and they were all Liberal voters”. Not sure if Comedy Festival board member **John Ridley**, a former Victorian director of the Liberal Party and adviser to **Andrew Peacock**, saw the funny side.

Ballard climaxed with: “I hope you die, I hope you choke on your own franking credits, you evil greedy fascist soulless pig dogs.”

All of which presented a huge headache for the ABC, which this Wednesday will broadcast the opening night gala with a second episode the following week. But after some agony and consultation of its voluminous editorial standards, Aunty has cancelled Ballard.

“The ABC checks all content prior to broadcast to ensure it meets editorial standards. In this case, it was determined that the risk of causing offence to viewers was not editorially justified,” a spokesman said.

What a pickle for Aunty. Broadcast Ballard and ABC managing director **David Anderson** faces a rabid Senator **Eric Abetz** yammering away at Senate estimates for the next five years. Or cut the comedian and woke *Guardianistas* will be firing up on Twitter about ABC censorship for, oh, the next 36 hours.



Tom Ballard. Illustration: John Shakespeare

Readers might remember [Ballard's *Tonightly* program was axed three years](#) ago after a skit labelling an Australian Conservatives candidate a c--t enraged the Liberal government. Ballard signed off with a tearful please for the national broadcaster to keep making “risky” content. Dare to dream, Tom!

Hanson on Hamilton

Pauline Hanson is keeping shtum on the details of a weekend jaunt to the Whitsundays last spring paid for by her parliamentary expense account.

Federal travel disclosures released last week revealed the Queensland senator spent – sorry, the Australian taxpayer spent – almost \$1500 on flights jetting to Hamilton Island from Brisbane on Friday, October 2. She then flew out of the **Oatley** family-owned hotspot three days later to Canberra (via Brisbane). That two-stop trip cost just over \$1020. The same expense report shows Hanson accrued parking fees of \$151 between October 1 and October 8.

Hanson's representatives did not respond to repeated questions about the purpose of the trip. Odds are there could have been a bit of business and pleasure on the island where golf carts are the primary form of transport and the six-star luxury Qualia Resort is considered to be one of the country's finest. It's worth noting the Queensland state election took place on October 31, about 25 days after Hanson left the island. One Nation fielded business development executive **Deb Lawson** for the seat of Whitsunday. Lawson also ran for the party a year earlier in the federal election representing the seat of Dawson.

Whether Hanson helped her state chances is another question. Liberal National **Amanda Camm** secured the seat against the ALP's **Angie Kelly** in a nail-biting race which came down to preferences. Camm secured 32.88 per cent of the primary vote while Kelly secured 32.51 per cent. Lawson came in fourth place with 9.4 per cent of the primary vote behind North Queensland First's **Jason Costigan**.

Perhaps Hanson should have stayed longer.

Hot job

One of the best jobs in the state is once again up for grabs.

Michael Kapel's time as the state's trade and export tsar has ended and recruiters are searching for a replacement, which suggests that his successor will not be a case of history repeating.

Officially, Kapel's title was commissioner to the Americas for the government of Victoria (Australia) and his San Francisco-based post oversaw a network of 23 trade and investment offices located in New York, Washington, DC, Chicago and San Francisco which "facilitate investment for the state and maximise opportunities for exporters".

Nice work if you can get it, which everyone thought after Kapel won the job in 2012 when he was chief of staff to premier **Ted Baillieu**, who was immediately attacked.

"So it turns out Ted Baillieu does have a plan for jobs – unfortunately it's only one job and it's for one of his best mates," opposition frontbencher **Martin Pakula** said.

But that zinger didn't survive Labor's ascent to government and Pakula changed his tune, reappointing Kapel twice, while a spokesman told CBD Kapel "delivered strong results for Victoria in an important role".

SHK Asia Pacific is now recruiting for a replacement, while **Nathan Elia** in its Boston office and **Natalia Gorrone** in Santiago hold the fort until the post is filled.

With Nick Miller



Stephen Brook



Stephen Brook is a CBD columnist for The Sydney Morning Herald and The Age. He is a former features editor and media editor at The Australian, where he wrote the Media Diary column and spent six years in London working for The Guardian.



Samantha Hutchinson



Samantha Hutchinson is a CBD columnist for The Age and The Sydney Morning Herald. She recently covered Victorian and NSW politics and business for News Corp, and previously worked for the Australian Financial Review.

From: [Hanson, Pauline \(Senator\)](#)
To: [Assurance](#)
Subject: FW: Assurance Review - Senator Hanson [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Wednesday, 10 November 2021 12:35:50 PM
Attachments: [image001.gif](#)
[image002.gif](#)
[image003.png](#)
[Message from EO19068P04.msg](#)

Importance: High

Dear [REDACTED]

I have had the opportunity to review the travel questions you have raised. My answers are detailed below.

1. Dominant purpose of travel – Electorate Duties
2. Met with various groups regarding tourism, commercial fishing and Queensland border closure impacts on the industries of the Whitsundays. I have attached the relevant dates from the diary of my Chief of Staff, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] arranged these meetings and accompanied me.
3. Dominant purpose of travel – Party Political Duties
4. Party Business – Upper Hunter By election
5. Dominant purpose of travel – Party Political Duties
6. Party Business – Upper Hunter By election

Should you require any further clarification please email me.

Kind regards

Pauline Hanson
Senator for Queensland

Electorate Office

Suite 6, Level 36, Waterfront Place
1 Eagle Street, Brisbane QLD 4000
Phone (07) 3221 7644

Canberra Office (sitting weeks only)
(02) 6277 3182



From: Assurance <Assurance@ipea.gov.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 2 November 2021 12:14 PM

To: Hanson, Pauline (Senator) [REDACTED]

Subject: Assurance Review - Senator Hanson [SEC=OFFICIAL]

SEC=OFFICIAL

Dear Senator Hanson

Please find **attached** correspondence from the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority in relation to an overdue response to an Assurance Review.

I have also **attached** the original correspondence, which was sent on 8 October 2021.

Should you wish to discuss this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me on [REDACTED] or at

assurance@ipea.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
Director, Audit and Assurance

Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority

[REDACTED] | E: assurance@ipea.gov.au

SEC=OFFICIAL

From: Assurance <Assurance@ipea.gov.au>

Sent: Friday, 8 October 2021 10:30 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Assurance Review - Senator Hanson [SEC=OFFICIAL]

SEC=OFFICIAL

Dear Senator Hanson

Please find **attached** correspondence from the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority in relation to travel you have undertaken.

Should you wish to discuss this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me on (02) 6215 3000 or at assurance@ipea.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Director, Audit and Assurance

Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority

T: 02 6215 3000 | E: assurance@ipea.gov.au

SEC=OFFICIAL

Be careful with this message

External email. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.



Senator Pauline Hanson
One Nation Senator for Queensland

Dear Nicole

After reviewing the dates in question, I can confirm that travel I engaged in between 15th – 16th May 2021 and 19th - 26th of May 2021 was related to my parliamentary duties as described under **Schedule 1—Parliamentary duties (Act s 6(4)(a))**

The relevant sections of schedule are parts:

- a) Preparing for, participating in and attending to business arising from proceedings of the Parliament, whether by committee of the whole or otherwise;***
- b) Developing, reviewing or amending legislation or proposed legislation, and activities engaged in for that purpose;***
- c) Undertaking research, communication (including with stakeholders) or administration connected with the business of the Parliament, the member's policy portfolio, or their role as a member;***

The travel undertaken between the 15th and 16th of May 2021 was related to an inspection of the Liddell Power Station and a tour of the surrounding region.

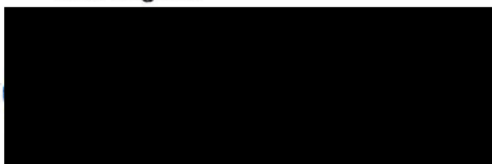
The tour included listening to business operators in numerous townships who would be impacted should plans to see the power station phased out proceed.

In addition to the tour, I also had meetings with government employed whistle-blowers who sought to inform about the serious negative consequences of phasing out coal fired power stations not just in the Hunter valley region but across all of Australia

The future of the Liddell Power Station has serious implications for Queensland's future energy security in the event NSW fails to meet National Energy requirements.

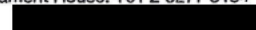
My travel between 19th - 26th of May 2021, related to meetings I had with NDIS groups, homeless advocacy organisations, and with stakeholders relating to the Fair Work Amendment (Supporting Australia's Jobs and Economic Recovery) Bill 2021 had passed in the Senate.

Kind Regards



Senator Pauline Hanson
Leader of One Nation

Commonwealth Parliamentary
Offices
Waterfront Place
Level 36, 1 Eagle Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000
Office +61 7 3221 7644
Fax +61 7 3221 8422
Parliament House: +61 2 6277 3184



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 22 August 2022 2:19 PM
To: Assurance
Subject: HPE CM: Assurance Review
Categories: Assurance Review, [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED]

The diary notes I have are quite limited, but I trust they'll suffice with respect to the review you're doing into Senator Hanson's travel on 15 - 16 May, and 19 - 26 May.

Regards
[REDACTED]

May 2021

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Wednesday
139/226 Week 20

7:30 - EARLY FLIGHT FROM ROCKHAMPTON TO BRISBANE.

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3:00 - BRISBANE TO CANBERRA.

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May 2021

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140/225 Week 20

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May 2021 FINE.

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141/224 Week 20

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May 2021

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144/221 Week 21

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- FLY FROM BRISBANE TO NEWCASTLE

May 2021

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Wednesday
146/219 Week 21

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May 2021

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May 2021

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- NEWCASTLE TO BRISBANE FLIGHT.

May 2021

17 Monday
137/228 Week 20

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