

Question: 6
Topic: Department provision of passport to President's Office
Asked: 8 February 2016

Senator McALLISTER: Turning to some of the other items that were paid for on a credit card. Can you provide an explanation, Mr President, about why \$704 was extended for diplomatic passports for yourself and your wife, and \$250 for the senior adviser for an official passport?

The President: Certainly. It has been the practice of the Senate to always provide for visas and passports for the President, the President's spouse and staff.

Senator McALLISTER: That is not something that would ordinarily have been dealt with by the Department of Finance under the old arrangements that we have been discussing?

The President: No. I understand it has happened forever.

Senator McALLISTER: Is that right, Dr Laing?

Dr Laing: I do not have it in my direct knowledge. I will check that.

Answer:

It has been the practice of the department to cover the cost of official passports for the President and his or her spouse and Senior Adviser (or accompanying adviser) for some time. A search of our files from 2008 onwards shows that in this period the department has paid for the official passports for former President Hogg and his spouse and Senior Adviser (and their reissue), and for President Parry and his spouse and Senior Adviser.