

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2017-18**

**Finance Portfolio**

24-25 May 2017

**Department/Agency:** IPEA

**Outcome/Program:** General

**Topic:** Travel approval for parliamentarians

**Senator:** Farrell

**Question reference number:** F90

**Type of question:** Hansard Proof, 25 May 2017, F&PA Committee, page 101

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** Friday, 7 July 2017

**Number of pages:** 1

**Question:**

**Senator FARRELL:** Yes. There is one question I thought of in relation to that when we were dealing with the bill. If you ask a particular question and you get a binding ruling that says, 'Yes, this is permissible conduct,' how would it ever come up that you had not satisfied the rules? If you have the binding ruling and you have followed the binding ruling, how would it ever emerge that there would be a question mark over that and you would then be found not to have been within the rules?

**Ms McGregor:** That, again, would depend. In terms of the rulings, I think in the legislation the process is actually that you would be seeking that post the event. That is the first thing to know about those, but the other thing is that any—

**Senator FARRELL:** Hang on a moment. Just to be clear on that, say I want to travel to Sydney tomorrow to do something and I want to know whether what I am intending to go to is within or without the rules. Are you saying I cannot get a ruling on that in advance of my travel?

**Senator Ryan:** I have a subtly different recollection, but I will check and come back to you.

....

**Senator FARRELL:** I fully understand that, but I thought Ms McGregor was saying something different—that I could not get a binding ruling in advance of my travel. I understood that you could do that.

**Senator Ryan:** I will take that on notice. Perhaps I have something in front of me. I will come back to you.

**Senator FARRELL:** It is a relatively crucial point.

**Senator Ryan:** As I said, I will take it on notice.

**Answer:**

Prior to travel, the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) may provide 'personal advice' to Members of Parliament and MOPS staff under Part 2, Item 12 (1)(a) and (p) of the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* (the Act). 'Personal advice' assists Members of Parliament and MOPS staff to make immediate and informed decisions about proposed travel.

Where requested by a Member of Parliament or their staff, IPEA will prepare and provide a Travel Advice Certificate, detailing the request for information, the recommendation from IPEA and the rationale for the decision, including the legislative basis.