

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Additional Estimates Hearings 2003-2004, 16 February 2004

Question: PM 3

Outcome 1, Output 4.7

Topic: Bolger Report

Hansard Page: F&PA 30

Senator Faulkner asked: Could it be tabled at this committee? I request the report be tabled for the benefit of the committee.

Answer: The report is attached:

**OFFICIAL VISIT
THE PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA
MR GEORGE W. BUSH
AND
MRS LAURA BUSH**

22-23 OCTOBER 2003

MEDIA LIAISON REPORT

Prepared by;
Daniel Bolger
Under Contract to;
Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

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MEDIA LIAISON REPORT

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA, 22-23 OCTOBER 2003**

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Section 1 - Overview

This report outlines the planning, contacts and events for media arrangements during the recent visit to Australia by the President of the United States.

The visit was announced by the Prime Minister on October 10 2003, and followed the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders Summit in Bangkok.

The initial Prime Minister & Cabinet (PM&C) briefing indicated that the visit was to involve a number of events including;

- a speech by the President to a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament.
- a wreath laying ceremony at the Australian War memorial;
- a call on the Governor- General.
- Lunch at the Lodge;

The media liaison function was carried out by Daniel Bolger, under contract to the Ceremonial and Hospitality Branch (CERHOS) of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. Senior Media Liaison Officers were seconded from the Attorney General's Department to assist in the media coordination.

All media arrangements were cleared and distributed by the Prime Minister's office.

The contracted media liaison services were as follows;

- To prepare media briefs outlining the opportunities for visiting media and Australian media and any restrictions on their operations.
- Liaison with officials and organisations to arrange access and facilities for the visiting media to enable them to record the visit and transmit material to their domestic media services.
- Facilitate Australian media coverage during the visit.
- Prepare a written report.

The White House advance team arrived in Canberra on Saturday 20th September 2003, and visited all establishments on Sunday 21st September, 2003. The media liaison officer (MLO) accompanied the White House press team to all sites. Possible pool arrangements were discussed at each venue.

These briefings were used to identify the requirements of travelling media pools, notably:

- a high level of technical infrastructure, including telephony and satellite installations in multiple venues.
- the need to liaise between Washington and Canberra on the make-up, size and movement of the pools on the day.
- management of media deadlines across different time-zones,
- sensitivity of media accessing areas that were restricted or where numbers were limited due to space logistics.

The planning for the visit began in September and continued through until October 22, and involved meetings and briefings with all key stakeholders including;

- PMO staff and media officers
- Media section, Embassy of the United States of America (USA)
- White House Press Office

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- Broadcast Facilities Manager, Parliament House
- Bureau Chiefs, Press Gallery, Canberra
- Sergeant – at- Arms
- Telstra
- CERHOS staff
- PSCC (Security) staff
- Australian War Memorial staff
- Government House staff
- AUSPIC
- AQIS
- RAAF Fairbairn staff
- AFP media and staff

Section 2

2.1 Overall Media Attendance

A large media contingent travelled with the President (127). This number was supplemented by members of the foreign press corps based in Sydney.

Australian media interest for all events was very strong. However, planned pool numbers for both Australian and US media at all venues was restricted due to space limitations and logistics

2.2 Standard Operating procedures

All visits involve the use of pooled media arrangements, where members of the visiting and Australian media are selected to represent their respective networks and make the footage, pictures and/or sound available to all media bureaus.

The size of these media "pools" is determined by several factors including the precedent, venue, the time needed to set up, travel time between scheduled events on the day. Where there are no such restrictions, the pool is deemed to be an open pool for planning purposes. Where pools are necessary, an equal number of media from both countries are placed in the pool.

A small pool will consist of a TV news camera and a photographer.

All Australian journalists have access to their own networks to file their stories. Journalists not in pools can access pooled material and report on the event.

Note: At each venue, the Official Photographer (OP) from BOTH countries is in attendance and is not included in pool numbers. Where there is no media in attendance, the event is covered by official photographers only.

2.3 Logistics

The visit was characterised by an extremely high level of pre-planning with respect to the schedule, the venues and media access. This planning began with the Advance team on September 21, 2003 and continued until an agreed schedule was formulated in the days before the arrival of the President.

Security requirements heavily influenced the scope of media arrangements during the visit. Difficulties were encountered on the day when the American media team departed from the

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agreed arrangements. In particular, the taking of a pool camera into the Representatives chamber during the President's speech.

2.4 Media accreditation and passes

All travelling media covering the official visit were issued with a National Visits Media Card (NVMC), which identified the bearer by name and media organisation. No digital photo was required. All travelling media were issued with their cards after disembarking the media plane. Security issues with the travelling press were coordinated by the respective security agencies and venue security personnel.

Australian journalists were advised that a current NVMC was required if they wished to gain access to media event venues during the visit. All media in pools were required to have a valid NVMC. Press Gallery members were advised that they could access the Chamber with either the NVMC or their Parliament House press pass. Access by Press Gallery members to the chamber for the address was controlled by Parliament House Security. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) had collected names of Gallery members wishing to attend the speech and that list was forwarded to security by MLO.

Members of the Press Gallery were advised by Parliament House Security that no passes were to be issued on October 23 to visiting staff wishing to enter Parliament House. The Press Gallery Committee sent a note out advising members of security and pass arrangements prior to the visit. The MLO also advised Gallery members of the security arrangements in the informal gallery briefings conducted in the week prior to the visit. Parliament House security was given the list of names at each pool position. The PMO had collected names of gallery members wishing to attend the speech and that list was provided to Parliament House Security on October 22, 2003.

2.5 US Media issues

The media arrangements were planned on an on-going basis beginning with the arrival of the White House advance team on September 20, 2003. The schedule of events was still being finalised by both teams in the last week prior to the visit. As a result, both media parties were prepared in case extra events materialised, as happened on the day with the media event at the Lodge.

Several issues which emerged early in the planning phase had ramifications on the day;

i) The White House advance team indicated that the main pool for the visit would be the travel pool, and it would comprise of 15 people. MLO provided advice that media opportunities for groups of this size (15 + 15) would be limited unless they were prepared to split their pool. This was necessitated by the smaller venues in Government House, Parliament House and the War Memorial. The advance team was advised that the Australian pool was kept to a minimum on such occasions. This was noted by the advance team.

ii) The advance team requested they bring their own camera in the Representatives Chamber to cover the Joint Sitting. MLO advised advance team that Sound and Vision had 8 Camera positions and that vision was to be patched 'live' to the US media centre in the National Press Club in Barton. They were also advised that no camera was allowed in the Chamber. Confirmation of this advice was sought from the Speaker and forwarded to the advance party in writing on October 20, 2003.

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iii) The US Statutory requirement for the media to be in attendance at every venue the President attends, on "watch", whether or not there was to be any media opportunity at that venue. In preliminary planning, there was to be no media opportunity at the Lodge, but the US media were on site in a tent with no access to the event unless directed. On the day an Australian pool was added to cover the event at Lodge.

iv) The US "travel" pool went with the President in the motorcade, unlike Australian media who were to be pre-positioned at venues. The late arrival of the US travel pool had to be accommodated by the Australian media, who would have taken the best spots in each pool. The fact that they had to move to accommodate the US travel pool may have led to allegations of favouritism on the day.

v) The bilateral media opportunity was discussed at length. The Australian side requested a media opportunity in the Prime Minister's Courtyard after the bilateral meeting, which would accommodate the level of media interest with an open pool. This plan was rejected by the White House staff, despite repeated requests. Due to space limitations in the Prime Minister's suite, where the media opportunity was to take place, the PMO agreed to depart from the standard equal pooling arrangement and accommodate the entire US pool, only placing 9 in the Australian pool. Sound and Vision decided not to cover this event live suggesting that the vision would be inferior due to the cramped conditions.

2.6 Media program in operation

Apart from the arrival at RAAF Fairbairn on Wednesday 22nd October, 2003, the main media events were scheduled for Thursday 23rd October 2003. The schedule for that day involved the coordination and movement of large numbers of Australian and US media into positions in five locations, namely Government House, Parliament House, The Lodge, The Australian War Memorial and RAAF Fairbairn.

The agreed arrangements for pool positions and numbers took into account the size of the venue and the event type, i.e. a photo opportunity or a media opportunity where the President and the Prime Minister could field questions from the media. The agreed media positions differed in some instances from standard VIP visit practice. That was communicated to the visiting media officers. Numbers in the pools were the same for both sides, except where the US did not request to cover the pool position or where changes were made due to space restrictions. i.e. Government House and the Prime Minister's Office.

The Government House meeting and the arrival at Parliament House went smoothly. The expanded pool in the foyer covered the ceremony and the departure of the main party to the Ministerial wing.

In the Prime Minister's Office the Australian pool was placed next to the Prime Minister's Visitors' Book ahead of schedule as is the usual practice for other visits. However, the media plan stated that this event was to be covered by official photographers only, and the White House media staff were upset by the change. There needs to be a system where changes to standard media arrangements in any venue are cleared and understood by all involved.

The Speech to Parliament was an open media event. The US media, apart from the Travel pool, were pre-positioned in the glass enclosure above the northern gallery. Australian media liaison officers were positioned in the enclosure with the US media. During the speech, a US pool TV camera was taken into the chamber despite written advice not to do so and this issue is the subject of an investigation initiated by the Speaker.

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The photo opportunity with the Leader of the Opposition was changed from a pool arrangement to official photographers only at the request of the US at the last minute. Despite this change the US subsequently took a US pool TV camera into the meeting.

The Lodge event was not originally on the media schedule. The PMO requested a small Australian pool join the US travel pool on the morning of the 23rd October. Both pools were invited to cover the photo opportunity with the President and John Eales.

The War memorial visit consisted of a wreath laying ceremony and a meeting with Defence force personnel (official photographers only). Australian pool pre-set in hall of memory. The US travel pool moved into position after arrival of motorcade. Australian pool camera (CH 10) did successful live cross to War Memorial during 5pm news bulletin. Australian media secured media interviews of ADF personnel at War Memorial after the departure of the motorcade.

Australian media were transported by bus and pre-set at the RAAF Base for the departure of the President.

2.7 Outline of approved Media arrangements

The following section refers to the approved media arrangements with the American media representatives and signed off by the PMO and provides comment in review of proceedings during the visit.

Date: October 22, 2003

Event: Arrival at RAAF Fairbairn

Pool Type: Open

Review: Domestic media at open arrival pool in excess of 60. The event generated large amount of local coverage. Local Channel 7 crew covered arrival "live" and beamed pictures to parliament house studio. Feed also went live via satellite to east coast of America in breakfast timeslot. Security and passes checking went smoothly. Excellent assistance from AFP site officers.

Date: October 23

Event: Government House

Pool Type: Small (5 + 5)

Review: Both pools set up in advance. Smooth entry and exit.

Date: October 23

Event: Parliament forecourt

Pool Type: Small (3)

Review: Australian pool pre-set. Covered the arrival and greeting.

Date: October 23

Event: Parliament Foyer- Ceremony

Pool Type: Expanded pool (10 + 10)

Review: both preset pools instructed to stay on riser which was provided by Joint House Department. One agreed photographic pool position for head-on shot in foyer removed by US security prior to the event. Good coverage. Sound and Vision covered this position live.

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Date: October 23

Event: Book signing # 1 – members hall.

Pool Type: US Camera + Sound and Vision Camera

Review: close up shot of signing of visitor's book.

Date: October 23

Event: Book signing – Prime Minister's Suite.

Pool Type: Pool camera + photographer.

Review: PMO officer moved expanded pool in early to cover this event, as happens for all other HOS/HOG visits, but this time was a departure from the media schedule.

Date: October 23

Event: Bilateral meeting

Pool Type: Expanded pool

Review: US travel pool and expanded (9 people) covered this event. PMO staff escorted pools from holding room. SAVO decided not to cover event due to space limitations. Requests from MLO and PMO to have a separate media event after the bilateral were unsuccessful.

Date: October 23

Event: Cabinet Photo- opportunity

Pool Type: pool (3 + 3)

Review: Changed to official photographers only at US request.

Date: October 23

Event: Mrs Bush media event

Pool Type: small

Review: event went smoothly. Media covered Mrs Bush and Mrs Howard in Mural Hall and alcove. Photo opportunity only.

Date: October 23

Event: Speech in Chamber

Pool Type: Open

Review: Australian media accommodated in press gallery behind Speaker. US media seated in glass alcove above northern gallery. US Travel pool arrived after speech began and proceeded to glass alcove to join other US media representatives. US and Australian still photographers pre-set in rear of galleries. US travel pool camera taken into Chamber during Presidential speech despite written advice that no camera was to be allowed in the Chamber during the Joint sitting. Footage of event seen on US and Australian networks.

Date: October 23

Event: Leader of the Opposition call.

Pool Type: Small (1 camera)

Review: pre-set Australian pool TV camera to cover greeting between President and Leader of opposition. Official photographers only to cover meeting proper. Pool camera denied coverage on day. US Pool camera subsequently taken into meeting to get footage. No Aus TV pool camera present.

Date: October 23

Event: Departure

Pool Type: Small

Review: Departure covered by photographer and SAVO.

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Date: October 23

Event: Lodge event

Pool Type: small pool (US) and small (AUS) (4)

Review: US Travel pool positioned inside Lodge grounds away from function on "watch". Joined by AUS pool and both sides invited to cover post-lunch photo opportunity when the President was handed a gift by John Eales. The PMO advised that they wanted one aspect of the function covered only.

Date: October 23

Event: War memorial arrival

Pool Type: small Australian pool

Review: agreed position changed after canvas awning erected on October 22 blocked the shot.

Date: October 23

Event: War Memorial – Hall of memory

Pool Type: Travel pool and Australian pool (15)

Review: Both pools pre-set to cover wreath-laying. US travel pool arrived just prior to event. Australian media advised to remain in Hall of Memory until departure of motorcade – 15 min wait. The US pool had to join the motorcade for departure to RAAF Fairbairn. (The US media had to be on the Presidential plane as their media plane had already departed)

Date: October 23

Event: War memorial departure

Pool Type: Small AUS pool (1 TV camera)

Review: agreed position changed due to canvas awning. Position moved back behind security perimeter after consultation with site security officers. Channel 10 proceeded with "live" cross during news and two other pool cameras on Anzac parade covered motorcade. Their footage was uploaded to bureaus via CH 10 outside broadcast van. Australian pool covered departure of General Cosgrove and held doorstep with ADF personnel.

Date: October 23

Event: RAAF Fairbairn – Departure of President.

Pool Type: Open

Review: Australian media escorted via media bus to RAAF Fairbairn. Channel 7 (AUS) covered the departure live. US Pool covered departure and escorted to plane.

2.8 Outcomes

Coverage of the visit was extensive with all national dailies and TV networks in Australia covering the visit. The majority of the reports were positive, with a strong emphasis on the Australian/US alliance. The President's speech to Parliament attracted widespread coverage. Coverage in the US was significant, with the focus being the address to the Joint Sitting of Parliament on the October 23.

The media arrangements enabled both American and Australian media access to the Presidential visit within the constraints of unprecedented security requirements imposed on all aspects of the visit.

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Section 3 - Summary and Recommendations

1. The National Visit Media Card (NVMC) system recently introduced by the Attorney-General was a success. Visiting media used the card. Australian media were aware of need to have a card for pool opportunities for the visit. Suggest ongoing awareness of the card system with security agencies at both Federal and State level. Suggest awareness campaign include the Diplomatic community.
2. Event venues worked well and accommodated the travelling press. Venue managers and staff were aware of the need to move media in and out of venues quickly and cooperated well. Suggest asking venue media managers (i.e. at the Australian War Memorial) for venue-specific guidelines for future visits and ensuring that where standard venue protocols are changed, that all relevant parties be informed.
3. Formal sign off for agreed media arrangements for high level visits should be sought from security personnel on both sides. Protocols for media management and security should continue to be cleared with security before distribution to the media.
4. Guidelines for high level visits be reviewed in conjunction with PM&C and PSCC, drawing on the standard arrangements for such visits. All stakeholders, including the media, the Speaker, the Department and the PMO to have input.
5. That visits with a similar high profile require continued involvement in planning and execution by the PM's media office.
6. That Government agencies involved in the visit be seconded at the earliest possible opportunity to assist in coordination and management of media events/issues/outcomes where possible.

Daniel Bolger
Under Contract to CERHOS
November 2003