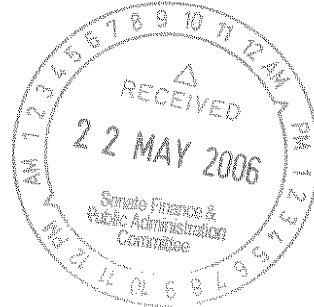




PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA

22 May 2006



Senator Andrew Murray
Chairman
Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Chairman

I have had a search of my office files, and provide to the Committee a further letter from the Presiding Officers to the then Education Minister, Dr Nelson, dated 15 February 2005.

Yours sincerely

(Paul Calvert)



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House of Representatives

15 FEB 2005

The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, MP
Minister for Education, Science and Training
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

The Prime Minister wrote to us on 20 December 2004 and asked us to consider the possibility of closer coordination or amalgamation of the Citizenship Visits Program (CVP) with the Educational Travel Rebate (ETR) administered under the National Capital Educational Tourism Project by the Department of Education, Science and Training, and to discuss the matter with you. We are writing to you with our preliminary views on this matter, and seek the opportunity to discuss these views with you before we respond to the Prime Minister.

We support greater coordination between the two programs, but consider that amalgamation of the programs is not appropriate. It needs to be recognised that the two subsidies in their present forms are mutually exclusive and are for very different purposes. The CVP is a specific purpose payment for a visit focussed on Parliament House which must include participation in a Parliamentary Education Office program, and facilitates the contact of students with Members and Senators as part of the parliamentary education experience. The NCETP-ETR is a payment to visit Canberra as a tourist. The CVP payment is made for engaging in a civics program, and the ETR has, as its prime purpose, the promotion of tourism.

Students visiting Parliament House under the CVP program represent only a small component of the parliamentary education program for schools which is delivered at Parliament House (about 20,000 of the total of about 110,000), making it efficient to administer the CVP as a component of this wider program. We would foresee potential inefficiencies, difficulties in coordination and the loss of a parliamentary focus if the CVP program were administered apart from the general parliamentary education program at Parliament House.

Because of the considerable interest of Senators and Members in the CVP and in visits by schools more generally to Parliament House, we would be reluctant to initiate any change which may diminish Senators' and Members' current capacity to have a say in setting and monitoring the terms and conditions of the CVP, or which may have a more general impact on the education program at Parliament House.

The Parliamentary Education Office and DEST already work together for greater coordination and clarification of the purposes and public notification of the two programs. We would see this working relationship being developed further by, for example, including references to the ETR on printed and electronic information about the CVP. We would welcome any suggestions that you have for greater coordination between the two programs.

We look forward to having the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our views on the programs.

Yours sincerely



PAUL CALVERT



DAVID HAWKER

CITIZENSHIP VISITS PROGRAM

Background

The Citizenship Visits Program (CVP) commenced in 1989. The CVP subsidy provides financial assistance to secondary and final year primary school students travelling more than 1000 kilometres to visit Parliament House to enhance their understanding of the roles of the Houses and the parliamentary system of government.

Initially the program was funded by the Department of Employment Education and Training and administered by both the Department of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Funding currently is provided by the Department of Finance and Administration as an administered item under Appropriation Bill No.3. In its first year of operation 1669 students received the subsidy. In the 2004—2005 financial year it is expected that 19,000 students will receive the subsidy to the value of more than \$1.3m. The Serjeant at Arms' Office takes all bookings for school visits to Parliament House and manages the CVP subsidy applications. Over 110,000 students visit Parliament House each year of which approximately 17 % receive the CVP subsidy.

Eligibility:

In order to qualify for the subsidy the students who meet the distance criteria must complete a program in Parliament House which is of at least two hours duration. This includes a specially developed Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) program with additional components which might include hospitality, meeting with their Member or a Senator and/or tours of Parliament House.

Enhancements to the administration of the CVP Program:

Since its inception the CVP program has been evaluated on a number of occasions and decisions regarding rates and guidelines have been made by successive Presiding Officers. These decisions have resulted in extending the program to include final year primary students. Rates have been modified and as from 1 January 2004 the following rates have applied:

Between 1000 and 2000 kilometres	\$40.00
Between 2000 and 3000 kilometres	\$110.00
More than 3000 kilometres	\$230.00

When the program was established in 1989 administration of the various components was shared between Members' or Senators' offices, the PEO and the Serjeant-at-Arms' Office. Booking arrangements were complex and did not meet the needs of our clients. In 1995 an electronic booking system was developed and now all components of each visit are booked at the one time and through the Serjeant's Schools Booking Officer. The booking system also allows monitoring of expenditure against budget and commitments. This has made the administration of the CVP efficient and streamlined in terms of organising bookings and financial management.

Since the National Capital Educational Tourism Project (NCETP) commenced in 2000, the PEO together with the Serjeant's Office has had frequent contact and meetings with Mr Gary Watson, Co-ordinator of the Project, to discuss operational issues and to ensure that schools are assisted to obtain the appropriate subsidy or rebate. The Serjeant's Office regularly advises schools to contact the NCETP to apply for the \$15 subsidy when they are not eligible for the CVP subsidy. As well, on occasions both parliamentary offices (PEO and SAA) have held discussions in relation to individual schools which have faced particular difficulties in obtaining the CVP subsidy because of late bookings or other administrative problems.

4 February 2005

National Capital Educational Tourism Project



Australian Government
National Capital Authority



National Capital Attractions

Attachment 2

Dear Parents,

Students from your school soon be undertaking, or have recently undertaken, an educational tour of the National Capital. Participating in a variety of educational programs will help them gain a better understanding of our history, culture, heritage and democracy.

The Australian Government recognizes the importance of all young Australians being able to visit their National Capital. To assist you in meeting the cost of the excursion the Government is contributing \$15 per student toward the travel expenses incurred. This contribution will be paid directly to your school upon completion of the excursion.

We would like to thank the Department of Education, Science and Training for their support of this initiative.

As part of this initiative students will be participating in projects that utilize the excursion and focus on either the history of our democracy, contributing to their local community or developing active leadership skills.

I hope that your child's tour to the National Capital will be a rewarding one.

Yours sincerely,

Garry Watson
Project Team Leader



CREEDA BUSINESS CENTRE, BRADFIELD ST DOWNER ACT 2602 ■ PO Box 1148 DICKSON ACT 2602
T 02 6162 4460 ■ F 02 6162 4461 ■ E ncetp@netspeed.com.au

COMPLETION OF EDUCATION FORM

Please stamp/sign at least 6 of the following Education Programs to verify that your students visited these National Capital Attractions. Two of the 6 that appear in capitals must have been visited to be eligible for the ETR.

<p>PARLIAMENT HOUSE PROGRAM (Parliamentary Education Office, guided tour, meet your local member. Circle above programs completed, only one stamp required)</p> <p>Sign: _____ Date: _____</p>	<p>OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE PROGRAM</p> <p>Sign: _____ Date: _____</p>	<p>ELECTORAL EDUCATION CENTRE</p> <p>Sign: _____ Date: _____</p>
<p>NATIONAL CAPITAL EXHIBITION</p> <p>Sign: _____ Date: _____</p>	<p>NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA</p> <p>Sign: _____ Date: _____</p>	<p>NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA</p> <p>Sign: _____ Date: _____</p>
<p>Anzac Parade Memorials</p> <p>Sign: _____ Date: _____</p>	<p>Australian Institute of Sport</p> <p>Sign: _____ Date: _____</p>	<p>Australian National Botanic Gardens</p> <p>Sign: _____ Date: _____</p>
<p>Australian Science Festival</p> <p>Sign: _____ Date: _____</p>	<p>Australian War Memorial</p> <p>Sign: _____ Date: _____</p>	<p>Blundell's Cottage</p> <p>Sign: _____ Date: _____</p>

National Capital Educational Tourism Project



Australian Government
National Capital Authority



National Capital Attractions

STEPS FOR APPLYING FOR AND CLAIMING THE EDUCATION TRAVEL REBATE (ETR)

1. Read the Guidelines to ensure that you are visiting the correct number of Attractions and you are familiar with the eligibility criteria.
2. Complete the Application form and post or fax to our office. Please ensure that you include a copy of the draft itinerary and proposed student list.
3. On receipt of your application form the NCETP office will write to your school confirming that funding is available for your school's excursion. This letter will enclose the requirements that need to be completed to finalise your school's application.

Please note that no funding is assured until the NCETP office has confirmed your application has been accepted.

4. Publish the letter acknowledging the Australian Government's \$15 contribution in your school's newsletter, or confirm that the letter has been distributed to the parents of the students undertaking the excursion. This can be done either prior to, or after the excursion has taken place.
5. Ensure the Attractions Stamping form is signed and stamped on your excursion.
6. On completion of your excursion undertake a class project, and provide a copy of it or a 300-word summary of the project undertaken to the NCETP.
7. Complete the New Supplier Form.
8. Complete the details on the Cover sheet forwarded as part of step 3.
9. Return all documentation to the NCETP office. (Please refer to the checklist to ensure all documentation has been completed.)
10. NCETP will check that all requirements have been met and process the application for payment.
11. NCETP will forward a letter to the school advising the application has been approved for payment. Payment will generally be made within one month.
12. Payment of the ETR will be deposited into the nominated school account by EFT. The school will receive a remittance advice from the National Capital Authority advising the payment has been made.



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Education Travel Rebate (ETR)

The National Capital Educational Tourism Project is providing a rebate for travel expenses to encourage primary and secondary students to visit the National Capital and take part in a range of special programs, engaging and educating students in Australia's democracy, civics and heritage. All participating National Capital institutions and attractions will provide programs around the theme 'Discover what it means to be Australian'.

The program, funded by the Australian Government, provides a \$15 Travel Rebate to student's visiting the National Capital up until the 30th June 2005. Funding will be available to students in years 4 - 12. It is possible for smaller schools to combine class groups or combine with other regional school groups to better utilise coach or alternate transport. The rebate is distributed on a first come first served basis until funds are exhausted.

ELIGIBILITY

- The rebate is available ONLY to schools that are located further than 150 Kms from the Australian Capital Territory. This distance will be calculated by the most direct route using the Robinson's Road Atlas of Australia.
- Schools qualifying for and receiving the Citizenship Visits Program subsidy provided by the Office of the Sergeant-at Arms, House of Representatives, Parliament House are **INELIGIBLE** to receive the ETR. Exceptional circumstances may be considered.
- To be eligible students must be enrolled with a recognised education provider outside of the Australian Capital Territory and be part of an organised school excursion group whose principal purpose is to travel to the National Capital and undertake the education programs offered by the National Capital Attractions.
- Teachers or other adults accompanying the students are not eligible.
- Students must visit and/or attend in the period of the excursion, a minimum of six (6) specific educational programs offered by the National Institutions and Attractions. This must include at least two of the following: a Parliament House program (Parliamentary Education Office, Parliament House guided tour, meet your local member) the Electoral Education Centre, Old Parliament House, the National Archives of Australia, the National Museum of Australia or the National Capital Exhibition.
- A student is only eligible to receive the travel rebate once per year. It is the responsibility of the visiting school to ensure that each student for whom the grant is claimed has not, to the best of the school's knowledge, already received the grant in the current year.
- Funding will be available to students in years 4 - 12 only.
- Student groups will be required to undertake a small post visit project based on their experience in the National Capital (a range of possible project topics will be forwarded on approval of the application). A summary of the project will be required after completion of the excursion.

A list of National Capital Attractions is included with these forms. If you require further information, please contact NCETP for details on 02 6162 4460. However, the National Capital Educational Tourism Project is **NOT** a booking agency. Please contact the institution/attraction or your travel agent for availability of programs when planning your excursion.

The NCETP partners are Government agencies and adhere to all government privacy guidelines.

NATIONAL CAPITAL ATTRACTIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL EDUCATIONAL TOURISM PROJECT

- Anzac Parade Memorials
- Australian Electoral Commission,
Electoral Education Centre,
Canberra
- Australian Institute of Sport
- Australian National Botanic
Gardens
- Australian Science Festival
- Australian War Memorial
- Bundell's Cottage
- Bywong Town
- Calthorpe's House
- Canberra Deep Space
Communication Complex
- Canberra Museum and Gallery
- Canberra Space Dome &
Observatory
- Cockington Green
- CSIRO *Discovery*
- Geoscience Australia
- Green Machine Science Education
Centre
- High Court of Australia
- Lanyon Homestead
- Mugga-Mugga
- National Archives of Australia
- National Capital Exhibition
- National Carillon
- National Dinosaur Museum
- National Gallery of Australia
- National Library of Australia
- National Museum of Australia
- National Portrait Gallery
- National Zoo and Aquarium
- Nolan Gallery
- Old Parliament House
- Parliament House Guided Tour
- Parliamentary Education Office
- Questacon – The National Science
and Technology Centre
- Royal Australian Mint
- ScreenSound Australia, National
Screen and Sound Archive
- Telstra Tower

Process for obtaining the Education Travel Rebate

Important: The ETR has been extended until 30 June 2005. However, funds are limited and applications will be approved on a first come first serve basis.

- Eligible schools must submit the attached form to the National Capital Educational Tourism Project (NCETP) and attach the following:
 - A copy of the planned itinerary.
 - A proposed list of participating students.
- Confirmation that the school has qualified to receive the Rebate will be forwarded along with all necessary claim forms and information as soon as possible after receipt of application. Each qualifying school will receive in this pack a letter which **MUST** be published in the school newsletter or provided to parents. It will provide information concerning the Rebate and its purpose to provide every Australian student with the opportunity to experience their country's democracy, civics and heritage.
- All completed claim forms and requested information must be returned to the National Capital Educational Tourism Project as soon as possible after completion of the excursion.
- In cases where school excursion groups comprise students from various schools, payment will be made to the school each student attends, unless other arrangements have been approved by the NCETP

ONE FORM PER SCHOOL IF MORE THAN ONE SCHOOL IS INVOLVED IN TRAVEL GROUP.

NAME OF SCHOOL _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ POSTCODE _____

PHONE _____ FAX _____

EMAIL _____

NAME OF TEACHER IN CHARGE _____

NAME OF COACH/BUS/AIRLINE OR TOUR COMPANY AND BOOKING AGENT _____

DATE OF VISIT ___/___/___ TO ___/___/___

NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS ON THE EXCURSION (please attach a list of names)

Please enter the number of students in each year level travelling to Canberra:

Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

IS THE ABOVE SCHOOL IN A COMMUNITY OF LESS THAN 10,000 IN POPULATION? YES/NO

HOW/WHERE DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE REBATE _____

FORWARD TO:

NATIONAL CAPITAL EDUCATIONAL TOURISM PROJECT
PO BOX 1148 DICKSON, ACT, 2602, Phone: (02) 6162 4460 Fax: (02) 6162 4461



Discovering
Democracy



Department of Education,
Science and Training

National Capital Educational Tourism Project



Australian Government
National Capital Authority



National Capital Attractions

PROJECT TASKS

The following are examples of project tasks that encourage involvement in the local community and develops leadership among your students.

This is a small sample and if you are undertaking another project task with your students that has similar characteristics (ie encourages community involvement and leadership development) you are welcome to submit this as an alternative.

If you have any questions regarding the below project tasks please contact the National Capital Educational Tourism Project on 02 6162 4460.

1. NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE - QUESTACON

Australian Scientific Achievements: Questacon's Australian Innovations Gallery showcases the work of Australians who have contributed to our society through significant scientific inventions and discoveries.

Project: Identify an invention while at Questacon and using the Questacon website www.questacon.gov.au further research this invention. Within your local community, identify an application of one of this invention. How has this helped further your community? Has the innovation developed and evolved since its inception?

2. CANBERRA SPACE DOME & OBSERVATORY

As our towns and cities grow, our night skies are fading. This subject touches on astronomy, the environment, town planning, demographics and economics.

Project: light pollution in your local area. Get your local astronomy group to talk to you about this vastly underestimated problem and the great need to raise public awareness. Conduct a survey on the amount of skyglow in the school's vicinity and identify the major contributors to the problem. Check the website www.ctuc.asn.au/planetarium/ and look at ways to save our skies. Perhaps your school could award commendations to those organisations that have shown a sensible and restrained approach to lighting.

3. AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS

Floral Emblems

Project: Investigate the native plants in your area. Decide on one that you think could become the Floral Emblem for your school. Draw pictures and write about it. Send your drawings and write to us at the Australian National Botanic Gardens and we will choose one entry each week during the school year to put onto our web site.

Project: Education kits (line art for photocopying, poster and PDF resource files) on the Gardens website www.anbg.gov.au will provide all the details.

4. SCREENSOUND, NATIONAL SCREEN AND SOUND ARCHIVE

ScreenSound Australia, the National Screen and Sound Archive Discover more than 13 hours of film and television clips and sound bites in the exciting exhibition Sights + Sounds of a Nation. Experience key moments in the last 100 years of Australia film, radio, television and recorded sound.

Project: Using the ScreenSound Australia website www.screensound.gov.au search our online catalogue to find items in the collection from your local area. Check out the school extension activities under education on our website. Use resources such as your local library, historical society and members of the community to find out about the history of your local cinema or radio station.

5. CSIRO DISCOVERY

The CSIRO Discovery centre showcases Australia's achievements in science and technology.

Project: CSIRO is located Australia-wide. Students could contact the nearest CSIRO research division located in their region. They could then identify a successful research project, which was undertaken in their region and by visiting the CSIRO website www.csiro.gov.au study how this work has been of benefit to the local community and Australia.

6. AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

Conflict has been a major part of the last 100 years. At the Australian War Memorial you can experience what it was like to be Australian soldiers involved in World Wars.

Project: Study the history of your local memorial or community organisation such as Legacy or RSL. How did your local community participate in past war efforts? By using the resources and examples available on the Australian War Memorials website www.awm.gov.au identify ways that your community can become more involved in recognising the sacrifice of local war heroes.



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