Parliamentarians' Overseas Study Travel Reports

1 January to 30 June 2012
1 July to 31 December 2012

The individual overseas study travel reports provided by Senators and Members are consolidated into one document and presented as a separate volume to the other two reports, which cover the costs of current and former Parliamentarians’ expenditure on entitlements for the period 1 July to 31 December 2012.

Supporting Information

To reduce the size of this document, some pages may have been excluded from individual reports (indicated on relevant title pages). A copy of the full report (and any supporting documentation, including a wide range of reference material such as copies of legislation, itineraries and reports prepared by other entities) is available on written request to the Office of the Special Minister of State.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr Harry Jenkins MP</td>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>1 - 5 September 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hon Dr Sharman Stone MP</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>6 - 8 September 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>7 - 9 September 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Don Randall MP</td>
<td>Sri Lanka and Hong Kong</td>
<td>21 September - 3 October 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Ross Vasta MP</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>22 September - 7 October 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hon Susan Ley MP</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>23 September 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28 - 29 September 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hon John Cobb MP</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>12 - 16 October 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Scott Morrison MP</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>12 - 17 October 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hon Julie Bishop MP</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>13 - 16 October 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Harry Jenkins MP</td>
<td>Cyprus, United Kingdom, United States of America</td>
<td>13 - 28 October 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hon Andrew Robb AO MP</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td>21 - 26 October 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Stuart Robert MP</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>21 - 28 October 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Mike Symon MP</td>
<td>United Kingdom and France</td>
<td>2 - 11 November 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senator Catryna Bilyk</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>2 - 16 November 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senator Trish Crossin</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>2 - 16 November 2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MR HARRY JENKINS MP

Malta
1 – 5 September 2012
Dear Minister

In accordance with the requirements of Clause 9.2(b) of Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2006/18 (the Determination), I submit the following statement reporting on my recent overseas study travel.

I note that, in accordance with Clause 9.5 of the Determination, a copy of this statement may be obtained from you upon request by any Senator or Member.

I note that this statement will be tabled in the Parliament at your discretion, including as part of the six monthly tabling of entitlements expenditure for Senators and Members by the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

Yours sincerely

HARRY JENKINS MP
20 March 2013
**Purpose of Journey**

The purpose of my travel to Malta was to investigate Malta’s approach to the processing of refugees, and to have discussions with Maltese Parliamentarians, including Speaker Michael Frendo who I hosted when he visited Australia in October last year, about current Maltese politics and contemporary parliamentary practices in Malta.

(The visit followed my attendance at the international conference “From a Nuclear Test Ban to a Nuclear-Weapons-Free World” and Annual Assembly in Kazakhstan, from Monday 27 until Thursday 30 August 2012. Cost of travel and accommodation for this conference was met by the Parliament of Kazakhstan.)

**Detailed Itinerary Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 September 2012</td>
<td>OS698</td>
<td>Astana to Vienna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KM513</td>
<td>Vienna to Valletta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 September 2012</td>
<td>Informal Meeting</td>
<td>Speaker VIP Lounge, Airport, Luqa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 September 2012</td>
<td>Official Dinner</td>
<td>Sliema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Department of Home Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>House of Catalunya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Marsamxetto Road, Valletta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>The Emigrants’ Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dar L-Emigrant, Castile Place, Valetta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Jesuit Refugee Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>St Aloysius’ Sports Complex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50 Triq ix-Xorrox, Birkirkara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 September 2012</td>
<td>Informal meeting/</td>
<td>House of Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tour</td>
<td>Grand Master’s Palace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>St George’s Square, Valletta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 September 2012</td>
<td>EK108</td>
<td>Valletta to Dubai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Meetings and Outcomes / Findings

Saturday, September 1

Mr Michael Frendo, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta.

Upon my arrival at Valletta Airport I was greeted by Speaker Frendo. I was able to have informal discussions with Mr Frendo about the current political situation in Malta. There was speculation that the parliament may not resume and that an early election might be called. The Speaker indicated that naturally the Government would call an election at the politically best timing. As a former Minister for Foreign Affairs, he was an interesting interlocutor about Malta’s relation with Europe and Malta’s dealings with asylum seekers/illegal boat arrivals.

Sunday, September 2

Due to illness I was unable to attend the official dinner to be hosted by Speaker Frendo.

Monday, September 3

Mr Mario Caruana, Director General (Operations)
Dr Josette Zerafa, Director (EU Affairs)
Department of Justice and Home Affairs

Malta’s attitude to irregular people movements is guided by its responsibilities under the relevant EU obligations. Malta accepts these directives as being appropriate. (Especially as the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) is situated in Valetta.)

Malta with a population of 425,000 has been confronted with the challenge of nearly 17,000 asylum seekers arriving irregularly in the past 15 years. This is the highest per capita ratio in Europe.

The modus of their arrival can be characterised as people leaving the North African coast on the Mediterranean setting out to land in continental Europe, specifically Italy. They have paid (US$1,000 to 1,700) for passage aboard vessels, usually an unscrewed inflatable rubber dinghy. Due to overcrowding/overloading and unsuitability for the task, the vessels founder leading to the need for search and rescue action. As a leftover from British colonial days Malta has search and rescue responsibilities within the Mediterranean Sea from east of Tunisia to west of Crete, an area of 250,000 square kilometres. Maltese officials are contacted by those at the destination in Italy who have received the distress call by cell phone provided to the passengers by the people smugglers, and once being rescued become Malta’s responsibility.

The asylum seekers come from the Horn of Africa, Somalia, Eritrea, Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast. The most recent arrivals had been guest workers from these countries fleeing the conflict in Libya.
Similar challenges are confronted by the Maltese officials as in Australia: confronting criminal networks involved in the irregular movement; the nature of detention – initially in closed reception centres and then after a time trigger to open facilities; difficulty of returning people if claim rejected.

The acceptance rate of asylum claims is 50-55%. The officials were very grateful that Australia had accepted 6 people for resettlement. Malta is working with other International partners on resettlement.

EASO is working on a more harmonised approach throughout Europe and is supporting the 27 member States by, for instance, providing training.

Mr Joseph Calleja
The Emigrants’ Commission

The Emigrants’ Commission is a multi-pronged NGO with an interest in migration related matters. In refugee services it takes a role in the long-term settlement of refugees, providing housing and long-term support. At the time of my visit a number of refugees were using computers and assistance for employment searching.

Other projects have involved assisting people to return to their homelands after being guest worker and fleeing a third country in the region.

Another important role of the Commission is its support of Maltese communities overseas. Migration from Malta to countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Canada and Australia is significant. The displays in the Commission’s Malta Migration Museum of historic documentation and other artefacts in the Commission’s Museum indicate the pride that Malta has of the contribution of their diaspora to their adopted countries. The strong feeling of connection to Australia is abundantly clear.

Dr Katrine Camilleri, Assistant Director
Jesuit Refugee Service Malta (JRSM)

My visit to this service impressed upon me the universality of Non-Government Organisations. I was confronted by scenes I had seen on many occasions visiting similar organisations in Australia - dedicated people working in modest surrounds. I arrived at the JRSM’s office during a torrential downpour, to be confronted by leaking roofs and a group of ten Somalis being kitted out with large plastic bins of household goods and essentials. This was a group of asylum seekers whose asylum claims had been accepted and had been released from a processing/reception centre that morning.

JRSM not only provides services it is involved in a range of advocacy activities, for individuals as well as on policy matters. They have expressed their concern that all irregular arrivals including unaccompanied minors are sent to closed reception centres, which are Army Barracks. It was indicated that processing of claims was a mixture of law and policy, which had developed as a response to circumstances as they occurred.
In discussions I was alerted to AWAS (Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers). This service is 75% funded by the EU European Refugee fund. People holding refugee status; or temporary humanitarian protection (THP); or subsidiary protection can register for the service. It aims to provide legal job matching between job vacancies with registered refugees and beneficiaries of protection.

Comment was also made that despite the Dublin Accord aiming to provide standardised processing throughout Europe, because of the age of the accord there were different approaches and a need for harmonisation.

Tuesday, September 4

Ray Scicluna, Clerk
House of Representatives, Malta

The House of Representatives presently meets in the Grand Master’s Palace. A heritage declared building it also houses the Office of the President of Malta in the South Wing.

The House Chamber is a 1970’s outfitted space in the original Palace Armoury. The room that the Business Committee of the House meets in is the Grand Master’s bedroom. I was impressed that despite the buildings heritage listing a pragmatic approach has been taken to the installation of new technology, such as automated TV cameras. I was envious that this could be achieved with more apparent ease than within our 25 year old Parliament House.

A new Parliament House is being purpose built in Freedom square near The Victoria Gate of the walled city. An Australian connection is that Bovis Lend-Lease is the project manager. Whilst the Parliamentary spaces will be modern, there will be less available space, nonetheless it is seen as necessary progress.

Conclusion

My visit to Malta fulfilled my expectations.

The information I gained about Malta’s attitude to asylum seekers, the processing of their claims, and assistance to refugees provides me with a clear understanding of the challenges of irregular people movement in and across the Mediterranean Sea, and that the irregular movement of people is definitely not the sole challenge of Australia. My only regret is that I did not meet representatives of the Office of the Refugee Commissioner.

In addition the visit confirmed for me the depth of the relationship between Australia and Malta; the importance and pride associated with Maltese migration to Australia.

In a parliamentary sense I have spoken to the Clerk of the House of Representatives indicating that I believed it would be appropriate for the Australian Parliament to make a small presentation to the Maltese Parliament to commemorate the opening of the new building.
Overseas Study Travel Report

Thursday 20 September 2012

Special Minister of State
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

In accordance with the requirements of Clause 9.2(b) of Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2006/18 (the Determination), I submit the following statement reporting on my recent overseas study travel.

I note that, in accordance with Clause 9.5 of the Determination, a copy of this statement may be obtained from you upon request by any Senator or Member. I also note that this statement will be tabled in the Parliament at your discretion, including as part of the six-monthly tabling of entitlements expenditure for Senators and Members by the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

Yours sincerely

Sharman Stone
Purpose of Journey

To undertake a review food trade matters in Singapore with emphasis on Companies in my electorate exporting fresh and manufactured produce to Singapore. These include Murray Goulburn, Fonterra and SPC Ardmona. Also to monitor the price, quality and availability of their fresh and manufactured produce in overseas markets.

Detailed Itinerary Schedule

**Thursday 6 September** - Singapore Airlines Flt 5017 depart Yangon Mingaladon Airport - Arrive Singapore

**Saturday 8 September** – Singapore Airlines Flt 217 depart Singapore - Arrive Melbourne

Key Findings

Australia exported $167million worth of milk, cream, whey and yoghurt into Singapore in 2010-2011, but imported over $546m worth of “food preparations” in the same year. In 2011-12 Singapore exports of food into Australia rose to $791million. Since Singapore has little agriculture beyond some limited chicken production (which Australia does not import), much of this food had been processed from raw materials or semi processed product from other countries of origin.

Clearly the value of the Australian dollar has given a significant boost to those importing the cheaper products, while handicapping Australian exports. Food is now coming into Australia at an accelerated rate, namely from New Zealand ($2.05billion) China $842million, the USA (1.13billion) Thailand (741million), Italy ($469million) France ($332m) and Malaysia ($456million).

In total imports into Australia of fresh fruit and vegetables from all sources were worth $354m while imports of processed fruit and vegetables were worth $1.74billion in 2011-2012.

I arrived in Singapore at 9.00pm on the 6th September, and exited the country on the 8th September at 9.00am. This allowed me one working day to check on the availability, competitiveness and performance of Australian food exports, in particular in popular middle range and higher cost supermarkets. I also compared the availability and price of the food imports from Australia’s competitors, in particular New Zealand, South Africa and the USA.
Australian beef sales to Singapore surged 94% to 1357 tonnes in August this year. This was due to reduced competition. The meat was displayed with prominent country of origin labelling, clearly seen as a selling point. It is particularly popular with the ex-pat community. Australian fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables have declined in market share in comparison to product from New Zealand, with fresh Australian carrots and cauliflower poorly presented with no prominent country of origin labelling. There were no special marketing efforts for Australian produce in the two supermarkets visited. However, New Zealand had elaborately presented kiwifruit in specially designed and printed cartons. The New Zealand origin labelling was a feature of this display with pictures of the New Zealand country side. The sales positioning was just inside the store. In contrast virtually beside this neat, prominent and colourful display was a table heaped with Australian avocados in various stages of ripeness, and obscure country of origin labelling. The kiwi fruit was in hot demand; I did not see anyone buying the sad heap of well priced avocados while I watched.

No fresh or frozen Australian seafood was located. There were however tins of Australian abalone on sale with no signage indicating country of origin.

Fresh vegetables from South Africa and USA were in much greater quantities, but Malaysia, for obvious reasons was the largest source of almost all produce.

There has been a slight increase in Australian dairy exports to Singapore. In the dairy cabinets Australian produce from Bega, Murray Goulburn, Lactos and Kraft was displayed without any reference to origin. The varieties and portion sizes from New Zealand were much more plentiful. European cheeses in particular were more prominently labelled as from France, Italy or Denmark. Prices of all products were comparable. Australian icecream and frozen yoghurt was also available along many similar offerings from other countries.

In speaking to consumers and one of the supermarket supervisors I asked about the comparative demand for Australian strawberries, which were being sold beside and at the same price as fresh strawberries from USA. I was told that there is a very common problem with the fresh Australian strawberries sold in clear plastic punnets. The Australian fruit inevitable goes mouldy while still on offer, while there is never an issue of deterioration in the quality of the USA fruit.

A feature of several restaurants were prominently displayed large sized posters supplied by the USA Government food exporter Council. These were generic posters extolling the virtues of USA pork and USA beef. The posters were attractive enough for the restaurants to have them in their display windows.
A new development in Singapore is the opening of a franchise off-shoot from Brunetti a very successful up-market cake and coffee shop first established in Carlton in 1974. Brunetti also opened in Dubai in 2010. The Singapore business is thriving.

**Conclusion**

Clearly consistent quality and presentation remains a problem for some fresh Australian produce, while Australian manufactured foods is less competitive with the high dollar. While the Meat and Livestock Corporation coordinates advertising and in store promotions of Australian beef in various export markets (particularly in Japan and Korea ROK), no other product enjoys the same concerted and coordinated marketing effort. The failure of our food export markets to grow substantially are in part a consequence of poor marketing, however, despite having an FTA in place, and even with a greater advertising effort, the high exchange rate means we are seeing our exports becoming steadily less competitive. Our failure to have FTAs completed in most of our other key food export markets (ie in ROK, Japan and China) means that countries like Chile and New Zealand have a significant tariff advantage, and are growing in reputation and market penetration.

Sharmen Stone.
12 October 2012

Special Minister of State
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

In accordance with the requirements of Clause 9.2(b) of Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2006/18 (the Determination), I submit the following statement reporting on my recent overseas study travel.

I note that, in accordance with Clause 9.5 of the Determination, a copy of this statement may be obtained from you upon request by any Senator or Member. I also note that this statement will be tabled in the Parliament at your discretion, including as part of the six monthly tabling of entitlements expenditure for Senators and Members by the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Richard Colbeck
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Fisheries and Forestry
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Innovation, Industry and Science
Liberal Senator for Tasmania
Purpose of Journey

The purpose of accessing my overseas study entitlement was to travel to Hong Kong to attended the Asia Fruit Logistica 2012 Exhibition and meet with other parties relevant to my Shadow Fisheries, Forestry and Industry responsibilities over the period 7-8 September 2012.

I also attended day 4 of the Seaweb International Seafood Summit whilst in Hong Kong.

Detailed Itinerary Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 September 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Jakarta to Hong Kong  CX798 0005/0550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 September 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Asia Fruit Logistica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Mr Paul Tighe, Australian Consul General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Phil Ingram, Austrade Senior Trade Commissioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 September 2012</td>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>Australian Exporters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 September 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Dinner with Tasmanian Exporters Contingent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 September 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Day 4, International Seafood Summit - Seaweb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Minister of State for Fisheries &amp; Agriculture – Republic of Maldives – Mr Hussain Rasheed Hassan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Mr Joe Hamby – Tri Marine International Ltd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Ing. Ernesto Godelman – President - CeDePesca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 September</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Hong Kong to Melbourne Cathay Pacific CX163 1020/2130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 September</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Melbourne/Canberra QF803 (0720/0830)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mrs Colbeck returned from Melbourne to Devonport QF2051 (*0830/0935)
Key Meetings and Outcomes / Findings

Asia Fruit Logistica 2012

Attendance at Asia Fruit Logistica along with meetings with Australia’s Consul General and Senior Trade Commissioner.

- Provided opportunity to discuss general market and market access issues into the Asian Market.
- Understanding of individual marketing strategies of Australian Exporters into the Asian market.
- Exposure to marketing approach of Trading Competitors into the Asian Market.
- Understanding of Competition into Asian Market and Investment of Trading competitors.
- Product ranges and quality requirements of Market.

SeaWeb 10th International Seafood Summit

Attendance at Conference Sessions

Charting towards Sustainable and Equitable Tuna Fisheries

- Understanding of Policy Applications for access to Tuna fisheries in several Indian Ocean and Pacific Island States.
- Economic implications/opportunities of policy decisions and returns to island states and communities.
- Resource sharing and management issues in trans-national fisheries.
- Social implication of varying policy applications of fisheries management.

High Seas Fishing Session

- Scientific assessment of South Pacific Mackerel fishery.
- Assessments of biomass and consideration of biomass separations and aggregations.
- Consideration of proposed management options via RFMO (Regional Fisheries Management Organisation).
- Current participants in the fishery.
- Recent catch rates.
MR DON RANDALL MP

Sri Lanka and Hong Kong
21 September – 3 October 2012
Overseas Study Travel Report

Friday, 19 October 2012

The Hon Gary Gray MP
Special Minister of State
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

In accordance with the requirements of Clause 9.2(b) of Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2006/18 (the Determination), I submit the following statement reporting on my recent overseas study travel.

I note that, in accordance with Clause 9.5 of the Determination, a copy of this statement may be obtained from you upon request by any Senator or Member. I also note that this statement will be tabled in the Parliament at your discretion, including as part of the six monthly tabling of entitlements expenditure for Senators and Members by the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

Yours sincerely

Don Randall MHR
Federal Member for Canning
19 October 2012
Purpose of Journey

As outlined in my application to draw upon my study leave, the purposes of my proposed study leave are varied. Primarily, I intended to investigate governance processes and progress in Sri Lanka, since the Civil War ended in 2009. The Australian Ambassador in Sri Lanka, Ms Robyn Mudie, and the Sri Lankan High Commissioner in Canberra, His Excellency Admiral Thisara Samarasinghe, assisted in arranging this trip.

At various times in this Parliament I have been either the Chair or Deputy Chair of the Sri Lankan Friendship Group in the Australian Parliament. During the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Perth last year, I entertained and hosted members of the Sri Lankan delegation whilst in Perth. This included the Sri Lankan President, Mr Mahinda Rajapaksa, the Foreign Minister, Prof G. L. Peiris and other ministers and members of the delegation. As you would be aware, Sri Lanka is hosting CHOGM in 2013 and I met with these Members of Parliament once again to continue my good working relationship.

To that end, I visited Sri Lanka and to take advantage of the opportunity to reciprocate invitations by the Sri Lankan High Commissioner, His Excellency Admiral Thisara Samarasinghe. I also had the opportunity of meeting with our parallel body of MP’s through the Sri Lankan-Australian Parliamentary Friendship Group.

Further, given the recent movement to Australia by many Tamils from Sri Lanka seeking asylum, I wanted to meet with the relevant Minister, Department and people on the ground that are involved with this heinous people movement. I traveled to the known staging point of the port city of Trincomalee in Sri Lanka’s east to meet with local authorities and individuals, NGO’s and security groups on this issue.

Finally, I sponsor two Sri Lankan families who have now been resettled in the town of Puthukudiyirippu. I wanted to meet with them and their village to most appropriately target my financial support and assistance to them. The first is Miss Skantharaja Kirusha, a young woman living in a refugee camp who is struggling to survive after her father passed away in the civil war. The second is Mr Suppaiya Nagarasa, a young married man who is also struggling to support his wife raise his 18 month old and 6 year old daughters in the refugee camp. Mr Nagarasa lost his leg during the civil war and now struggles to find suitable employment.

They have communicated with me about requests that they would like me to assist them with. To do so, I need to meet them personally to examine the best method of going forward in the best manner that I and others, can do to support them into the future.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 September 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Perth to Colombo via Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 September 2012</td>
<td>In transit</td>
<td>Travel from Colombo to Kandy by bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Hon Mahendra Ratwatta, Mayor of Kandy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 September 2012</td>
<td>In transit</td>
<td>Travel from Kandy to Nuwareliya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Mr Aruna Bandaranayake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Snr. Manager of Somerset Tea Estate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 September 2012</td>
<td>In transit</td>
<td>Nuwareliya to Colombo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Her Excellency Robyn Mudie, Australian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Ms Sonya Koppe, Australian Deputy High Commissioner to Sri Lanka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Mr Gotabaya Rajapaksa – Secretary, Ministry of Defence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Hon Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Saroja Sirisera, External Relations Secretary to the Minister for Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>His Excellency The President of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapaksa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 September 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Poya Day public holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 September 2012</td>
<td>In transit</td>
<td>Colombo to Trincomalee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 September 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Commodore P. S. De Silva, Deputy Commander – Sri Lankan Eastern Naval Command</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 October 2012</td>
<td>In transit</td>
<td>Travel to from Trincomalee to Puthukudiyirippu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Resettled families who lost their homes during the Civil War – I sponsor two of these families financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Principal, Sivanagar Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Principal, Sri Murugananthan Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 October 2012</td>
<td>In Transit</td>
<td>Puthukudiyirippu to Kilinochchi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>K. Vedharaniyam, Coordinator North - International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Kilinochchi office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Yoko Matsumoto, Associate Field Officer of Protection – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Viktoriya Talishkanova, Officer - UNHCR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 October 2012</td>
<td>In Transit</td>
<td>Kilinochchi to Jaffna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 October 2012</td>
<td>In Transit</td>
<td>Jaffna to Colombo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Meeting with Hon Thilanga Sumathipala MP – Secretary, Sri Lanka- Australia Parliamentary Friendship Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 October 2012</td>
<td>In Transit</td>
<td>Colombo to Perth via Hong Kong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 October 2012</td>
<td>In Transit</td>
<td>Hong Kong to Perth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Meetings and Outcomes / Findings

Meeting 1
Mayor of Kandy, Hon Mahendra Ratwatta – 24 September 2012
This meeting was relevant to my Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Local Government position and discussed the similarities and differences between the two countries’ local government systems.

Meeting 2
Visit to Somerset Tea Estate in Nuwareliya – 26 September 2012
Met with Estate Senior Manager, Mr Aruna Bandaranayake and tea factory workers, learnt about their working conditions, worker’s rights and wages. Currently 920 of these are actually working and are paid 572 Rupees per day (=AU$4.30).

Meeting 3
Her Excellency Robyn Mudie, Australian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka – 27 September 2012
Received background on Australia’s role within Sri Lanka such as the status of aid by Australia, the progress of Australian Government’s relationship with Sri Lanka’s Government post war, update on Aus Aid involvement in rebuilding schools, de-mining the country, resettling displaced persons after the civil war.

Meeting 4
Mr Gotabaya Rajapaksa, Secretary to the Ministry of Defence & Urban Development-28 Sept 2012
As the Minister who oversees the armed forces, I was informed about his role in the end of the Civil War in 2009, as well as the repatriation of those displaced during the war, soldiers returning to civilian life, demobilisation of the army. He is also the Minister who oversees the navy which are helping to stop the people smugglers.

Meeting 5
Hon Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development – 28 September 2012
Exchanged a number of ideas and examples regarding infrastructure and discussed the different approaches to Budget process and government programs between our two countries.

Meeting 6
Visit to His Excellency The President of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapaksa – 28 September 2012
The President is leading the charge of rebuilding and returning the country to its former glory after the country’s victory over the LTTE – one of the most ruthless terrorist organisations in the world.

Meeting 7
Sri Lankan Eastern Naval Command – 30 September 2012
Meeting with Commodore P. S. De Silva, Deputy Commander of the Eastern Naval Command, primary responsibility is identifying people smuggling vessels and returning them to shore. Extremely beneficial meeting and given briefing by the commander on their people smuggling combat operations.

Meeting 8
Site visit to resettled families, two schools, IOM & UNHCR – 1 October 2012
Met with the two families I sponsor who lost everything in the war. Visit to Sivanagar Primary School & met with Principal, Mr Sinnarasa. Visit to Sri Murugananthan Primary School & met with students and Principal. Visit to Kilinochchi office of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), met with K. Vedharaniyam, Coordinator North. Met with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Kilinochchi. Met with Yoko Matsumoto, Associate Field Officer of Protection & Viktoria Talishkhanova, Officer – UNHCR
Conclusion

I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to visit Sri Lanka and I found this study leave to be highly beneficial to my understanding of the people smuggling business that operates worldwide and I was able to build on my good working relationship with the Sri Lankan Government.

The meeting with the Mayor of Kandy was a great opportunity to discuss what works in our local government system and what could be adopted by Sri Lanka. In my role as Parliamentary Secretary, I was appreciative for the insight into how other Local Governments operate and the role they play in Sri Lankans daily life.

Sri Lanka is the world’s fourth largest producer of tea and the industry is one of the country’s main sources of income. Consequently I valued the insight into how the Somerset Tea Plantation operates and learnt that it works as a small community. There are over 3,500 people living on the Estate, who are maintained by the tea plantation, above what they are paid. Workers bring their entire family to live with them and then retire on the estate, often meaning their children also go on to become workers on site.

When meeting with the Hon Thilanga Sumathipala MP, Secretary to the Sri Lanka- Australia Parliamentary Friendship Group, we were able to engage in a wide ranging exchange of information regarding our two countries and the best way to continue this working relationship.

During my meeting with the Sri Lankan President and other Ministers of the Parliament, I was able to raise the Opposition’s concerns regarding the people smuggling trade from Sri Lanka to Australia. Since my visit to Sri Lanka and the information given to me by the Sri Lankan Government and Navy, the Shadow Minister for Immigration, Mr Scott Morrison MP, and the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ms Julie Bishop MP, will now be also be visiting the country to work with the Sri Lankan government on border protection policy and work out a solution to this terrible trade. See statement: http://www.scottmorrison.com.au/info/speech.aspx?id=522

The Sri Lankan Eastern Naval Command took me on a patrol boat to tour of the Trincomalee harbour where most of the illegal boats attempt to leave from. I was able to examine these vessels that had been seized by the navy and see firsthand the conditions in which people were travelling to reach Australia. These boats are small, disguised as fishing boats, in poor condition and generally unseaworthy. See media coverage on my findings: http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/sell-house-and-sail-away-to-better-lives/story-e6frg6n6-1226493973659

When I arrived at the Navy base on 30 September, Commodore P.S. De Silva, Captain Rohan and Commander Kumara had spent the previous night involved in the successful capturing of a people smuggling operation. The illegal immigrants were detained in a gymnasium before being handed over to the Criminal Investigation Department. Not only did I inspect this vessel they had used, but I also met with the people being smuggled out of Sri Lanka and spoke to them at length about why they wanted to leave the country, how much it cost them and how they are treated by the Navy and UNHCR officers upon their capture. I witnessed firsthand the interview conducted by the Navy and there was no evidence of violation of human rights or torture. One of the detainees spoke very good English and was able to speak freely about his journey. He had been a waiter and in the hospitality industry all his life, however he had heard wages were better in Australia so he decided to try his luck with the people smugglers. He said himself that he was not a humanitarian asylum seeker, just looking for a better life and more money. See link for further information: http://www.navy.lk/index.php?id=3727

The Sri Lankan Government has been doing their part in turning around boats that try to illegally enter Australia, however at present the pull factor to Australia is too great for so-called “asylum seekers” to ignore. The Australian Government needs to take a tougher stance on people smuggling and work with the Sri Lankan Government to put an end to this tragic trade.
Due to the size of this individual study report a number of pages are not included in this document. A copy of the full report (and any supporting documentation) is available on written request to the Office of the Special Minister of State.
Dear Minister,

In accordance with the requirements of Clause 9.2 (a) of Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2006/18 (the Determination), I submit the following statement reporting on my recent overseas study journey:

(1) (a) Confirmation of Purpose

NOTE: There were no changes to the original purpose

As a former small business owner it was important for me to undertake a study tour in China as it is Australia’s biggest trading partner, to ascertain whether or not there were opportunities and other practices that we could adopt to further strengthen Australian business practices.

Not only did I find opportunities for the service industry in our Electorate, I have also highlighted an opportunity for the Australian Taxation Office as an incentive for consumers to request official taxation receipts, which I will explain in detail within this report.

Small business, in particular those in the hospitality and service industries, is an active interest of mine, and the findings that I have made have the potential for significant benefits to Australia.

I was also able to write a small article for the magazine for the Aust-Cham the China-Australia Chamber of Commerce called Insight while I was visiting the Beijing office on Wednesday 26th September.
(b) Itinerary

Please see appendix (A).

Please note, due to the late procurement of my visa, I was unable to visit mainland China in an official capacity, as my visa was a tourist grade only. However, this did not affect my ability to engage with local businesses, ascertain best practices and connect with the general feeling of optimism that surrounds the small business sector in China.

(2) Key meetings and Outcomes / Findings

Overview of Bilateral Relationship - Australian Embassy Briefing, Beijing, China (Monday, September 24)
Mr Trevor Holloway, Counsellor (Economic)

Figure 1 With Mr Trevor Holloway, Economic Counsellor for Australia

My first experience of the business world of China was early Monday morning, trying to catch a taxi in the centre of Beijing, which was a nightmare. The kingdom of bicycles had been transformed into the kingdom of cars, and traffic was at a new standstill, even when there are over six lanes of traffic one way! I eventually had to capitulate and order a car and
driver from the hotel so that I was guaranteed to be on time for my meeting. Despite this, what should have been a ten to fifteen minute drive became a forty-five minute ordeal.

Upon arriving at the Australian Embassy, I was greeted with barricades and an immaculately dressed soldier from the Chinese Army, who showed great pride in guarding the hallowed ground that the Embassy stands on. As you can see from the photo above with Trevor Holloway and myself, the Embassy has an Australian Parliament similarity, and made me feel as though I was back in Canberra instead of overseas in one of the largest economies in the world. Trevor told me that the architects had that concept firmly in mind when they designed it.

My meeting with Trevor was very enlightening, we discussed how China is Australia’s biggest trading partner, and the enviable relationship Australia has with China. Our discussion focused on how it was incredibly important to nurture and enhance this relationship, as China is one of the strongest economies in the world, which continues to grow from year to year. Approximately 20 million Chinese people leave rural China each year to move to urban areas within China to capitalize on the fantastic opportunities in the business sector. Trevor also made note that he drives a rusty Jeep Wrangler that is perfectly suited to the Beijing traffic conditions. i.e. That if it gets hit, it doesn’t really matter.

Supplementary information from the meeting that was discussed is confidential and will not be published in this report, however, feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss this further.

China’s business environment: Australian business perspectives – Austrade, Beijing, China (Tuesday, September 25)
Mr Alan Morell, Senior Trade Commissioner

Figure 2 With Alan Morell, Senior Trade Commissioner for Australia
I met with Alan Morell and his team, who are a very professional and experienced division of Austrade, the Australian Government corporation which has been set up to facilitate business between Australia and China.

The main focus of this meeting was to discuss the many business opportunities that exist within China, and the work that Austrade is doing to assist Australian businesses in this diverse marketplace. Austrade assists business by navigating the idiosyncrasies of the Chinese business practices and culture, identifying business partners, new customers and real opportunities, accessing both urban and high-growth regional centres in China and separating business reality from myth in this dynamic marketplace.

Austrade’s three pillars are trade, investment and education, which they emphasise through their five priorities in business; improving perceptions of Australia’s international education, effective communications and media strategy, effective engagement strategy with offshore education agents, high quality and timely market research, intelligence and services and engaging effectively with onshore and offshore stakeholders.

For the complete presentation that I viewed in this meeting, please see appendix (B).

China’s business environment: Australian business perspectives – Austcham, China-Australia Chamber of Commerce in Beijing, Beijing, China (Wednesday, September 26)
Mr Stevan Tao, Government Relations Manager

Figure 3 With Mr Stevan Tao, Advocacy and Government Relations Manager for AustCham
The office of the Australian Chamber of Commerce in China is situated in a busy high rise in Beijing. It is incredible just how many buildings there are in the city, and just how many businesses operate out of them. The Chamber office was opened by Wayne Swan earlier this year and there is a real buzz about the office, as the staff there are all young and vibrant individuals.

Stevan and I discussed the great potential for Australia in the Chinese market and how Australian expertise, especially in the hospitality industry, should be utilised. Our conversation focused on the ability of the Australian hospitality industry to help guide the Chinese industry on the level of service that should be provided.

I was also invited to write an article in Insight, the Chamber’s magazine, which I accepted with pleasure. Unfortunately at the time of writing this report the magazine has yet to be published so I am unable to include my article for your perusal.

Figure 4 With the AustCham team in Beijing
My meeting with Mr Phil Ingram of the Australian Trade Commission in Hong Kong was very informative. We discussed the enviable position that Hong Kong plays as the gateway to mainland China for Australian businesses. There are currently many Australian businesses which operate in Hong Kong, with all five major Australian banks operating within this diverse marketplace.

Australian businesses are finding it easy to work with people in Hong Kong because of its strong historical ties with our country, and also because of the assistance that the Government provides for the Commerce industry. Unfortunately, Australia has recently scaled back operations in Hong Kong, which has left many business opportunities that could be taken advantage of by Australian’s looking to expand their own businesses.

The team that I met with are all hard working, and have a great morale, which fosters their ability to assist Australian businesses to prosper in this fast paced industry.
The Hong Kong government is independent from the Chinese government as it has its own parliament, which has helped to put the Hong Kong economy in a strong, desirable position. Recently, the Hong Kong government handed out the equivalent of eight hundred Australian dollars to each citizen, which has helped to cement the notion of residents that they are Hong Kong(ese) instead of Chinese.

There is a perception that goods that are manufactured in Hong Kong are generally of a far more superior quality to those that are produced in China, as the main counterfeiters hail from mainland China. Despite this, the manufacturing industry has experienced a decline, as it now is only 2% of the Hong Kong economy when in the 1970s and 1980s it thrived at around 25%. Generally, most manufacturing now occurs in mainland China.

When the SARS outbreak occurred, the Hong Kong economy was devastated. China was required to lift restrictions on mainland visa’s, which was a successful move allowing the devastated economy to begin to recover to the thriving industry that it is today.
Australian Consulate-General, Harbour Centre, Wan Chai, Hong Kong
(Wednesday, October 3)
Ms Kirsty Boazman, CEO of Australian Chamber of Commerce Hong Kong and Macau

The Australian Chamber of Commerce Hong Kong and Macau is the second largest Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong, with the United States of America being the largest. Within this diverse marketplace, there are more than eight thousand Australian expatriates, most of whom are still constituents who still vote for the electorate where they used to live when they resided in Australia.

Hong Kong is a very commerce driven government, with the major players in the Chamber of Commerce’s generally invited to sit in on Cabinet meetings.

Please see appendix (C) to view AustCham News Magazine – for the Australian Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong and Macau for further viewing as an example of the wonderful work this corporation, which is the largest grouping of Australian business outside the country, is doing.

Ms Boazman has issued a standing invite to all Members of Parliament to come and visit Hong Kong, to learn more about the vibrant and dynamic people and economy of this great region.

Casino Operations on Macau Peninsula, Aristocrat, Macau
(Thursday, October 4)
Mr Sam McElhone, Key Account Manager, SE Asia

Macau, like Hong Kong, is a special administrative region of China and is governed by its own separate government. The economy of this region is particularly strong, with Macau posting a surplus again this past budgetary year. Like Hong Kong, Macau passed on much of these savings to their citizens, with each resident receiving a tax refund in the order of one thousand Australian dollars.

Macau’s true strength is in the hospitality industry, which thrives on the numerous casinos that operate in the region. The gambling industry in Macau is now the biggest in the world, with a turnover of forty three billion U.S dollars a year, which is still rising. This dwarfs the turnover that Las Vegas makes, and shows Macau to be the premier gaming region in the world.

Macau has its own universities, which gain some use from school graduates in the area, however, more and more high school graduates are becoming involved in the casino industry instead as it is the dominating industry within the economy.
Hotel Operations on Macau Peninsula, Crown Towers Hotel, Cotai, Macau (Thursday, October 4)
Ms Macy Lam, General Manager of Crown Towers Hotel

I met with Macy Lam, the General Manager of the Crown Towers Hotel group and was escorted around the City of Dreams, one of Crown Towers most opulent hotels in the area. This particular hotel is designed to cater for the high end gamblers, or the whales as they are known within the industry.

Macau is a paradise for serious gamblers, which explains the massive turnover the industry manages to achieve each year. New hotels and casinos are being built constantly, further increasing the reach that this industry has. The benefit that this developed industry has on the Macau economy is easily identifiable, with the regions economy continuing to grow, despite the financial struggles that the rest of the world is facing.

Australia could benefit from following the lead of Macau, and capitalizing on hospitality industry to help our own economy continue to grow.
Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, Hong Kong
(Friday, October 5)
Mr David O'Rear, Chief Economist
Dr Mayee Lang, Assistant China Economist

The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce has an incredible understanding of the Hong Kong economy. Not only does it watch over the general state of the economy, but it also assists the Hong Kong government directly with policy.

Mr O'Rear informed me that despite Hong Kong's numerous entrepreneurial successes, there are just as many, if not more, failures. Despite this, the people that fail follow one of the favourite sayings of this area – "Pay your debts and start again".

The resoluteness of the Hong Kong people is something that Australian businesses can aspire to replicate, as it has helped to shape Hong Kong into the thriving economy that it is today.
SME Financing Guarantee Scheme by Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation, International Finance Centre, Hong Kong

(Friday, October 5)

Ms Irene Mok, Vice President, Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Ltd.
Ms Yuki Chan, Assistant Manager, Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Ltd.

My meeting with Ms Mok and Ms Chan went through the history of Hong Kong, specifically referencing the economy and the Government. We discussed the hardships facing businesses in light of the global financial crisis, and the uncertainty that is facing most markets.

Ms Mok discussed the ability of the Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation to help guarantee business loans, and thus generate more stability into the Hong Kong economy. Without corporations like Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation, the economy in this region would not be nearly as strong or as viable as it currently is.

Please see appendix (E) to view the presentation that I viewed during my meeting with Ms Mok and Ms Chan.
General Observations on China, Hong Kong and Macau

In my recent trip to China, Hong Kong and Macau, I came across a startling fact that was of great concern to me. The dynamic Chinese market, powered by the rising middle class, are expecting more from their dining experience than many of them are currently receiving. In today's market Australian expertise would be a valuable export commodity, and could be used to bolster the already booming Chinese hospitality industry. I was impressed by the Australian's who have quite accidentally landed themselves in Macau and Hong Kong and are now making a valuable contribution to the hospitality industry there.

There is a fantastic opportunity for our youth, both Australian and Chinese, to learn from our more mature / sophisticated practices, especially in hospitality. I believe that working together; we can improve the service in what is becoming a very strong industry within the Chinese economy.

During my visit, I also discovered a phenomenal incentive that the Chinese government has undertaken to help assist both small business and the general consumer with taxation. Upon the purchase of any items, I was presented with an official taxation receipt for the items that I had purchased.

Each official receipt has a unique feature and that is a “scratchie” on the left / right corner that enables the purchaser an opportunity to win money. This helps to encourage the general consumer to always request an official receipt, as it is always nice to win that extra little bit of money, without having to do anything particularly special to earn it. In some cases I had to ask specifically for the receipt as some retailers would simply give me a generic receipt instead of the official tax receipt. Because of the scratchie though, I always made sure to ask.

Officially, the business that issues the receipt will pay the winner cash if they win a prize. They are generally reimbursed for their expenses when it comes time to do their taxes. By having records of the official tax receipts, it allows the government a better chance of knowing how well a business is doing, and also minimises the chance for expenditure to be altered from what is actually earned, and what is actually spent.

Through the chance of winning money, this empowers the everyday consumer to always ask for the official receipt, allowing a far more streamlined process for everyday people when it comes to claiming their tax. It helps to remove the risk of someone claiming that they have earned, sold or spent a different amount to what they have actually done.

With these two major observations, I undertook proceedings to inform those who are able to do something within our own economy of these findings.

Please see appendix (F) to view the email that was sent to John Heart of Restaurant and Catering Australia who represents the national interests of restaurants and caterers.
Please see appendix (G) to view the email that was sent to the ATO Commissioner .......

(4) Conclusion

I believe it is important for all Members of Parliament to study or visit China, and its administrative regions Hong Kong and Macau. This diverse region of Asia is our biggest trading partner, with an economy that is dynamic and growing. It is vital that Australia takes advantage of the historical closeness and geographical proximity that we share with one of the world’s fastest growing nations.

I recommend that we strive to strengthen our ties with this economy, so that our economic fortunes are on the same upward projections. On my recent study tour I recognised the opportunity for businesses in Australia to strengthen ties, particularly those in the service industry. By taking advantage of the opportunities that we can offer to our largest trading partner, we can build on our existing relationships to ensure that Australian businesses can benefit from being in partnership with one of the worlds most vibrant economies.

Additionally, I discovered a chance for us to support our taxation industry through introducing the same method that the Chinese industry uses to promote businesses and consumers alike to obtain official tax receipts for all purchases. This could help to reduce the stress caused around tax time, as it encourages individuals to request official tax receipts and keep them through the chance to ‘get something back’, as opposed to simply getting a receipt.

My strong desire is that anyone who reads this report will want to investigate the many opportunities that await us in China, Hong Kong and Macau; and look to assist with fostering the already strong trade relationship that exists between our two great nations.

I note that in accordance with clause 9.5 of the Determination a copy of this statement may be obtained from you upon request by any Member or Senator. I also note that this statement may be tabled in Parliament at your discretion.

Yours sincerely

Ross Vasta MP
Federal Member for Bonner

Insert Date Here
Report not received at time of preparation of this document.
The Hon John Cobb MP
Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Food Security

Overseas Study Travel Report

Special Minister of State
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

In accordance with the requirements of Clause 9.2(b) of Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2006/18 (the Determination), I submit the following statement reporting on my recent overseas study travel.

I note that, in accordance with Clause 9.5 of the Determination, a copy of this statement may be obtained from you upon request by any Senator or Member. I also note that this statement will be tabled in the Parliament at your discretion, including as part of the six monthly tabling of entitlements expenditure for Senators and Members by the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

The Hon John Cobb MP
Purpose of Journey

The purpose of the journey is to increase my knowledge of the processes involved in the live cattle trade in Indonesia and to discuss a range of current bilateral issues related to the Agriculture and Food Security portfolio, such wheat and meat exports quality and market access.

Detailed Itinerary Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 October 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Sydney to Jakarta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Briefing by MLA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 October 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Jakarta to Perkasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>MLA and ALEC and Austrex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 October 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Perkasa to Agrisatwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>MLA, CEO ALEC and Wellard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 October 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Agrisatwa to Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 October 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Australian and Indonesian Industry Representatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 October 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Members of live export industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 October 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Jakarta to TUM Feedlot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 October 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Briefing by TUM boardroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 October 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>TUM Abattoir to Karawaci Abattoir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Briefing by AUSTREX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 October 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Karawaci Abattoir back to Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Hotel to Ambassador’s Residence Jakarta Pusat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Page | 2
Overseas Study Travel Report – The Hon. John Cobb MP
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Australian Business Leaders in Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Ambassador's Residence to Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Hotel to Soekarno Hatta Airport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Jakarta to Sydney</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Meetings and Outcomes / Findings

Tony Abbott and Julie Bishop were very impressed by the quality of the facilities and the professionalism of the people involved.

The Australian and Indonesian Beef Industry were very appreciative with the engagement of the Coalition and were impressed with Tony Abbott giving so much time to the live export industry.

I was very proud to be able to show how much effort the Industry had put in place in the last 12 months to comply with the traceability system.

Feedlots are building what amounts to a community abattoirs with stunning equipment on site. This allows local butchers to come to the feedlot and buy a couple of prime animals and then process them on-site in modern facilities so animal welfare can be maintained at the highest standard.

This is a step up in change for Indonesia and it is assisting with improving animal welfare standards.

What’s more the local butchers really appreciated it, as the facilities with stunning make the animals easier to handle, the quality of the meat is better and animal welfare can be handled appropriately.

This is a win - win for all those concerned. Importantly, none of it would have happened without the continued Australian involvement in the live export market.

Indonesia remains Australia’s largest market for live cattle, accounting for 60% of our live cattle exports in 2011 – that’s a drop from over 80% of all cattle exports in 2009 in the wake of the Australian Government’s botched handling of relationships and the knee-jerk ban last year.

Conclusion

Australia’s active involvement in the live export market is a force for good in international animal welfare

Improvements in animal welfare in Indonesia are already real and rapid, following a supreme industry effort to lift standards to ensure access to Australian animals.

Today, 80% of approved facilities in Indonesia use stunning, way up from a low base of approximately 15% at the time of the trade suspension. I was thoroughly impressed by the commitment from both the Indonesian’s and Australian’s involved in the industry on the ground.

This is positive change and, importantly, none of it would have happened without Australian involvement in the live export market.

There is no doubt the Coalition delegation, which won rare high level access to Indonesian heavyweights, was well received and has started the bridge-building following last year’s Australian Government’s induced diplomatic and trade disasters.
The extraordinary step of sending a delegation of four senior Shadow Ministers to Indonesia demonstrates the importance we place on their country as a valued trading partner and that we will work closely with them to maximise the economic opportunities between our two countries. That message was welcomed by Indonesia.

Indonesia is on our doorstep and is a tremendous opportunity for the expansion of our export markets, this relationship can be mutually beneficial but we must work to build strong ties and make every attempt to better understand the intricacies of their economy, its governance and culture.

I am truly amazed that we have $15 billion in two way trade with New Zealand who has only four and a half million people while our trade with Indonesia who has 250 million people is only $11 billion.

I believe Australia has been presented with an ideal opportunity for our Agricultural sector. Indonesia’s geographic location, its booming middle class coupled with a high level of consumer spending makes it an ideal destination for Australian agricultural produce.
MR SCOTT MORRISON MP

Indonesia
12 – 17 October 2012
Overseas Study Travel Report

Special Minister of State
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

In accordance with the requirements of Clause 9.2(b) of Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2006/18 (the Determination), I submit the following statement reporting on my recent overseas study travel.

I note that, in accordance with Clause 9.5 of the Determination, a copy of this statement may be obtained from you upon request by any Senator or Member. I also note that this statement will be tabled in the Parliament at your discretion, including as part of the six monthly tabling of entitlements expenditure for Senators and Members by the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

Yours sincerely

Scott Morrison MP
20 November 2012
Purpose of Journey

The purpose of accessing my overseas study entitlement was to travel to Jakarta, Indonesia with the Leader of the Opposition, Hon Tony Abbott, and the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Hon Julie Bishop to meet with the President of Indonesia, His Excellency Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the Coordinating Minister for Legal, Political and Security Affairs, Djoko Suyanto and the Minister for Foreign Affairs Marty Natelegawa to discuss regional and bilateral cooperation on people smuggling.

I also met with senior Indonesian and Australian Government officials and key NGOs with policy and operational responsibilities within Indonesia relating to humanitarian aid, asylum seekers, immigration and people smuggling.
## Detailed Itinerary Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 October 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Sydney to Jakarta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Visit Hibah Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Briefing at Australia-Indonesia Facility for Disaster Reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Visit to International Organization for Migration (IOM) Community Accommodation Facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 October 2012</td>
<td>Working Lunch</td>
<td>With UNHCR and IOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 October 2012</td>
<td>Tour</td>
<td>AFP hosted tour of locations in Jakarta relevant to irregular immigration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Briefing with Australian Ambassador and Senior Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2012</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>With Business leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>HE President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>With Minister for Foreign Affairs, Marty Natelegawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2012</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td>With Peter Alford, Jakarta Correspondent, The Australian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 October 2012</td>
<td>Site Visit/Meeting</td>
<td>Visit to Tanjong Priok Port to view Australian-gifted POLAIR (water police) patrol vessel! Senior Superintendent Zainal Palewang, Head of the Law Enforcement Sub Directorate of the Indonesian Marine Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Ambassador Hasan Kleib, Director General for Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 October 2012</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>With Dr Rizal Sukma, Executive Director, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Mr Bambang Irawan, Director General for Immigration followed by a visit to Immigration IT Control Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 October 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Jakarta to Melbourne</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Meetings and Outcomes / Findings

Saturday October 13, 2012

*Water Hiba Site*

Accompanied the Leader of the Opposition to inspect Ausaid project connecting local households in local villages to clean water supply. The connections replace the existing reliance on local wells previously shared with multiple households in the village and where the water source was contaminated.

The connection brings piped water from a more reliable and less contaminated, however, the water quality would still be below Australian standards.

Mr Abbott and I spoke to the local project managers and residents who have received the new connections. The connections are funded on a completion basis, and have assisted with improving the working relationship with local and central Government for delivering these services to poor areas. The projects has been successful in improving the health of local villagers, especially children, who have limited access to health services.

*Australia-Indonesian Facility for Disaster reduction*

Accompanied the Leader of the Opposition to inspect the Ausaid facility, located in the city of Jakarta that provides mapping, scientific and technical expertise and early warning services to assist local disaster response. The project has worked with local community based organisations, including local mosques, to assist disaster response preparations, capability and readiness. The facility is also aiding greater cooperation between different public civic agencies in Jakarta, that is also helping with response readiness and capacity building to deal with non-natural disasters.

The project is a good example of using Australia’s technical expertise to build local capacity in a critical area, where the failure of local agencies to be able respond effectively can have disastrous humanitarian outcomes.

Sunday October 14, 2012

*International Organisation for Migration – Community Accommodation Facility*

Accompanied by IOM Country Manger, Denis Nihill to inspect IOM run community detention facility at Cisarua in the Bogor district of West Java. The facility is used to accommodate asylum seekers on behalf of Department of Immigration who have been typically intercepted by the Indonesian National Police. This and similar facilities are funded by the Australian Government at a cost of $17 million per year. Unlike in Malaysia, The IOM has full access to all detention facilities in Indonesia.

The facilities provide accommodation for both single males and family groups in rented accommodation. People living in these centres are funded to access local health services and children are allowed to enrol in local schools. Despite the ability to have their children enrolled in school, most of the parents I spoke to had chosen not to enrol their children in local schools or they had been withdrawn from those schools because of language difficulties and cultural differences. In these cases children were only attending English language courses run by the IOM.
The population in these facilities visited were predominantly Afghan, Iraqi and Iranian and included asylum seekers who had recently been rescued at sea.

The standard of accommodation was good, and those living there were able to move freely in the community. There was no access to processing for claims or case management at this location. These matters are handled by the UNHCR from Jakarta.

UNHCR and IOM-Jakarta

Dr Engel from the Australian Embassy arranged a luncheon with the UNHCR Country Manager Manuel Jordao and IOM Country manager Denis Nihill, together with DIAC officials. Key topics of discussion were regional responses to people smuggling, the regional protection framework, processing timeframes within Indonesia and the current flow of people through Indonesia.

While formally there are an estimated 6,500-7,000 asylum seekers currently in Indonesia, the number could be double this amount. The average processing time for asylum seekers resettled from Indonesia was two to three years. Malaysia was said to be up to three times longer. It was estimated that approximately 1500 asylum seekers were arriving in Indonesia every month.

While additional funds for processing of asylum claims was welcomed by the UNHCR, the issue was considered moot given the limited number of settlement places available. There was a strong interest from the UNHCR locally on regularisation of status in Indonesia for asylum seekers as the higher priority.

Briefing by AFP on people smuggling in Jakarta

Escorted by Commander Chris Sheehan, Manager Indonesia, AFP to key locations in Jakarta relevant to illegal immigration and the people smugglers operational model with Jakarta. Commander Sheehan also provided a briefing on AFP strength and operations, the working relationship with Indonesian National Police and the success of local disruption activities. The briefing indicated a highly sophisticated, flexible, multi layered and mobile network of operator works within the smuggling network.

Monday October 15, 2012

Briefing from Australian Ambassador and Senior Staff

Accompanied Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade for briefing from the Australian Ambassador Greg Moriarty at the Ambassadors residence involving senior staff from the Embassy, the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service, DIAC and AFP.

The briefing gave an overview of Australia’s operations in Indonesia with respect to people smuggling.

Luncheon with Business Leaders – Ambassadors residence

Joined the Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade at luncheon for Indonesian Business leaders to discuss commercial and trade opportunities for Australian businesses, including education and training and the challenges facing the Indonesian economy.
Meeting with HE President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono – Presidential Palace

Joined the Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade for meeting with the HE President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the Coordinating Minister for Political, Law and Security Affairs, Air Chief Marshal (Ret.) Djoko Suyanto, State Secretary Lieutenant General (Ret.) Sudi Silalahi and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Marty Natelegawa. Key topics discussed included people smuggling, regional cooperation, the Bali process and the Coalition willingness to work closely with the Indonesian Government on these issues if elected. Detailed discussions of Coalition policy were referred to the latter meeting with the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs

Joined the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade at meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs, Marty Natelegawa to discuss the Coalition’s full suite of polices to combat people smuggling, the need for the Bali Process to focus single mindedly on deterrence initiatives to discourage asylum seekers entering the region, especially from central Asia and the need to ensure clearer understanding of Australia and Indonesia’s respective responsibilities with respect to search and rescue operations.

Dinner with Peter Alford, Jakarta Correspondent, the Australian

Met with Mr Alford to gain his observations on Indonesian politics, Australia’s relationship with Indonesia and people smuggling.

Tuesday October 16, 2012

Indonesian Maritime Police – Tanjung Priok Port

Visited Tanjung Priok port to inspect the three POLAIR (Water Police) patrol vessels, gifted by the AFP, accompanied by Commissioner Sheehan. I inspected each of the vessels and spoke to their crew and commanding officers. The vessels had not been engaged in patrols off the southern coast and had limited operations out of Jakarta and on occasions into the Sunda Strait. I also had the opportunity to inspect other vessels in the fleet gifted by other nations, such as Singapore. POLAIR has between 12-13 Class A vessels and 36 Class B vessels, with approximately 1-2 RIB vessels on each (those I saw were in very poor condition).

Much of the POLAIR fleet is typically tied up at port due to lack of funds for fuel, especially to support longer range patrols, not facilities at other locations, maintenance and fuel contamination (problems with algae) and training of officers and crew.

Meeting with Ambassador Hasan Kleib, Director General for Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ambassador Kleib is the senior Foreign affairs official responsible for Indonesia’s involvement in the Bali process. Issues discussed included treatment of Indonesian crews on smugglers vessels, the need to ensure that Australian resettlement out of Indonesia did not create a pull factor relative to other transit countries, the operations of the regional support office, the broader agenda of the Bali Process on human trafficking and transnational crime and the need for the Bali process to move beyond information sharing projects to concrete action programmes with a strong focus on deterrence and improving border security throughout the region.
Luncheon with Dr Rizal Sukma, Executive Director, Center for Strategic and International Studies

This luncheon, organised by Deputy Ambassador Dr Engel, provided an excellent briefing on the current state of Indonesian politics in the lead up to the 2014 Presidential election, the relevance of people smuggling to the domestic political agenda and the relationship between Indonesia and Australia from an Indonesian perspective.

Meeting with Mr Bambang Irawan, Director General for Immigration, and visit to Immigration IT Control Room

The meeting provided a briefing on the visa controls and processes for people entering Indonesia, an update on their bio metric data collection programme, electronic capture of identity documentation and the operation of their networked immigration portal with live links to their IT control room. Indonesia has 130 border control points, of which 44 ports, accounting for 90% of passenger movements are linked to the portal.

Conclusion

The series of meetings and briefings in Jakarta, combined with the regional visits provided an invaluable insight into the efforts of and challenges faced by Indonesian and Australian agencies to combat people smuggling in Indonesia, and the work done by NGOs to support those who remain in Indonesia. The problem of people smuggling is getting worse, not better. The people smugglers model has been allowed to develop to a high level of sophistication that will be even more difficult to disrupt than at any other time.

The Indonesian Government is clearly receptive to playing a more significant role in addressing this problem that is not of their making. However, the initiative for such programmes and co-operation must be driven and funded by Australia. There is significant scope and need to broaden and scale up the partnership and level of activity that already exists. Much can be learned from existing operations, however at the current level of activity, little more can be expected than is currently being achieved.
THE HON JULIE BISHOP MP

Indonesia
13–16 October 2012
The Hon Julie Bishop MP  
Federal Member for Curtin  
Deputy Leader of the Opposition  
Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade  

Overseas Study Travel Report

The Hon Gary Gray AO MP  
Special Minister of State  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

In accordance with the requirements of Clause 9.2(b) of Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2006/18 (the Determination), I submit the following statement reporting on my recent overseas study travel.

I note that, in accordance with Clause 9.5 of the Determination, a copy of this statement may be obtained from you upon request by any Senator or Member. I also note that this statement will be tabled in the Parliament at your discretion, including as part of the six monthly tabling of entitlements expenditure for Senators and Members by the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

[Stamp]

Hon Julie Bishop MP  
9 November 2012
Purpose of Journey

The purpose of my visit to Indonesia between 14 October and 15 October 2012 was to meet with Indonesian Government ministers, business leaders and live export industry stakeholders to discuss the bilateral relationship.

Other Coalition members on the trip included:

- The Hon Tony Abbott MP Leader of the Opposition;
- The Hon John Cobb MP Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Food Security
- Mr Scott Morrison MP Shadow Minister for Immigration and Citizenship
  Shadow Minister for Productivity and Population

The delegation sought to highlight the Coalition’s strong commitment to strengthening ties with Indonesia and restore trust in the trade relationship following the Australia Government’s ban on live cattle exports to Indonesia.

The delegation also sought to discuss issues and policy options relating to people smuggling and reiterated our determination to work closely with the Indonesian Government to address this problem.
## Detailed Itinerary Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 October 2012</td>
<td>Flight (SQ246, SQ950)</td>
<td>Brisbane to Jakarta, via Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Lunch with live export industry stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Inspection of TUM feedlot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Inspection of TUM abattoir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Inspection of Karawaci abattoir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Minister for Tourism and Creative Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Australian Embassy officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Lunch with Australian business leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>President of the Republic of Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Minister for Political, Justice and Security Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Minister for Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>State Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Minister for Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flight (QF42)</td>
<td>Jakarta to Sydney</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Meetings and Outcomes / Findings

Live export industry stakeholders
TUM feedlot
TUM abattoir
Karawaci abattoir

The delegation heard firsthand about the damage done to Australian businesses as a result of the Australian Government’s decision to ban live cattle exports to Indonesia.

The delegation also had the opportunity to observe the measures that have been put in place to ensure the humane treatment of livestock.

These meetings highlighted the importance of the live cattle trade to Indonesia’s food security.

HE Dr Mari Pangestu, Minister for Tourism and Creative Economy

The delegation discussed the opportunities and challenges in further developing the two-way tourism trade between Australia and Indonesia.

HE Dr Yudhoyono, President of the Republic of Indonesia
HE ACM (Ret) Djoko Suyanto, Minister for Political, Justice and Security Affairs
HE Dr Natalegawa, Minister for Foreign Affairs
HE Lt Gen (Ret) Sudi Silalahi, State Secretary

A range of issues of mutual interest were discussed including economic relations, the live cattle export trade, people smuggling and student exchange.

The delegation raised the Coalition’s commitment to establishing a new Colombo Plan within two years of assuming government, should we win the next election.

This significant increase in two-way student mobility will foster deeper understanding and promote closer engagement between Australia and countries in the region.

HE Dr Natalegawa, Minister for Foreign Affairs

A range of issues were discussed, building on the delegation’s earlier meeting with President Yudhoyono.

The meeting confirmed the close friendship that exists between the Coalition and the Indonesian Government.
Conclusion

The Coalition values Indonesia’s close friendship and will inject the energy and determination that is needed to broaden, deepen and diversify bilateral ties in the coming years.

Indonesia’s strong rate of economic growth and the rapid rise of its middle class will open up new opportunities for Australian businesses.

It is important that Australia maintain a strong working relationship with Indonesia, based on a policy of no surprises, if we are to expand trade and investment between the two countries and address issues such as people smuggling.
MR HARRY JENKINS MP

Cyprus, United Kingdom, United States of America and Canada
13 – 28 October 2012
Dear Minister

In accordance with the requirements of Clause 9.2(b) of Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2006/18 (the Determination), I submit the following statement reporting on my recent overseas study travel.

I note that, in accordance with Clause 9.5 of the Determination, a copy of this statement may be obtained from you upon request by any Senator or Member. I also note that this statement will be tabled in the Parliament at your discretion, including as part of the six monthly tabling of entitlements expenditure for Senators and Members by the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

Yours sincerely

HARRY JENKINS MP
04 April 2013
Purpose of Journey

To attend the 127th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and related meetings in Quebec, Canada from 20 to 26 October 2013.

Whilst at the IPU, as a member of the Council of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) to attend the launch of the handbook *Supporting Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament* and participate as a panel member at a PNND workshop.

Whilst on route to Canada, to visit Cyprus to investigate Cyprus’ current activities to resolve the Cyprus dispute, attend discussions about current Cyprian politics and contemporary parliamentary practices.

In London to hold a number of meetings in my capacity as the Chair of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights, and matters relating to PNND activities.

**Detailed Itinerary Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 October 2012</td>
<td>EK407/EK107</td>
<td>Melbourne to Lanarca, via Dubai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 October 2012</td>
<td>Arrival</td>
<td>Lanarca Airport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Interior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Division Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Cyprus-Australia Friendship Group in the House of Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>President, AKEL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Stella Kyriakidou MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>George Iacovou, Presidential Commissioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>UNFICYP Buffer Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 October, 2012</td>
<td>CY346</td>
<td>Larnaca to London (Heathrow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 October, 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Joint Committee on Human Rights, UK Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>External Legal Adviser, Joint Committee on Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>PNND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>All Party Parliamentary Group on Security and Non-proliferation, Lords Committee Room 2A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19 October, 2012  DL 04  London to New York (Kennedy)
20 October, 2012  AA4635  New York (LGA) to Toronto
                AA5132  Toronto to Quebec
21 to 25 October 2012  Various  127th Assembly of the IPU and Related
                        Meetings
26 October, 2012  AA5137  Quebec to Toronto
                AA3619  Toronto to New York (JFK)
                QF108  New York to Los Angeles
                QF094  Los Angeles to Melbourne

Key Meetings and Outcomes / Findings

CYPRUS

Mr Andreas Assiotis, Permanent Secretary
Mr Makis Polydorou, Head of Asylum Service
Ministry of Interior

The Ministry representatives indicated that they had to deal with xenophobia amongst the public arising from the number of potential asylum seekers at a time of economic difficulty. Especially with the potential for large numbers from Syria if the Assad regime fell. They emphasised the need for EU action and a Regional Protection Program and a common asylum policy within Europe.

Mr Andreas Kakouris, Director, Division for Cyprus Question and Turkey
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr Kakouris thanked Australia for the ongoing contribution to UNFICYP; “until there is a solution the UN presence is very important.”

Lunch hosted by Mr George Tasou, with members of the Cyprus-Australia Friendship Group in the House of Representatives

Whilst the luncheon was an informal gathering it enabled a frank exchange of views. One member in attendance had been a member of the recent Maltese delegation to Australia and was well versed in our contemporary challenges. Whilst I was aware of the difficulties that confronted the President and his Government especially arising from the aftermath of the Evangelos Florakis naval base munitions dump explosion which lead to the destruction of the neighbouring Vassilikos power station, leading to severe power shortages country wide.

What shocked me was the depth of feeling towards ‘The Troika’ across the political parties. ‘The Troika’ comprises the European Union, IMF and World Bank. The economic ‘hair cut’ being requested were difficult for all political parties to accept.
Mr Andros Kyprianou, President
AKEL (Progressive Party of the Working People)

I was given a frank overview of the Party’s difficulties of retaining the Presidency.

Ms Stella Kyriakidou
DISY (Democratic Rally Party)

Ms Kyriakidou is a great supporter of Australia. She champions women’s health issues; and has brought to Cyprus from Australia the “pink ribbon” campaign for breast cancer awareness.

Mr George Iacovou, Presidential Commissioner

A delightful former Minister in previous administrations, Mr Iacovou gave a very generous and frank overview of the quagmire that now besets the search for a solution to the Cyprus question. For instance talks have been terminated by the Turkish side because of Cyprus’s present rotating presidency of the Council of Europe.

Contingent Commander Peter Bond, AUSPOL, UNFICYP Buffer Zone
Karina Parker, Deputy
Australian Federal Police

I toured the buffer zone along the ‘Green Line’ from Nicosia through the old airport, Mammari and Denia. The zone is 180 Km long, with a width of a few metres through to 7 to 8 Km. There are still remnant mine fields. Many villages exist within or partially within the buffer as Civil Use Zones.

Under strict regulation UNFICYP supervise the areas.

The buffer which has existed since 1974 is a stark reminder of the tension which continues to exist, with troops on either side carefully watching each other over what is a DMZ, whilst on either side, outside the Green Line people get on with life.

The Australian Police, from the International Deployment Group, continue to play a valuable role alongside their international colleagues that comprise UNPOL.

LONDON

Dr Hywel Francis. Chair
Mr Mike Hennessy, Clerk of Committee (House of Commons)
Mr Murray Hunt, Legal Adviser
UK Joint Committee on Human Rights

The Chair indicated that the committee’s decision making was by consensus. They had recently held a pre-appointment hearing with the proposed Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, and had concluded that the person to be appointed “has demonstrated her suitability for the post....and endorse its (the Government’s) choice of candidate.” The committee had also conducted inquiries on themes, most recently on the Human rights of the disabled.
In my one on one meeting with Murray Hunt, he gave a very positive and encouraging feedback on the work of our committee thus far. He iterated that his legal advice to the committee was a signpost and that it was for members to decide whether actions proposed were proportionate, were justified and whether appropriate safeguards were in place.

*Robert van Riet, PNND Coordinator - United Kingdom
World Future Council*

I discussed arrangements for the PNND handbook launch and my involvement in the workshop at Quebec, and the work of the World Future Council. Robert videoed a contribution from me for the video which was to accompany the launch.

*Lord Hannay, Chair, et al
All Party Parliamentary Group on Security and Non-proliferation*

At Mr van Riet's suggestion I attended the groups meeting where Ambassador Tom Graham Jr, former special representative for Arms Control, Non-proliferation, and Disarmament to President Clinton, provided a comprehensive overview of the progress, or lack of progress, towards nuclear disarmament, with special reference to North Korea, Iran, and the Middle East. Among those attending were Des Browne former defence minister under Blair and Lord Field Marshal Guthrie. The Chair Lord Hannay was former UK Ambassador to the UN in the early 1990s.

He contrasted the Clinton approach to that of George W Bush – “we don’t negotiate with evil, we destroy it.” He indicated that during the Bush years North Korea produced enough plutonium for 10 to 12 bombs, with the US not doing anything. With regard to North Korea he could not imagine what the 'West' could give them to give up their weapons.

In the case of Iran he was of the opinion that an opportunity was missed post 9/11 when he claimed that co-operative overtures from Iran to assist with efforts in Afghanistan were ignored. Now under Ahmadinejad the use of nuclear weapons would be disastrous.

Amongst his conclusions was a belief that the "non-proliferation treaty is the most important outside of the UN Charter"; re China who say "we don’t understand North Korea any better than you do", he said "if you believe that I've got a bridge in Brooklyn I can sell you.”

**NEW YORK**

Whilst New York was primarily a transit stop-over I took the opportunity to meet up with Laurie Ferguson MP, Member for Werriwa who was in the city as a UN Parliamentary observer. He was able to share experience of activities in various UN committees and his observations with regard to Australia’s successful UN Security Council bid.

**IPU, 127th ASSEMBLY, QUEBEC**
(Also refer to Official delegation report)

At the IPU I participated in a number of the sessions of the Assembly and made personal interventions at: the round-table sponsored by the IPU Committee on UN Affairs on “Multi-lateralism and the role of parliamentary diplomacy; the Special Gender Partnership Session, “Gender sensitive parliaments”; and at the round-table sponsored by the IPU Committee on UN affairs on the “UN declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples: Five years on”.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
Page 1 | 5
Overseas Study Travel Report – Harry Jenkins MP, October 2012
I attended, along with the official delegation, a bilateral meeting with delegations from Ireland.

I attended and assisted members of the delegation at the inaugural meeting of the Parliamentary Whips Network, which has the potential to be a worthwhile forum of the exchange of parliamentary processes and experience.

As a member of the executive council of PNND, I participated as a panel member at the PNND “Workshop on new tools to promote nuclear disarmament”, organised by the IPU, CTBTO, and PNND. This event followed the official launch of *Parliamentary Handbook on Supporting Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament* at the plenary session. I outlined the Australian IPU delegation’s involvement in disarmament matters since the 116th Assembly through to the present. Most importantly this included our sponsorship of the resolution: *Advancing Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, and Securing the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: The Role Of Parliaments* at the 120th Assembly, Addis Ababa, 2009.

Along with other PNND members I participated in a luncheon meeting with the Kazakhstan delegation, lead by the Speaker, Mr Nurlan Nigmatulin. The Speaker emphasised the very positive support in Kazakhstan for disarmament from the Head of State, the head of Parliament and ordinary people, stressing all comments had been positive.

At the margins of the Assembly I was able to have a number of informal meetings with a range of people such as the Secretary-general of the IPU; the leader of the Iraqi delegation Sheikh Humam Hamoudi; the leader of the Chinese delegation Ambassador Zha Peixin and the former Chinese Ambassador and present Ambassador to Canada Zhang Juncai; and the delegation from Micronesia who were ecstatic at Australia’s success in the UN Security Council ballot.

**Conclusion**

Australia’s delegation at the IPU Assembly continues to make a very strong contribution often seen as a “go to” delegation for guidance and to achieve outcomes; acts in the National interest; and as the Parliament of a creative middle power our opinions on international affairs are valued.

The PNND workshop and handbook launch adds to the body of work at the IPU in nuclear disarmament over a long period of time to which Australia has played a pivotal role. The ongoing interest of Australia’s IPU delegation in disarmament and non-proliferation is vital.

The value of the engagement and interest between our Joint Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights and the UK Joint Committee on Human Rights is inestimable. It should be continued and encouraged.

Australia’s efforts in Cyprus are highly regarded. As Parliaments of the Commonwealth, Australia and Cyprus legislatures are well placed to cooperate on many issues, parliamentary and international affairs. Efforts in these areas should continue to be promoted.

Overall, my study journey assisted me in my ongoing parliamentary work.

Finally, parliamentarian to parliamentarian interaction, both formally and informally, should never be underestimated.
Due to the size of this individual study report a number of pages are not included in this document. A copy of the full report (and any supporting documentation) is available on written request to the Office of the Special Minister of State.
26 Nov 2012

The Hon Gary Gray AO MP
Special Minister of State
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Gary

Report of Participation in the American Australian Leadership Dialogue:

21-23 October 2012, Honolulu, Hawaii

This three day dialogue was the fifth annual Honolulu Leadership Dialogue conducted by the American Australian Leadership Dialogue (AALD) and the co-hosts, the East-West Centre and the US Pacific Command.

The bipartisan Leadership Dialogue aims to advance understanding between American and Australian Leaders on matters of designated mutual interest, such as defence, security and conversation about our shared Indo Pacific neighbourhood.

Asia Pacific is the most dynamic region in the world today with its continued economic expansion and raising influence in world affairs. Both Australia and the United States have deep ties into the region and shared interests, and are uniquely placed to engage with the region.

In this regard, during the last year there have been potentially more disturbing flash points which were discussed at the Dialogue. As well, the Dialogue met at a sensitive and fascinating stage in the US Presidential and Congressional election timetable – a fortnight before the elections.

The opportunity to engage the US Pacific Command during this Honolulu Leadership Dialogue was a rare privilege indeed, and offered a unique and insightful learning experience.

All sessions of the Leadership Dialogue are closed (off-the-record) with all information and views expressed to remain in the room.
The Dialogue involved the participation of 25 leaders from the United States, and 14 from Australia.

In addition to the opportunities for informal discussion provided by receptions and dinners, the program covered the following topic discussions:

1. Australian Political Review  
2. US Political Review  
3. Details briefings by the US Pacific Command  
4. US Strategic approach knows as the PIVOT  
5. Energy and Resources  
6. Maritime Security – South China Sea/Japan/Korea  
7. Trade/Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement

CONCLUSION:

Over the last 20 years the non-governmental Leadership Dialogue has woven ideas and friendships together in ways that have influenced national security, trade and business ties.

This fifth Dialogue in Hawaii continues that role in a most effective way, and it was a privilege to participate.

Yours Sincerely

ANDREW ROBB
MR STUART ROBERT MP

Uganda
21 – 28 October 2012
Overseas Study Travel Report

Special Minister of State
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

In accordance with the requirements of Clause 9.2(b) of Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2006/18 (the Determination), I submit the following statement reporting on my recent overseas study travel.

I note that, in accordance with Clause 9.5 of the Determination, a copy of this statement may be obtained from you upon request by any Senator or Member. I also note that this statement will be tabled in the Parliament at your discretion, including as part of the six monthly tabling of entitlements expenditure for Senators and Members by the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Stuart Robert MP
27 November 2012
Purpose of Journey

The purpose of accessing my overseas study entitlement was to take advantage of the opportunity of being in the Middle East as part of the 70th anniversary of the 2nd battle of El Alamein to visit the largest NGO in Africa in Cairo and then fly to Uganda to meet with the leadership of the world’s largest orphan care program.

I currently sit on the International Board of one of the world’s largest non institutional orphan care programs and have had a great interest in finding solutions to the crushing issue of inter-generational poverty caused by HIV AIDS and war and the resultant legacy of up to 50 million African orphaned children.

Australia has recently increased its aid budget to Africa to address some of these issues and thus I met with Africa’s leading NGO’s that are dealing with child poverty and inter-generational solutions. I also met with some of Africa’s leading military politicians both as part of the official delegation to North Africa and then subsequently as part of the study tour that was tacked on the end.

Detailed Itinerary Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 October 2012</td>
<td>Drive</td>
<td>El Alamein – Cairo (Travel to El Alamein from Australia was as part of the Australian delegation for the 70th anniversary of the 2nd battle of El Alamein)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 October 2012</td>
<td>All Day tour</td>
<td>Stephen’s Children Projects in the garbage cities of Cairo and then fly to Dubai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 October 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Fly Dubai to Uganda and meet with General Eli, the military Commander of the revolutionary forces of the Government of President Museveni and now the senior military MP and leading anti-corruption advocate in the Ugandan Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Living Hope leadership and programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 October 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Watoto leadership and programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 October 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Uganda - Dubai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 October 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Return travel to Australia as part of the El Alamein delegation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Meetings and Outcomes / Findings

Meeting 1
*Stephen’s Children*
22 October 2012

Mama Maggie Gobran is the founder of Stephen’s Children, a ministry based in Cairo dedicated to helping families living in Cairo’s garbage slums, providing assistance to both Christian and Muslim children, and helping impoverished rural communities in Upper Egypt. She is referred to by locals as "Mama Maggie" and has been dubbed the "Mother Teresa of Cairo."

It is widely acknowledged that it is through her deep religious and moral commitment that Mama Maggie has succeeded in creating an organization that serves the poorest, desperate, and most vulnerable population of Egypt.

Stephen’s Children has provided services to over 25,000 families in Egypt. In 2010 alone, Stephen’s Children assisted communities through 80 clinics, 80 community education centres, 65 camps, and 5 vocational centres.

I visited a number of these centres and saw first hand the work being done in:
- caring for children at the Kindergartens,
- young boy’s and men’s vocational training centre in shoe making
- young girl’s and woman’s vocational training centre in garment making and embroidery.
- Medical clinic treating the community (there was a young boy in the clinic being treated for quite horrific burns to his hand inflicted by his Mother because he was being naughty. This is apparently a regular problem within these large garbage cities of up to 70,000 people in each city).

Meeting 2
*General Eli Tumwine MP*
23 October 2012

I met with General Eli Tumwine who is a senior MP in the Ugandan Parliament, representing the Uganda People’s Defence Force. He is a former Commander of the Army in Uganda, (our CDF equivalent) and is still considered one of the highest ranking members of the Ugandan military.

General Eli led the military revolution (FRONASA forces) that ushered President Museveni into power in 1986. He fired the first shots of the National Resistance Army and led the forces, despite sustaining facial injuries that led to loss of sight in one eye.

He is currently leading the anti-corruption fight within the Ugandan Parliament and general society and his daughter happened to work previously for Watoto, hence his great interest in caring for the orphaned child and widowed mother.
Meeting 3
Living Hope
24 October 2012

I met with the management of the Living Hope program that is being effectively run in Eastern Africa with thousands of HIV women. Living Hope provides women with training and skills, including literacy and numeracy to allow them to learn a work skill to continue to raise their family. Skills being taught include jewellery making, Shea butter cream production, doll making, sewing and knitting. This combined with a nurturing environment and support structure, including a novel banking system using a basic mobile phone network is empowering some of the most vulnerable women to care for themselves and their children.

This time focussed on the establishment of profit making enterprises, especially Shea butter and clothing manufacturing.

Meeting 4
Watoto
25 October 2012

I met with the leadership and management of Watoto Childcare, an organisation I am passionate about that is caring for over 4500 widows and orphans. I visited the new Suubi babies home, where there were 118 babies that had been rescued from pit latrines, garbage bins and general abandonment.

I visited the Suubi village, home to over 2000 orphaned children and widows who care for them, the primary and high school as well as administration and medical facilities.

Discussions were also extensively had with the management of the babies’ home programs, the school, the village and the wider global organisation.

Conclusion
In summary I found the very quick side trip to Africa, both Egypt and Uganda to further my knowledge concerning causes and responses to the plight of the Africa orphan due to poverty, violence and HIV AIDS to be another sobering, at times deeply distressing yet encouraging experience. Like my visit to South Africa last year, I found that many of the policies of the Egyptian Government are harming the ostensibly Coptic Christian populations and the politicisation for vote winning of the garbage cities exacerbates the situation. There remains enormous hope through the communities response to the problems.

Mama Maggie’s work with Stephen's Children is nothing short of awe inspiring. She is quite rightly considered the Mother Theresa of the Middle East as her work touches almost 250,000 people each week.
Poverty we may well always have with us, but there are community solutions, if only Government would get out of the way. There is much Australia can learn from what community groups and churches are doing in Africa to engage with disenfranchised communities and provide not only hope, but valuable skills.
MR MIKE SYMON MP

United Kingdom and France
2 – 11 November 2012
The Hon. Mark Dreyfus QC MP
Special Minister of State
Suite M1 21
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Overseas Study Travel Report

Dear Minister,

In accordance with the requirements of Clause 9.2(b) of Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2006/18 (the Determination), I submit the following statement reporting on my recent overseas study travel.

I note that, in accordance with Clause 9.5 of the Determination, a copy of this statement may be obtained from you upon request by any Senator or Member. I also note that this statement will be tabled in the Parliament at your discretion, including as part of the six monthly tabling of entitlements expenditure for Senators and Members by the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Mike Symon
Federal Labor Member for Deakin
27/04/2013
Purpose of Journey

The purpose of accessing my overseas study entitlement was to travel to Europe and compare the broadband fibre optic rollout and policy in the UK and France with the National Broadband Network that is currently being installed in Australia.

There has been much comment from the federal opposition that the speed and capacity of the NBN may be more than Australian businesses and consumers require as the NBN Fibre To The Premises (FTTP) installation is more costly than the Fibre To The Node (FTTN) installations in other countries such as the UK, parts of Europe and New Zealand.

I attended a series of meetings and briefings with key players in both the UK and France to gain a first-hand perspective on both the benefits and pitfalls of their particular broadband rollouts.

Detailed Itinerary Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>02 November 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Melbourne to Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 November 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Singapore to London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 November 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Mr Matt Rogerson, Head of Public Affairs and Policy, Virgin Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 November 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Ms Chi Onwurah MP, Shadow Minister for Innovation, Science and Digital Infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 November 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Mr Matthew Conway, Director of Regulatory Development and Nations, OFCOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 November 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Mr Mike Galvin, Network Investment Managing Director, BT OpenReach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 November 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Mr Julian Ashworth, Directory Group Industry Policy, BT Group UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 November 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Mr Andrew Field, Deputy CEO, Broadband delivery UK Department for Culture, Media and Sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 November</td>
<td>Train</td>
<td>London to Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08 November 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Ms Natacha Ferrier, Corporate International Relations, RATP Group, Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08 November</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Mr Georges-Etienne Faure, Adviser to Deputy Mayor Missika, Paris Town Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08 November</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Ms Florence Chimaud, Director, Institutional Relations, Orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09 November</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Mr Andre Merrigoux, Public Affairs Director, Global Government &amp; Public Affairs, Alcatel Lucent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09 November 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Paris to Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 November 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Singapore to Melbourne</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Meetings and Outcomes / Findings

Meeting
Mr Matt Rogerson, Head of Public Affairs and Policy, Virgin Media 5th November 2012

Virgin Media operate their own network in the UK through a HFC co-axial cable network. This network is connected to around 12.5 million homes and this reach is due to the high take up of pay TV in the UK. For businesses, an optical fibre connection is available to the premise, whilst for residential the service is provided via fibre to a node and then HFC to the household.

Services are offered at differing speeds such as 30Mb, 60Mb or (100Mb/s fibre) on Virgin Media cabled streets, so only premises passed by Virgin Media can receive these products.

Meeting
Ms Chi Onwurah MP, Shadow UK Minister for Innovation, Science and Digital Infrastructure 5th November 2012

In particular, we discussed the regulatory settings that are in place covering broadband rollouts in the UK. The EU have a major impact on the regulatory settings as there constraints as to where funding from the Broadband Delivery for the United Kingdom (BDUK) can be spent. This funding is around £2 Billion and is expected to be matched by public funding.

We also discussed issues of open access to networks and backhaul, take up of services and complaints from the public regarding the 2Mb/s minimum speed guarantee for broadband.

Meeting
Mr Matthew Conway, Director of Regulatory Development and Nations, Ofcom, UK & Mr David Stewart, Competition Policy Director, Ofcom, UK 5th November 2012

Ofcom are the regulator that controls all forms of telecommunication in the UK. The BDUK program bids are currently being issued, funded by £530 million allocated by the current Parliament. This money is raised from the collection of TV licences. 90% of the network will have a minimum download speed of 24Mb/s, whilst 10% of the network will have a minimum speed of 2Mb/s. This funding is subject to sign off by the European Union (EU).

Also discussed were the Universal Service Obligation and the cut off point of £3300 per premise, installations costing in excess of this amount have to be paid by the customer. Ofcom define superfast broadband as in excess of 24Mb/s.

Meeting
Mr Mike Galvin, Network Investment Managing Director, BT Openreach UK 5th November 2012

BT subsidiary, Openreach is the company that provides copper, fibre, PSTN, circuits and ULL’s through open access arrangements to retail telecoms providers in the UK.
The commercial Broadband rollout is being undertaken by BT Openreach to pass 2/3 of the approximately 28 million premises in the UK. Currently 12 million premises have been passed with a take up rate of 7%. This broadband delivery model is FTTC and the broadband plan has recently been upgraded from 40/20Mb/s to 80/40Mb/s.

Interestingly, Openreach claim to be able to provide ADSL2 up to 11Km from the exchange or the cabinet, a completely different limit to Australia where ADSL2 often cuts out short of 5Km.

The UK copper network and underground ducts are typically 50 to 60 years old and access for fibre is limited whilst copper is in place. The decision to keep copper in place has been a regulatory decision, rather than a commercial decision.

A BDUK area is typically one British County, with all of Wales in one area, and two areas in Scotland.

Meeting
Mr Julian Ashworth, Directory Group Industry Policy, BT Group UK
5th November 2012

BT Group have around 90,000 Fibre To The Cabinet (FTTC) installations across the UK, these are being upgraded to Generic Ethernet Access that can supply a service of up 80/20 Mb/s to the premise depending on the length of the copper circuit, and 330/30 Mb/s when installed as FTTP. At present BT run ADSL to the premises up to 11Km distant from the cabinet with speeds as low as 2Mb/second. Some areas in Scotland are served by satellite with speeds of up to 6Mb/second.

The minimum 2Mb/second broadband service has an 80% take-up across the UK but there is much demand for faster services. BT Group are installing fibre to various sites under the BDUK program e.g. Cornwall and these areas have a higher take up rate of new fibre connections.

The BDUK program is classified as State Aid by the European Union and BT cannot receive funding under the UK governments program with approval of the EU. BT also offer Fibre On Demand at cost to the user, this service is not a part of the UK Universal Service Obligation that applies to telephony.

Meeting
Mr Andrew Field, Deputy CEO, Broadband delivery UK Department for Culture, Media and Sport
5th November 2012

The Department defines superfast broadband as 24Mb/s + using FTTC or FTTP and 90% of the UK is expected to achieve this connection speed by 2015 as the BDUK program is delivered.

Sites already started under the BDUK program include North Yorkshire and rollouts are pending in Wales, Cumbria, Surrey, Kent and Essex.

Because EU approval for the expenditure has taken longer than expected there have been delays to contract negotiations and slow start ups with the BDUK program.

Meeting
Ms Natacha Ferrier, Corporate International Relations, RATP Group, Paris
8th November 2012
The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the provision of Public Transport within the metropolitan areas of Paris and was not directly related to broadband rollout.

RATP is a State owned company that moves around 10 million passengers per day in and around Paris by Regional Train (RER), Metro (Underground Train), Tram and Bus and employing a workforce of 48,000 employees in France plus others worldwide in subsidiary companies that operate with local transport providers.

**Meeting**

*Mr Georges-Etienne Faure, Adviser to Deputy Mayor Missika, Paris Town Council*

*8th November 2012*

Paris is unique in the world in its provision of broadband fibre rollout as this is delivered via the sewer system that was installed in the 19th Century. With walk through tunnels running along every street and right up to the basement wall of every premise the FTTP rollout does not face some of the delivery or access hurdles that many other cities in the world are facing when providing new services. Newer parts of the city and outlying suburbs have underground services delivered by the usual form of underground ducts.

The Paris Council are paid an access rate of 2 Euro per meter per year for use of this access and there are three or four main wholesalers operating. The copper that currently serves every premise will not be turned off until every customer within a building has changed over and even then will remain in place and not be removed.

A standard home service provides 100/40 (or 100/60) Mb/s at present over the FTTP.

**Meeting**

*Mrs Florence Chinaud, Director, Institutional Relations, Orange*

*M Mr Mark Lebourges, Director Europe & Economics, Regulatory Affairs Orange*

*M Mr Eric Debroeck, Senior Vice President, Regulatory Affairs Orange*

*8th November 2012*

Access issues in multiple unit premises are an in impediment to the fibre rollout in France as there is no regulatory regime that provides for guaranteed access to private properties, this is a particular problem if a body corporate (known as a General Assembly) of a building does not grant an access request as these bodies usually only meet once per year.

The running of fibre through France Telecom ducts is open to competition by regulation but the cost driver in existing ducts is space as many are already near or at capacity. The existing copper network in France is of high quality and has an average age of well under 20 years.

For buildings of more than 12 units in Very Dense Areas a mutualisation point is provided and a wholesale offer will apply to the entire building with the install free to the end user as costs are
shared amongst the different retail operators. New providers in a building have to reimburse costs to existing operators.

The French Very High Speed Broadband National Plan will cover 70% of the population by 2020 and 100% by 2025 supported by EU funding of 2 Billion Euro for installations outside of Very dense Areas.

Meeting

Mr Andre Merrigoux, Public Affairs Director, Global Government & Public Affairs, Alcatel Lucent
Mr Florian Damas, Director Public Affairs, Alcatel Lucent, Belgium
8th November 2012

The issue of access to Multiple Occupancy Units was discussed and without regulation to require access to premises it would appear that the French rollout will continue to suffer from this problem.

In most of Europe, copper DSL is cheap and reliable and provides speeds of 10Mb/s plus and this is one reason that take up of fibre services is less than expected.

The rollout in broadband France shares the ‘passive layer’ of ducts and fibre but not the ‘active layer’ of equipment to light the fibre.

Conclusion

Broadband fibre rollouts in both the UK and France are the subject of very different regulatory regimes to that of Australia. The lack of guaranteed access to buildings and premises for installation of fibre optic cabling is affecting both the speed of the broadband rollout and the take up of these services in both countries.

The competition between cable and fibre providers in the UK is reminiscent of the parallel HFC pay TV cabling installed by both Telstra and Optus in Australia in the early 1990’s to many, but not all suburbs in large Australia cities. To me it represents an extravagance for some customers, whilst others may miss out on the same levels of speed or service.

The Fibre To The Cabinet rollout in the UK does offer increased data speeds over what is currently available and will be useful to many customers in the short term. However the limitations of copper cabling will curtail the provision of faster services in the future for all, except for those people or businesses that have paid extra to have the fibre installed to their own premises (FTTP).

Rather than every customer in the fibre footprint receiving a service that has the capacity to be massively upgraded as data download volumes and speeds increase, those who remain connected to a Fibre To The Cabinet /copper service will not receive an equal speed or quality of service compared to those that can afford to pay more for their infrastructure.

The National Broadband Network in Australia does not have these flaws in its rollout design or delivery to customers within the 93% fibre footprint and in comparison it offers the best option for faster services now and upgradability in to the future without keeping redundant copper systems in place and avoiding the building of duplicated infrastructure in the name of (misguided) competition.
SENATOR CATRYNA BILYK

Ireland
2 – 16 November 2012
Senator Catryna Bilyk
Senator For Tasmania

Overseas Study Travel Report

Special Minister of State
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

In accordance with the requirements of Clause 9.2(b) of Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2006/18 (the Determination), I submit the following statement reporting on my recent overseas study travel.

I note that, in accordance with Clause 9.5 of the Determination, a copy of this statement may be obtained from you upon request by any Senator or Member. I also note that this statement will be tabled in the Parliament at your discretion, including as part of the six monthly tabling of entitlements expenditure for Senators and Members by the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Senator Catryna Bilyk
6 December 2012
Purpose of Journey

I undertook this study tour as a member of the Australia-Ireland Parliamentary Group. The overseas study entitlement was used to travel to Ireland to strengthen parliament to parliament relationships between Australia and Ireland; and to investigate economic and cultural links and opportunities for new trade and relationships.

The group had a strong and balanced program developed in response to a range of interests which included meetings with local government authorities, industry representatives, cultural institutions, Government Ministers, Parliamentary Committees and not for profit organisations.

Issues discussed included:
- the impact of fiscal responses and austerity measures being instigated in response to the EU bailout conditions from the GFC;
- reconciliation efforts between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland;
- responses and government actions in relation to the Ferns Report (abuse of children in institutional care);
- mental health reforms and new initiatives relating to palliative care.

The study tour included an audience with the President of the Republic of Ireland Dr Michael Higgins.

Detailed Itinerary Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Hobart to Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Sydney to Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Guinness Factory Tour and trade discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Avoca – Inspection of Woollen mills and weaving facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Official Reception HE Bruce Davis, Australian Ambassador</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Barnardos, Chief Executive, Mr Fergus Finlay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Chairman Wicklow Co. Council Cllr Pat Casey and County Manager Eddie Sheehy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Genealogy Presentation – Irish Australian emigration records, Ms Catherine Wright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Lord Mayor of Cork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Cork to Doolin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Inspection of Killarney National Park - biodiversity preservation measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Briefing of EU measures on biosecurity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Irish Music Concert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Visits to Heritage preservation sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Galway to Belfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Tour of North Belfast areas subject to conditions of the Good Friday Peace Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Speaker of Northern Ireland Parliament, Mr William Hay MLA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Ms Barbara Jones, Irish Representative in Joint Secretariat for Northern Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Meeting with Mayor of Drogheda and Community representatives – presentation of letter from PM to people of Drogheda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Visit to Cultural site - Newgrange – Ancient burial mound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Inspire Ireland – youth mental health initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Irish Hospice Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Headstrong, Youth Mental Health Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Attended Dail Eireann and Seanad Eireann (Parliament)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Ms Frances Fitzgerald TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Parliamentary Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Working lunch hosted by Speaker of Seanad, Senator Paddy Boyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Parliamentary Agriculture Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Parliamentary Joint Committee on Education and Social Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Chairperson of the Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform, Deputy Cairan Lynch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>President of Ireland, Dr Michael Higgins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Dinner hosted by Speaker, Sean Barrett TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Dublin to Melbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Melbourne to Hobart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key Meetings and Outcomes / Findings**

Meetings with Parliamentary Joint Committee on Education and Social Protection, Joint Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform, Headstrong and Inspire Ireland (both NGOs), and HE the President of the Republic of Ireland, Dr Michael Higgins.

The Parliamentary meetings attended lead to a broader understanding of the impact of the global financial crisis (GFC) on Ireland as well as the causes, effects and challenges of recovery.

The global financial crisis has had more than just a financial impact on the people of Ireland. Mental Health difficulties cost the Irish economy around 2% (approx 2.5 billion euro) of GNP annually.

The Parliamentary Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform committee outlined recent developments in the Irish economy.

Ireland enjoyed strong economic growth in the period from the mid 1990’s to 2007. Growth in the first part of the period corresponded to the arrival of the EU single market, which attracted significant investment in Ireland particularly in export oriented industries. This initial period of strong growth enabled Ireland’s economy to catch up with the rest of the world after a period of stagnation. Living standards improved, employment increased and improved education levels led to increased productivity.
Then in the period 2002 – 2007 greater availability of credit led to a build up of household debt as rising property prices stimulated a rush of investment in housing construction.

Irish banks turned to short term borrowing from abroad and, as with many in the global financial markets, indulged in increasingly risky lending practices, which were not scrutinised adequately by financial regulators.

The collapse of global financial markets left Irish banks vulnerable. They were heavily exposed to the Irish property market and when property prices tumbled, banks suffered huge losses and the short term loans they relied upon dried up.

Crisis spread to Government. It was forced to guarantee banks’ liabilities and public funds were used to recapitalise them. This put further strain on the Government’s fiscal position already hit by declining tax revenue. Spending was cut, employment fell and many young people, particularly those who were skilled and well educated, emigrated in search of greater opportunity abroad.

The Government guarantee to underwrite the 6 major banks shouldered the population with a debt of 400 Billion Euros.

Ireland is currently on a bumpy road to recovery, the Irish economy is expected to grow at only 0.4% this year, with a growth of 1.4% next year. Ireland is trying to shrink the deficit from 32% to 3% of GDP by 2014.

This information all tied in with discussions held with HE the President of Ireland, Dr Michael Higgins, who warmly hosted the delegation for over an hour. Dr Higgins spoke of the many young people choosing to move to Australia due to the economic climate in Ireland, along with discussing issues of concern in relation to asylum seekers and refugees and Australia’s actions. He stated “this is a difficult global problem; we all need to play our part.” He also briefed the group about The Gathering, an initiative of the Irish government to be celebrated all over Ireland in 2013, where Communities throughout Ireland will showcase and share the very best of Irish culture, tradition, business, sport, and the uniquely Irish sense of fun. Over 70 million people worldwide claim Irish ancestry. The Gathering Ireland 2013 will reach out to those who have moved away, their relatives, friends and descendants, and invite them home.
The problems facing Ireland have had many effects. In particular a large number of young people are moving overseas, many thousands have come to Australia. The massive over supply of housing, means that housing prices will remain depressed for many years, even if many of the 600 or so ghost estates end up being bull dozed. Bailouts to builders and speculators, estimated in the region of 106 Billion Euros, means that the road to recovery will be long and deep economic and social difficulties will remain for some time.

The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Education and Social Protection discussed the growth in mental health issues, a universal concern for governments in many countries and a number of other issues, including the recent referendum on children’s rights.

Many young people in Ireland have been left feeling frustrated about their future. Youth unemployment is approximately 20%, and many young people find their social networks have been severely changed with so many young people emigrating.

In seeking more information about this I met with two non government organisations, HEADSTRONG and INSPIRE IRELAND.

HEADSTRONG is a non-profit organisation dedicated to supporting communities and statutory services in providing appropriate mental health support for young Irish people in the 12 – 25 year age group. The organisation support youth mental health in 3 significant areas of service development - Jigsaw, Advocacy and Research.

Jigsaw is facilitated by Headstrong and the model of service delivery is a response to the challenge of transforming how young people in Ireland access mental health support and attain positive developmental outcomes. It brings services and supports together, by supplying first level contact that is fully accessible. It is based on strong emphasis of working with communities and Individuals to improve mental health and well being. A total of 909 young people were supported through Jigsaw Hub in 2011. Of these 34% were self referred and 29% parent referred. 8% were referred by GP’s, 4.8% by social work services, 4.8% adult mental health, 4.5% secondary schools and 32.5% peer referred. Almost the same number of males as females (49.6%M 50.4%F), which is interesting given the theory that seeking help and support is difficult to males. Clearly if the proper environment is established males will engage. Almost 2/3 of Jigsaw support recipients were aged 15-19 (63.5%), while in the 20 – 25 year age group 25.6% engaged the service.

By using strategies that target the whole community Jigsaw promotes positive mental health. Universal prevention strategies such as anti-stigma campaigns and youth advocacy are central to this being.

Jigsaw has sites in Galway, Kerry, Meath, Ballymun and Roscommon with a further 6 communities being developed having received funding from HSE Innovation Funds (Government).

INSPIRE IRELAND is a charitable organisation which is part of an international network of foundations operating in Australia and the USA. Set up in 2009 its aim is to improve mental health in Ireland and help prevent suicidal behaviour through the use of technology. Launched in 2010 the ReachOut.com program has had almost 300,000 unique Irish visits, and has become a trusted brand
and service providing young people with support through an innovative and accessible means – the Internet.

Inspire’s objective is to ensure that online youth mental health help and support are relevant, safe and easy to access. They aim to integrate the online and offline environments to ensure there are clear pathways for young people to get the best support they need, wherever they are and whenever they need it. Community education in relation to the tool they have developed is also important to them.

Over the 12 month period June 2011 – June 2012 there were 143,652 Irish visits to ReachOut.com, an overall increase in traffic of 10% from the previous year. January 2012 was the busiest month followed by November 2011 and October 2011. During the academic year there is a fairly consistent trend of a high number of site visits on Mondays and Tuesday, numbers then fall during the week. Lowest visitor numbers are on Saturday. Most people find their way to ReachOut.com through a Google search. Facebook referrals were also quite prominent. Top entry points to the site are the homepage and fact sheets on depression, anxiety and eating disorders. Real stories are the most popular postings. The most popular informational sheets are on depression, anxiety, bi-polar disorder, management and treatment options for depression and what to do if you are being bullied.

Conclusion

The complexity of the Irish economic situation has had fundamental social, economic and political implications for the future of Ireland, not least of all the young people.

There are a great number of challenges as well as positive factors impacting on young people in Ireland. Youth unemployment is at approximately 20%, and the high number of young people choosing to leave Ireland will lead to other issues including demographic problems and skills shortages.

Youth mental health difficulties are of great concern to politicians, and the broader community. Early intervention strategies and support is the key to assisting young people learn to cope and mitigate those difficulties. Internet-based technology continues to offer an effective way of bringing information, connection and support to young people in a way that is meaningful to them. In the coming years the continued roll out of next generation broadband across Ireland will serve to grow the delivery of online mental health supports. Disseminating coping strategies and accurate information on mental health problems can be of great benefit to young people, but it must not be used to absole the government of the provision of appropriate mental health support for those who need it.

The information gained from the many discussions on the economic, social and political impact of the Global financial Crisis on Ireland was very informative for the Australian Politicians, and the Parliamentary Group visit enabled good relationships to be developed with a broad range of Irish Parliamentarians.
Overseas Study Travel Report

Hon. Gary Gray
Special Minister of State
Parliament House
CANBERRA
ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

In accordance with the requirements of Clause 9.2(b) of Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2006/18 (the Determination), I submit the following statement reporting on my recent overseas study travel to the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

I note that, in accordance with Clause 9.5 of the Determination, a copy of this statement may be obtained from you upon request by any Senator or Member. I also note that this statement will be tabled in the Parliament at your discretion, including as part of the six monthly tabling of entitlements expenditure for Senators and Members by the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]
22/12/2013
Purpose of Journey

This study tour was undertaken as a member of the Australia-Ireland Parliamentary Group. The overseas study entitlement was used to travel to Ireland to strengthen parliament to parliament relationships between Australia and Ireland and to investigate economic and cultural links and opportunities for new trade and relationships. The group had a strong and balanced program developed in response to a range of interests which included meetings with local government authorities, industry representatives, cultural institutions, Government Ministers, Parliamentary Committees and not for profit organisations.

Issues discussed included the impact of fiscal responses and austerity measures being instigated in response to the EU bailout conditions from the GFC; reconciliation efforts between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland; responses and government actions in relation to the Fern Report (abuse of children in institutional care) and information regarding the outcomes of the constitutional referendum on children which was held during our visit.

The visit was privileged enough to include an audience with the President of Ireland Dr Michael Higgins.

Detailed Itinerary Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Sydney to Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Guinness Factory Tour and trade discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event, Meeting, Ambassador</td>
<td>Avoca – Inspection of Woollen mills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting, County Manager Eddie Sheehy; Event emigration records, Ms Catherine Wright.</td>
<td>Chairman Wicklow Co. Council Clr Pat Casey and Genealogy Presentation – Irish Australian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Lord Mayor of Cork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Cork to Doolin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Inspection of Killarney National Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Briefing of EU measures on biosecurity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Visits to Heritage preservation sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Galway to Belfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Tour of North Belfast subject to conditions of the Good Friday Peace Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Speaker of Northern Ireland Parliament, Mr William Hay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Ms Barbara Jones, Irish Representative in Joint Secretariat for Northern Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Meeting with Mayor of Drogheda and Community representatives and presentation of letter from PM to people of Drogheda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Visit to Cultural site - Newgrange – Ancient burial mound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Parliamentary Economics Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Working lunch hosted by Speaker of Seanad, Senator Paddy Boyle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Parliamentary Agriculture Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Parliamentary Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>President of Ireland, Dr Michael Higgins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Dinner hosted by Speaker, Sean Baret T.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Nov 2012</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Dublin to Darwin via Manilla</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key Meetings and Outcomes / Findings**

The meeting with the Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform provided several opportunities to understand how decisions were made and why by the Irish Government to stabilise the economy following the financial crash. Ireland was the 4th best economy in the world but the recent banking crisis has been a crucial issue in dealing with the national debt.

The IMF imposed austerity measures which are impacting on public policy and service delivery and contribute to the challenges of the economic collapse of Ireland.

Unemployment throughout Ireland has reached almost 16 percent. In October, the NT Government sent a delegation to attend the Working Abroad Expo in Dublin to promote job vacancies in the NT. This included representatives from Master Builders NT, Motor Trades Association, and Australian Hoteliers Association. 20,000 new jobs are predicted for the NT in the next five years and the economic crisis in Ireland has been an opportunity for this recruitment.

In association with the jobs losses, there is the crisis with Irish property prices which have plunged 70 percent down to the level that is was in 2000 levels. In 2011, just €2.3bn was provided in mortgage finance compared with €40bn at the peak of the property market in 2006.
What was of interest was the fact that there are some 400,000 properties lying empty in the Irish Republic, which will keep house prices depressed for years. The 600+ “ghost estates” symbolise the Irish recession. The cost of bailing out the banks that loaned billions to builders and property speculators during the boom has been estimated at losses of €106bn.

County Councils are being funded to take responsibility for these ghost estates in an effort to make some of these properties available for social housing. Wicklow County Council has recently acquired an additional 400 properties under this scheme, although we were informed that there are some estates so poorly designed and with little infrastructure, that the best and most cost-effective option is to bulldoze these buildings.

During the Economics Committee meeting in the Dail, deputies explained that the government is determined to find a mechanism to avoid paying €3bn due in four months for bailing out Anglo Irish Bank and is looking for concessions which could ease the debt burden. The Irish Parliament is closely watching the negotiations underway with Greece, arguing that Ireland is a special case, having signed up to punitive repayment conditions that many believe are not able to be honoured.

The Agriculture Committee outlined the critical importance of current deliberations about the EU Common Agricultural Policy, and the future of CAP payments, which provide financial incentives to farmers to increase productivity. The delegation heard how CAP has been used to drive significant change, including the introduction of milk quotas, and commitments to environmental protection.

Farmers get 4% of income as subsidies but in the EU it is 23%, therefore Ireland is heavily reliant on the export market.

The meeting with the Joint Committee on Education and Social Protection which was also attended by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Frances Fitzgerald and involved an extensive discussion about the Children’s Referendum. This referendum proposed to insert a new Article in to the Constitution that deals directly with children and aims to establish their fundamental rights such as protection, supporting families, removing inequalities in adoption and recognising children in their own right. The objective is to influence the legal framework for decision making regarding children and to add weight to existing provisions in statute law.

The need for the referendum arises from the report on the Kilkenny Incest Case nearly 19 years ago. It was progressed by a Joint Committee established in 2007 which was given the task of considering proposed wording for a Children’s Referendum.

The vote was held on the Saturday during the middle of our visit with a 56% acceptance rate. Interesting there was a low voter turnout, a high court case delivered a few days before the vote determined that the campaign had not been balanced because there was not a no case being funded or run, the Catholic Church was not in favour of this change as they had the view that it assumed that some parents are not doing well which lead to distrust of the government and its intentions.

I personally found this to be an interesting case study given the current work in this country to look at the Constitutional recognition of indigenous people. While our method and requirements for changing the constitution is vastly different, there are many similarities about how to frame the right
question, how to conduct a balanced campaign and community perceptions about what is going to be achieved with these changes.

The group met with HE the President of Ireland, Dr Michael Higgins and discussed Ireland’s relationship with Australia. We discussed the current unemployment situation in Ireland and the emigration to Australia by many young people. The President raised concerns that those who travel to Australia in search of new opportunities may never return home. Hence, the initiative of the Irish Government, The Gathering, to be celebrated all over Ireland in 2013 – an appeal to the global Irish diaspora to return to Ireland and renew their connection with Ireland.

Dr Higgins took the opportunity to express his concern about Australia’s actions in relation to refugees and asylum seekers, saying ‘this is a difficult global problem, we all need to play our part... and no man is an island’.

He reflected on the crisis in Gaza and expressed the view that the Joint Secretariat model as a permanent feature of the Irish Peace Process could assist in negotiating a lasting peace between Israel and Palestine.

The group met with the Speaker of the Northern Ireland Parliament, Mr William Hay MLA, who outlined the stabilisation of the Northern Ireland government which enabled a first full term to be achieved and elections to be held in 2011. As a unicameral system, with a consensus model of decision making (no formal opposition) designed to reduce the adversarial environment, steady progress is being made.

The group toured the troubled areas of North Belfast, and had a guided tour of the murals before meeting with the Irish representative of the Joint Secretariat, Ms Barbara Jones. She outlined the critical diplomatic and negotiating role played by the Joint Secretariat, which provides a forum for resolving emerging issues.

Finally one of the highlights of the trip was a visit to Drogheda to meet with the Mayor Paul Bell and to personally deliver a letter signed by the Prime Minister to that community on the death of the Jill Meagher. This expressed the view that this death had deeply touched both nations, highlighted the on going need to campaign for violence against women and was much appreciated by this city.
Conclusion

It is very difficult to understand the complexity of the Irish economic situation without coming to terms with the benefits and conditions of being part of the European Union, and the Eurozone.

The current economic situation going from prosperity a recession has had profound social and political implications for Ireland’s future. Ireland is also going through some major social policy changes concerning children protection, cohesion and development of the nation in a changing and challenging economic environment. The Parliamentary Group visit strengthened our relationship with Irish Parliamentarians: many personal connections were made, and fruitful discussions identified matters of interest to be pursued, including the Australian Political Exchange Council.