

Annual Determination

Report and Determination of additional entitlements for Members of the Parliament of New South Wales pursuant to the *Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1989*

22 July 2025

(As amended by erratum in Government Gazette Number 332-1 – Other on 15 August 2025)

Contents

Contents

Section 1 – Introduction	6
Section 2 – Matters dealt with in the General Review report	10
Those to be given effect in the 2026 Determination	10
Those matters which require further consideration	11
Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration	15
Basic Salary	15
Proposed 2026 general review of the basic salary	28
Section 4 – Additional Entitlements	35
The Auditor General’s Review	35
Annual adjustment to quantum of Additional Entitlements	37
No increase to the Electoral Allowance	39
Other changes to the Electoral Allowance entitlements	45
The General Travel Allowance	46
Use of caravans	49
Matters relating to staff.....	50
Travel expenses	50
Staff members working at Parliament House.....	54
Correction to a staffing anomaly.....	56
Additional staff for Members of the Shadow Cabinet	56
Staff for Whips	62
Additional staffing generally	64
Staff Salaries	65
Use of entitlements	66
Sydney Allowance	68
Committee Allowance	71
Electorate/Zone to Sydney Travel	73
The Communications Allowance.....	73
Skills Allowance	75

Contents

Audit of entitlements	76
Members' caring responsibilities.....	77
Section 5 – General Summary of the Determination	79
2025 Adjustments	79
The Determination Index	81
The Determination	83
1. Definitions.....	83
2. Guidelines and General Conditions Regarding Additional Entitlements for Members in Connection with Parliamentary Duties	85
2.1 – 2.3 Circumstances upon which the additional entitlements may be used for parliamentary duties.....	85
2.4 Conditions	89
2.5 List of Tables Relating to Additional Entitlements	93
3. Basic Salary	94
4. Electoral Groupings and Zones for Fixing Additional Entitlements	95
5. Additional Entitlements in the Nature of Allowances	97
5.1 Summary	97
5.2 Electoral Allowance.....	97
5.2.1 Basis	97
5.2.2 Entitlement.....	98
5.3 Sydney Allowance	100
5.3.1 Purpose and Operation of the Provisions.....	100
5.3.2 Entitlement.....	101
5.3.3 Conditions.....	108
5.4 Committee Allowances	110
5.4.1 Purpose and Operation of the Provision	111
5.4.2 Entitlement.....	111
6. Additional Entitlements in the Nature of Fixed Allocations	112
6.1 Summary	112
6.2 Electorate/Zone to Sydney Travel	112

Contents

6.2.1 Purpose and Operation of the Provisions.....	112
6.2.2 Conditions.....	114
6.3 Communications Allowance.....	115
6.3.1 Purpose.....	115
6.3.2 Entitlement.....	116
6.3.3 Carry over/forfeiture of entitlement.....	119
6.3.4 Special Conditions.....	119
6.3.5 Conditions.....	120
6.4 General Travel Allowance.....	121
6.4.1 Purpose.....	122
6.4.2 Entitlement.....	122
6.4.3 Carry over/forfeiture of entitlement.....	123
6.4.4 Conditions.....	123
6.5 Recognised Office Holder Additional Entitlements	127
6.5.1 Additional loadings	127
6.5.2 Carry over/forfeiture of entitlement.....	129
6.5.3 Conditions.....	129
6.6 Skills Development Allowance	129
6.6.1 Purpose.....	129
6.6.2 Entitlement.....	130
6.6.3 Carry over/forfeiture of entitlement.....	130
6.6.4 Conditions.....	131
7. Additional Entitlements/Resources	133
7.1 Equipment, Services and Facilities	133
7.2 Staff.....	134
7.2.1 Emergency Relief Staff	135
Appendices	137
Appendix 1 – General Review – Report to review the additional entitlements for Members of the Parliament of New South Wales.....	137

Contents

Appendix 2 – NSW Treasury Advice regarding	138
Appendix 3 – Submission of the Secretary of NSW Treasury.....	142

Section 1 – Introduction

1. As explained in the 2024 Annual Report, in 2023, for the first time since the 2000 Determination was made, the Tribunal was asked to conduct a general review of the Determination: 2024 Annual Report: at [7]-[16]. That general review was undertaken and the Tribunal provided its General Review Report to Members in October 2024. That Report is annexed as **Appendix 1**.
2. There the Tribunal explained changes to the Determination which it had concluded were warranted; legislative and administrative changes which it had concluded that the Parliament might wish to consider; as well as other changes to the Determination and the Parliament's administrative arrangements, which required further consideration.
3. These conclusions were arrived at after submissions received from Members of Parliament, the Presiding Officers, Government, various political parties and the Auditor General were considered. The Tribunal also obtained advice from the Crown Solicitor about matters which Members had raised, which it provided to Members and sought their submissions about. It also considered various information provided by the Department of Parliamentary Services (the Department).
4. When submissions were sought for the 2025 Annual Review, Members were invited to consider the General Review Report and raise any matters it dealt with in their submissions. They were also asked to provide information about the use which they made of their Electoral Allowance.
5. The 2025 Annual Review otherwise commenced in the usual way in October 2024. Written submissions were received from the Presiding

Section 1 – Introduction

Officers, the Opposition Whips in both the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council, the Leader of the NSW Nationals and the Nationals Whip, the Liberal Party, the Greens and some individual Members. Some, including the Government Whip, also made oral submissions.

6. As usual, submissions were also invited from the Auditor General. They referred to the Auditor General's December 2024 Special Report into Members' Additional Entitlements, which reviewed Members' compliance with the Determination. Various information was also provided by the Department. Further submissions were later invited and received from Members, as the result of amendments to the *Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1989*.
7. What has been raised has to be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Its purpose is specified in s2A. It includes providing all Members and Recognised Office Holders with statutory salaries paid as personal income or received as employment benefits for the performance of their parliamentary duties, as well as all or some Members and Recognised Office Holders being provided with additional allowances and other entitlements for the propose of facilitating the efficient performance of those duties.
8. In this review, which began when the Legislative Council was celebrating its bicentenary, Members did not raise concerns of the kind which were raised in 2023 and 2024 about the ongoing effects of natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic on the State. But while the Determination was being considered, Cyclone Alfred hit the north of the State, again causing

Section 1 – Introduction

considerable flooding, the consequences of which Members had to deal with in their work.

9. Concerns which were raised by Members included the impact on the State, its people and the resulting work which its Parliament was being called on to do, included the ongoing impact of cost-of-living challenges which the community faced, albeit they appeared to be easing somewhat. The consequences of ongoing and increasing warfare in other parts of the world, particularly in Europe and the Middle East and the impact this was having on the State, the community and the work which Members were called on to perform as a result, were also raised.
10. This reflects that Australia is a nation comprised of its Indigenous peoples as well as those who have migrated here from other parts of the world, now over the course of more than two centuries, as well as their descendants.
11. Those who live in this State have had the good fortune of being able to live here in peace. But very many of the States' people do maintain close relationships with family living in other parts of the world, in countries with which the State also trades. As this report was being prepared, it became increasingly apparent that wars in other places were affecting the State and its people, as well as Members' day to day work in a variety of ways. Unfortunately, at times that included violence which was feared to have involved acts of terrorism, that also impacted the work of Members.

Section 1 – Introduction

12. Specific matters drawn to the Tribunal's attention in respect of the review of Members' basic salary and their entitlements, which had to be considered in this context, included:
- various changes to the Determination proposed in the General Review Report, most of which were supported;
 - how some matters raised in that Report about the operation of the legislative scheme and its regulation of the Electoral Allowance and Members' staff might be further considered by Members and the Parliament;
 - the inadequacy of staff support for Members and their ongoing dissatisfaction with how staff are remunerated;
 - how an increase in Members' basic salary from 1 July 2025 should be approached; and
 - how various additional entitlements are administered and how that and other aspects of the Determination might be improved.

Section 2 – Matters dealt with in the General Review report

Those to be given effect in the 2026 Determination

13. The General Review Report explained changes to the Determination which had been proposed and the Tribunal had accepted, as well as those which it did not.
14. The Presiding Officers agreed with almost all of the conclusions which the Tribunal had reached. Other submissions did not address these matters.
15. Resulting changes have been made to various clauses of the Determination: cl2.1.12, cl2.3, cl2.4.2, cl2.4.4, cl2.4.9, cl5.3.2, cl5.3.3 (ii) and (iii), cl5.3.3 (viii), cl5.4.1, cl6.2.1 (i) and (iv), cl6.3.1, cl6.3.5 (ii) and (viii), cl6.4.4 (viii), cl6.5.1, cl6.6.1, cl6.6.4, cl7.1.2, cl7.1.2, and cl7.2.1 and an index has been inserted in the Determination.
16. Attention was also drawn to one error to a change proposed, in order to give effect to the provisions of Schedule 1 to the Act, which has been corrected: see cl 7.2 (viii).
17. The Presiding Officers also suggested alterations to some other proposed changes. Those which the Tribunal accepts are:
 - **Condition 2.4.3** provides that “Members must ensure that they have sufficient funds to meet the costs associated with their parliamentary duties.” This will be amended to provide:

Section 2 – Matters dealt with in the General Review report

“Members must ensure that they have sufficient funds to meet expenses which they claim to have reimbursed or paid out of their additional entitlements.”

- **Condition 5.2.2(iii)** provides “A further allowance of \$2,325 per annum is payable to each Independent in the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council”. This will be amended to provide:

“A further allowance of \$2,325 per annum is payable to each Member elected as an Independent in the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council, who is not a Recognised Office Holder.”

- **Condition 6.4.4(ii)(a)** The Presiding Officers proposed the addition of a reference to caravans in condition 6.4.4(ii)(a), which refers to the use of private vehicles for which claims may be made under the General Travel Allowance. This was dealt with in the General Review Report at [208]-[212]. Given what was there explained, I am satisfied that this addition should be made.

Those matters which require further consideration

18. The Presiding Officers also considered that some matters dealt with in the General Review Report required further investigation and consultation with Members, as well as the Parliament’s consideration. They included:
 - the provisions of the Act which currently restricts the Parliament’s oversight of the Electoral Allowance and which preclude the Tribunal

Section 2 – Matters dealt with in the General Review report

from imposing any conditions as to its use, unlike other additional entitlements provided by the Determination;

- the use of the Electoral Allowance to supplement Members' basic salary rather than being used to meet expenses incurred in the performance of their parliamentary duties and complaints about pay inequity which this had generated; and
- how staff members are dealt with and their expenses are met.

19. The Presiding Officers informed the Tribunal that they propose to pursue a process of consultation about such matters which they would manage. The aim being that the Tribunal can be provided with further information and submissions about matters dealt with in the General Review, to consider as part of the 2026 Annual Review process.
20. I am satisfied that such further consultation is required, given the complex matters which the General Review Report had to deal with, and the possibility of legislative amendment, in order to address Members' concerns about matters such as pay inequity and the lack of transparency in use of the Electoral Allowance. Given the inability of both the Parliament and the Tribunal to oversee the use made of this allowance and the impact which this has on how the allowance should be adjusted over time, that consultation is in the public interest.
21. The submissions the Tribunal received confirmed that Members have very different views about what is appropriate and necessary for the use and

Section 2 – Matters dealt with in the General Review report

oversight of the Electoral Allowance and how the legislative scheme regulates this aspect of their benefits.

22. Given the limited time available since the provision of the General Review Report to Members, that reflecting the many submissions which the Tribunal continued to receive until even shortly before it issued that report, that further time to consider some of the more difficult issues that it deals with will unquestionably be valuable. Given what they concern, it is undoubtedly important for these issues to be properly addressed.
23. The submissions which were received revealed that:
 - The way in which the Electoral Allowance is paid to Members provides a practical impediment to the last monthly payment being used to meet expenses.
 - At present many Members oppose any change to the Electoral Allowance or its regulation, they valuing the flexibility and control which it gives them in managing their expenditure of funds they are provided in order to meet expenses which they incur when performing their parliamentary duties, without the imposition of significant administrative burdens.
 - Some Members also support the use of the Electoral Allowance to supplement their basic salary, as they choose from time to time. They oppose any legislative change which would result in the Electoral Allowance being differently regulated, despite the lack of transparency of their use of these funds, which this results in.

Section 2 – Matters dealt with in the General Review report

- Other Members remain dissatisfied with the current arrangements and favour oversight of the Electoral Allowance and its use by the Parliament and/or the Tribunal, that requiring legislative change.
 - The introduction of a requirement for Members to make a confidential report to the Parliament or the Privileges Committees about their receipt of all or part of the Electoral Allowance as income, which would then provide reliable information for the Tribunal to consider when increases to the basic salary and Electoral Allowance are considered, was one possible legislative change which was suggested.
24. Given these ongoing differences between Members and all that the General Review Report raised, which the Parliament and Members may wish to consider further as part of the Presiding Officers' intended consultation, Members should expect that in the 2026 Annual Review the Tribunal will invite them to make further submissions about these matters.
25. The Tribunal also foreshadows that in that review submissions may also be invited about what is explained below in relation to a more general review of Members' basic salary.

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

Basic Salary

26. Members' basic salary was not increased in 2023 or 2024 for reasons explained in the 2024 Annual Report: at [24]-[29]. It was there observed at [28] that:

“Not only should Members of Parliament be fairly remunerated for their important and challenging work, within the State's means, but it must also be remembered that such remuneration and the other conditions and entitlements provided by the Determination play a real role in attracting people of high intellect, integrity and vigour to stand for election to the Parliament. People who have the necessary skills to perform such work well and who are prepared to devote their time to serving the public interest, rather than only their own interests. Appropriate salary and conditions also help to ensure that such people are also prepared to continue seeking re-election in order to continue performing the important work of their offices.”

27. These remain relevant considerations.
28. While agreeing with Members who all submitted that their basic salary should be increased in July 2025, when submissions were received the Tribunal still had no power to make a determination which provides for such an increase: s4A *Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1989 (NSW)*.
29. Unlike additional entitlements, the Act does not require the Tribunal to consider annually whether increases in the basic salary are warranted: s4(2). Rather, it provides that “The Tribunal may make a determination

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

fixing the amount of the basic salary. Determinations are to be made at such times as the Tribunal thinks fit or the Minister direct.”

30. Still, traditionally the Tribunal has each year considered adjusting the basic salary at the same time as considering additional entitlements.
31. But the temporary arrangement introduced by s4A of the Act, meant that until 30 June 2025 the Tribunal could not make a determination fixing the basic salary of Members to an amount that would increase it to more than that determined to have effect from 1 July 2022. This section was, however, repealed from 1 July 2025: s4A(3).
32. It should also be noted that when the Tribunal received submissions on the 2025 Annual Review, s4(3) still required that “In making a determination, the Tribunal is to give effect to the same policies on increases in remuneration as those that the Industrial Relations Commission is required to give effect to under section 146C of the Industrial Relations Act 1996 when making or varying awards or orders relating to the conditions of employment of public sector employees.”
33. But that section and the *Industrial Relations (Public Sector Conditions of Employment) Regulation 2014*, which articulated the policy on wages to which s146 of the *Industrial Relations Act 1996* referred, had both been repealed. It thus appeared that s4(3) of the Act would no longer have any practical operation when the basic salary could next be increased by the Tribunal in July 2025, unless there was further regulation in the meantime.

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

34. In their submissions the Presiding Officers proposed an increase in the basic salary similar to that received by public sector employees in this State. This was supported by some other Members. There had not, however, been one increase which public sector employees in the State had generally received. For their part the Opposition Whips proposed increases of:
- 4 per cent from the first full pay period on or after 1 July 2024
 - 3 per cent the first full pay period on or after 1 July 2025
 - 3 per cent the first full pay period on or after 1 July 2026
35. This reflected that in November 2023 the Government adopted the NSW Government Fair Pay and Bargaining Policy 2023, which encouraged a cooperative approach to rebuilding and improving access to essential government services, while also investing in the State's public sector workforce, through enhancements to pay and improvements to working conditions. In order to "enable delivery of the world class public services that the people of New South Wales can rightly expect, while also taking into account the Government's fiscal circumstances and budgetary environment": at 1.3-1.4.
36. This policy applied to "the Government sector as defined in the Government Sector Employment Act 2013, including Public Service agencies, the Teaching Service, the NSW Police Force, the NSW Health Service, the Transport Service of NSW, independent statutory bodies, and

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

persons identified in section 5 (1) (b) – (f) of the Government Sector Employment Act 2013.”: at 2.1.

37. In the case of instruments due to expire on 30 June 2024, the Policy permitted a 4% increase to salary and salary related allowances for one year and in the case of those due to expire in 2023, 1% from July 2023 and the balance when the instrument was renewed: at 3.1-3.2. Further increases depending on substantial efficiency improvements, including changes to work practices and systems which “provide demonstrable enhancements to the delivery of services to the public”: 3.4. The policy also dealt with productivity enhancement.
38. The Government also entered a Memorandum of Understanding with the Public Service Association, following a 4.5% pay increase in 2023, for the making of a new three-year salary award which applies to specified awards and instruments. It provides for increases of the kind which the Opposition Whips proposed.
39. The State Wage Case 2024 has also been delivered: *State Wage Case 2024 (No 2) [2024] NSWIRComm 6*. It followed the Fair Work Commission’s adjustment of the National Minimum Wage and modern award minimum wages by 3.75% from 1 July 2024: *Annual Wage Review 2023-24 [2024] FWCFB 3500*. That was required by ss 50 and 52 of the *Industrial Relations Act 1996 (NSW)*.
40. The NSW Industrial Relations Commission there ordered the increase of rates of pay fixed by certain awards by 3.75% from various dates. It also made provision for those increases to be offset against equivalent over

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

award payments and award wage increases other than State Wage Case adjustments.

41. Higher and lower increases for other public sector employees have resulted from various agreements, which are listed in the Table below.

Table 1: Table of awards and enterprise agreements' wage increases for 1 July 2025.

Award/Enterprise Agreement	Wage increases		
	From 1 July 2024	From 1 July 2025	From 1 July 2026
All awards listed in <i>Crown Employees (Public Sector Salaries 2024) Award</i> ¹ (except for Crown Employees Awards listed below)	4%	3%	3%
<i>Crown Employees (Sheriff's Officers) Award</i>	3%	3%	3%
<i>Crown Employees (NSW Police Force Special Constables) (Security) Award 2024</i>	11% (3% salaries, 8% work value)	3%	3%
Groom, Mounted Police within <i>Crown Employees (NSW Police Administrative Officers and Temporary Employees) Award 2009</i>	3%	3%	3%
<i>Crown Employees (Psychologists) Award</i> ²	3%	TBD	TBD
<i>Crown Employees (Department of Industry, Skills</i>	3%	TBD	TBD

¹ [C2024-07 Crown Employees \(Public Sector-Salaries 2024\) Award](#)

² Psychologist Award increase from 1 July 2025 to be determined following resolution of negotiations between the parties for a new award.

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

<i>and Regional Development) Fisheries Employees Award</i> ³				
<i>Crown Employees Nurses' (State) Award 2023</i>	3%	TBD	TBD	
Proposed Sydney Trains Enterprise Agreement ⁴	4%	4%	4%	
<i>NSW Ambulance Paramedics (State) Award 2023</i> ⁵	From 1 Jan 2024	From 1 Jan 2025	From 1 Jul 2025	
	Median: 5.5% Min: 2.0% Max: 6.1%	Median: 10.9% Min: 0% Max: 11.7%	3%	
<i>Crown Employees (Teachers in Schools and Related Employees) Salaries and Conditions Award 2024</i> ⁶⁻⁷	From 9 Oct 2023	From 9 Oct 2024	From 9 Oct 2025	From 9 Oct 2026
	Median: 8% Min: 4% Max: 26.1%	3%	3%	3%

42. Unlike the Industrial Relations Commission, the Tribunal had no power to increase Members' basic salary from 1 July 2024, as the Opposition Whips sought. Until 1 July 2025, it also had no power to determine that there should be any increase in the basic salary. Nor is there a basis in the legislative scheme which would appear to permit backdated increases to be determined. That also being contrary to the legislative arrangements

³ Fisheries Employees Award increase from 1 July 2025 to be determined following resolution of negotiations between parties for a new award.

⁴ Proposed increase, as captured in Ministerial media release: [Wage agreement with rail workers is an investment in network reliability](#).

⁵ *C9809 NSW Ambulance Paramedics (State) Award 2023 (AIRC - Award of Industrial Relations Commission)*, section 8.

⁶ *C9868 Crown Employees (Teachers in Schools and Related Employees) Salaries and Conditions Award 2024 (AIRC – Award of Industrial Relations Commission)*, section 3.

⁷ *The Crown Employees (Teachers in Schools and Related Employees) Salaries and Conditions Award 2022*, in their Schedules lists salary increases from 4% to 20% effective from 9 October 2023 compared to the [previous award](#).

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

which were not to come to an end until 30 June 2025 and seemingly seeking to circumvent them.

43. I did consider, however, given all that had been advanced, that once the Tribunal was empowered to increase Members' basic salary that power should be exercised. This conclusion reflected the effective decrease in Members' salary since the basic salary was last increased in 2022. By way of comparison, additional allowances, including the Electoral Allowance, had been increased to reflect CPI increases by 14.7% over that time.
44. The result was that I was satisfied that Members' basic salary could no longer justly be frozen, the position which all submissions the Tribunal received advanced. But it appeared that until 1 July 2025, the Tribunal had no power to give effect to that conclusion.
45. On 20 February 2025 the Act was amended to omit ss4(3) and (4) and to insert:

“(3) In making a determination, the Tribunal must have regard to:

 - (a) the fiscal position and outlook of the Government, and
 - (b) the likely effect of the making of the determination on the position and outlook.”
46. The result was that the Tribunal sought and obtained a direction from the President of the Industrial Relations Commission under s11(2), that the 2025 Annual Determination be made on or before 1 August 2025. That permitting this Annual Determination to deal with both the annual

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

determination of entitlements which s11(1) would otherwise have required be made on or before 1 June 2025, together with the basic salary and to seek further submissions from Members about what s 4 required, when it was assented to.

47. The amendments to the Act were assented to on 2 March 2025 and so the Tribunal sought submissions from the Government about its fiscal position and outlook and the likely effect of increasing Members' basic salary, the submissions it had received all seeking an increase by reference to increases in the salaries of public sector employees, which had varied. A 4% increase from 1 July 2025 then being considered.
48. Submissions about the amendments and how the Tribunal should approach them were also invited from Members. Those received included:
 - (1) The submission of the NSW Liberal Party, which urged that the base salary be increased, having regard to considerably higher base salaries paid to Members of other Parliaments, comparisons drawn with the salaries of executive level public servants and to reflect increases in the Crown Employees (Public Sector – Salaries) 2024 Award, by:
 - 4 per cent from the first full pay period on or after 1 July 2025.
 - 3 per cent from the first full pay period on or after 1 July 2026.
 - 3 per cent from the first full pay period on or after 1 July 2027.

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

(2) The submission of the cross bench, that the salary should be increased by at least 7% from 1 July given a range of considerations, including that Members now received what was amongst the lowest base salary, despite the State producing one third of Australia's GDP and having a substantially higher cost of living and there being little scope to top up salary from the electoral allowance.

49. Improved opportunities to self-sacrifice salary was also raised but will not be considered as part of this annual review, given the time they were raised. Such submissions can be pursued in the 2026 Annual Review.
50. Another submission received came from the NSW Parliamentary Former Members Association. It addressed the decline in the real value of the basic salary, given increases in inflation of some 20.9% over 5 years, while the basic salary had increased by only 2%, with resulting impact on those former Members receiving a pension. Appropriate action to ensure a reasonable increase in salaries for Members and retirement incomes for former Members, effective 1 July 2025, was urged.
51. The Hon John Graham MLC, Special Minister of State, Minister for Transport, Minister the Arts, Music and Night-time Economy and Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council later provided the Government Submission. It included NSW Treasury advice about the matters specified in s4(3) of the Act, given the Tribunal's consideration of a 4% increase in the basic salary.
52. The Government's submission was that the appropriate increase to the basic salary was 3%, taking into account the NSW Treasury's advice; that

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

workforces which had received an increase above that percentage had been required to produce offsets, savings and productivity measures; that superannuation was not included in the proposed increase and that there was to be a 0.5% increase in the superannuation guarantee from 1 July 2025, which would result in a further increase in Members' remuneration; that the Parliament did not intend that its decisions to freeze the basic salary in past years would be made up for by future increases; and that general movements in prices are below 3%.

53. The NSW Treasury's 29 April 2025 advice is annexed at **Appendix 2**. It explained the Government's fiscal strategy, position and outlook which was concerned, understandably, with manageable levels of debt and sufficient fiscal buffers to help it better manage future economic challenges and shocks and support ongoing, stable delivery of essential services to citizens. They requiring stronger efforts to contain spending, enhance revenues and increase growth; to help ensure that future debt burdens do not rise significantly; to enhance private sector trust in government commitment to fiscal sustainability and increased creditworthiness, as well as fiscal discipline and transparency, which can reduce borrowing costs. The two guiding principles identified being:

2.2.1. Returning to a sustainable operating position

2.2.2. Returning to and maintaining a sustainable debt position.

54. Budget results and employee expenses were explained, the Government being the largest single employer in the State, with employee expenses averaging around 45% of general government expenditure, with growth

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

from \$54.5 billion in 2024-25 to \$59.2 billion by 2027-28 expected. Factors impacting such estimates were explained to be final approved wage agreements and determinations, determinations by the Industrial Relations Commission, Industrial Relations Court or Fair Work Commission, future wage policies, productivity enhancing reforms, new initiatives, and other policy or parameter changes.

55. The Government's intention to maintain existing services in the absence of significant revenue uplift, at a time when the State is running large cash deficits was explained. As were the State's non-discretionary levels of gross debt and interest expenses, which were expected to increase, reducing the revenue available to fund service delivery and programs, with resulting impact on the State's credit ratings. The object of the *Fiscal Responsibility Act 2012* being to maintain the State's AAA rating s3(1).
56. The estimated cost of a 4% increase in Members' basic salary was advised to be \$0.5 million in 2025-26 and \$2.1 million over the four years to 2028-29, that worsening the Budget Result deficit and increasing gross debt by \$2.3 million over the four years to 2028-29, taking into account the increase and interest, if the increase is debt funded.
57. But the NSW Treasury also advised that "The effect of the making of the proposed determination on the Government's fiscal position and outlook is immaterial".
58. This is of importance to the Tribunal's consideration of whether the increase it proposed to Members' basic salary should be confined in the

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

way for which the Government contended, given the reasons which it advanced.

59. Despite them, I have concluded that Members' salary should be increased by 4% from 1 July 2025. In arriving at that conclusion, I have taken into account all that the Government submitted and have considered its fiscal position and outlook, as s4(3) required. But the Tribunal's independent exercise of its discretion requires it also to take into account all the other matters which I have explained, in order to come to a just conclusion about the 2025 increase to Members' basic salary. They driving to the conclusion that an increase of more than 3% is now warranted.
60. That, in my view, did not permit the increase to be confined to 3%, notwithstanding the positive decrease in the CPI, which I will later explain, and that superannuation will increase by 0.5% on 1 July 2025.
61. There is no suggestion that the salary increase of any State employee was reduced as the result of the statutory increase in superannuation which takes effect on 1 July 2025.
62. That reflects that the statutory regime which regulates that increase attaches to whatever salary must be paid on 1 July 2025, with the result that superannuation will then increase by the same percentage, irrespective of whether what is paid is less or more than a Members' basic salary.
63. What finally persuaded me that the increase I had advised Government was being considered by the Tribunal should be determined, given all that

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

had to be considered, was the NSW Treasury advice that the increase would be immaterial to the Government's fiscal position and outlook.

64. By way of contrast the increase, I consider, would not be immaterial to attracting and retaining appropriately qualified and motivated people to pursue the difficult work of a Member. It is that work on which achievement of the Parliament's objectives in our democracy necessarily depends, that being a matter which the public interest requires account be taken, when Members' basic salary is determined by the Tribunal.
65. This conclusion was supported by another development. On 11 June 2025 the Commonwealth Remuneration Tribunal announced that it would amend its Federal Members of Parliament Determination effective from 1 July 2025, to increase parliamentary base salary by a further 2.4%. That salary has not been frozen in past years, with the result that the existing disparity between the salaries of the Members of the two Parliaments will be maintained, albeit to a somewhat reduced extent, despite the 4% increase I have determined is warranted in 2025.
66. I am satisfied that were the increase in the basic salary to be confined to 3%, the disparity would not begin to be addressed, as it plainly needs to be, in an adequate way.
67. Until 1 July 2025, the possibility of further, legislative change which would again remove or restrict the Tribunal's power to increase Members' basic salary still existed. As did the possibility that the Minister would again decide to issue a direction to the Tribunal under s4(2) of the Act, restricting its power to exercise its discretion to increase the basic salary in July 2025.

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

68. That did not transpire.
69. In the result, having considered all that has been advanced and arises to be considered, I determine that the power to increase Members' basic salary must be exercised and that it should be increased from 1 July 2025 by 4%. That was driven by the conclusion that the basic salary is now so inadequate that an immediate increase of 4% is necessary. As is a more rigorous examination of its adequacy in the 2026 Annual Review.

Proposed 2026 general review of the basic salary

70. The Tribunal thus notes that it intends, when inviting submissions for the 2026 Annual Review, to seek submissions about a more general review of Members' basic salary, if it then has the power to conduct such a review.
71. This will provide an opportunity for submissions to address whether the basic salary, even after being increased by 4%, any longer adequately compensates Members for their work.
72. I concluded that this was necessary because in recent years the Tribunal has repeatedly received submissions from Members about the increasing inadequacy of their basic salary, given changes in the work they have to perform, which it had no power to consider.
73. In the 2024 General Review, information which the Presiding Officers provided established that Members' basic salary had fallen considerably behind that which Members of other Australian Parliaments receive: table at [16]. The position then was that while in NSW the basic salary was

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

\$172,576, that of Commonwealth Parliamentarians was \$233,660 and in Victoria it was \$205,798. Only Tasmania and the Northern Territory paid Members of their Parliaments a basic salary less than that of NSW Members.

74. Submissions then received included that the value of Members' work had increased significantly over time with the result that their basic salary was no longer adequate. Further, that the decline in the real value of the basic salary over time helped explain the use which some Members were making of their Electoral Allowance to supplement their basic salary.
75. This allowance is not fixed for that purpose, but at a level intended to help facilitate the efficient performance of Members' parliamentary duties: General Review Report at [269].
76. On this Annual Review submissions again drew attention to the ongoing challenges of attracting and retaining in this State's Parliament not only suitable staff, but also Members, given what was considered to be their increasingly inadequate basic salary. Attention was also drawn to the opportunities which they have to take up more remunerative positions elsewhere.
77. In some cases, these are positions for which Members are successfully headhunted. Positions where the work may also be less challenging and not subject them to the downsides of public office which they often now have to contend with. Particularly as the result of the development of social media and the uses which are made of it.

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

78. I consider that this situation is not in the public interest.
79. That rather requires that Members be adequately remunerated for their important work. Being entitled to receive a basic salary which not only attracts, but helps retain suitable people of high integrity, intellect and vigour, to perform the difficult work of Members' important offices, rather than driving them to utilise their Electoral Allowance, provided to them for other important purposes, to supplement their salary, is an outcome which the Tribunal ought to pursue, if it has the power to do so.
80. The submissions the Tribunal has now repeatedly received about the inadequacy of the basic salary have raised a question of obvious importance to the Parliament as an institution, as well as to the community. One which I am satisfied the Tribunal should consider in the 2026 Annual Review, given its statutory role.
81. It should be noted that in NSW the value of the work that Members perform has not been considered by the Tribunal. At an earlier time, Members' basic salary was fixed to be \$500 less than that of a Federal Member of Parliament. Since 2012 the Tribunal has been empowered to adjust the basic salary from time to time, subject to caps and freezes which have been imposed by Government, as well as Ministerial directions. But it has not considered changes in the value of the work that Members are called on to perform.
82. The position is different in the Commonwealth and other States.

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

83. For example, the Commonwealth considered the value of work Members undertake in 2011, and in Victoria that was considered in 2019. In South Australia the basic salary for a Member is now set “at a rate equal to the rate from time to time of the Commonwealth basic salary, less \$42,000, plus the common allowance for the relevant year”: *Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1990 (SA)*, s4AB.
84. The differing basic salaries that Members of the various Parliaments are paid, thus reflect the operation of the relevant statutory schemes. In this State, the result over time has been a significant, effective overall decrease in Members’ basic salary, despite the 4% increase in 2025. That resulted in the following comparative picture.

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

	C/wealth ⁸	NSW	VIC ⁹	QLD ¹⁰	SA ¹¹	WA ¹²	TAS ¹³	ACT ¹⁴	NT ¹⁵
Date of last adjustment	1-7-2025	1-7-2025	1-7-2025	1-7-2025	1-7-2025	1-7-2025	1-7-2024	1-7-2025	1-1-2025
% variation	2.4%	4.0%	3%	3.0%	-	3.5%	3.5%	2.0%	4.7%
Base salary	\$239,270	\$179,479	\$211,972	\$189,505	\$232,807	\$179,462	\$171,527.50	\$192,574	\$175,000

⁸ Remuneration Tribunal, [Remuneration Tribunal \(Members of Parliament\) Amendment Determination \(No.2\) 2025](#), CRT, 2025; Remuneration Tribunal, [Explanatory Statement: Remuneration Tribunal \(Members of Parliament\) Amendment Determination \(No.2\) 2025](#), CRT, 2025.

⁹ Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal, [Members of Parliament \(Victoria\) Annual Adjustment Determination 2025](#), VIRT, 2025

¹⁰ Office of the Clerk of Parliament, [Members' Remuneration Handbook](#), Queensland Parliament, 2025; Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal, [Review of Annual and Additional Salary – Members of the Queensland Legislative Assembly 2023](#), QIRT, 2023

¹¹ [Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1990 \(SA\)](#), s 4AB; Remuneration Tribunal of South Australia, [Determination No.7 of 2024 – Common Allowance for Members of the Parliament of South Australia](#), RTSA, 2024; Section 4AB states that 'The basic salary payable to a member of Parliament is salary at a rate equal to the rate from time to time of the Commonwealth basic salary less \$42 000 plus the common allowance for the relevant year.' Therefore, the formula for the South Australian basic salary is \$239,270 - \$42,000 + \$35,537.

¹² Salaries and Allowances Tribunal, [Members of Parliament Tribunal Determination No 1 of 2025](#), SAT, 2025

¹³ Tasmanian Industrial Commission, [Inquiry into Parliamentary Salaries and Allowances](#), TIC, 2025; % variation provided is the % variation from 1 July 2024-30 June 2025 captured in clause 1.1(1) – Table A, of the Determination. The total change since the last determination in 2018 is 22.36%. Noting that the increase is currently not in effect, as the determination is still in the disallowance period.

¹⁴ Australian Capital Territory Remuneration Tribunal, [Determination 4 of 2025 Members of the Legislative Assembly](#), ACTRT, 2025

¹⁵ Northern Territory of Australia Remuneration Tribunal, [Report and Determination No. 3 of 2024 – Salaries and Other Entitlements of Assembly Members](#), NTRT, 2024

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

85. Members' basic salary is also now significantly eclipsed by that of the public servants who report to them.
86. For example, in 2024 the Treasurer, a Recognised Office Holder, has a basic salary of \$172,576 plus an additional salary, as an "Other Minister" as per Schedule 1 of the Act, of 57%, resulting in a total 'basic salary' of \$270,944. Conversely, the Secretary of the NSW Treasury, a Public Service Senior Executive, whose salary is determined by the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Tribunal under the *Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Act 1975*, receives a salary of \$626,300. Although as I have explained, Members also have access to the Electoral Allowance to supplement their basic salaries.
87. The current position also reflects that CPI increases applied to additional entitlements, including the Electoral Allowance, since 2011 have totalled some 44.32%, while Members' basic salary has increased by only 26.76%. That reflecting a real decrease in the basic salary over time.
88. Given the importance to the State and its people of Members being appropriately remunerated for their work, I was thus persuaded that in the 2026 Annual Review the Tribunal will have to invite submissions about the adequacy of the basic salary. That also permitting consideration of whether there have been changes in the work which Members perform, which warrant an increase, how and when any such an increase should be introduced into the Determination; and importantly what impact the way in which the Electoral Allowance is regulated should have on such an assessment of the basic salary.

Section 3 – Parliamentary Remuneration

89. The Tribunal will also consult about how this review should be undertaken.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

90. Various submissions were received about additional entitlements and how they might be increased or adjusted and the Determination improved.

The Auditor General's Review

91. One of the Tribunal's ongoing concerns has been with the efficient operation of the Determination. That is audited by both the Department and the Auditor General. Various improvements proposed in the General Review Report will help enhance this.
92. The Auditor General's submission drew attention to its most recent review of compliance, which does not encompass the Electoral Allowance. But the report indicated that there had been fewer departures from requirements of the Determination and/or the Department's administrative guidelines than in previous years, which was positive.
93. While not all Members' use of their entitlements had been examined, this review identified increased numbers of claims, but a small overall decline in expenditure given reduced use of the communications allowance, which reflected that 2022-23 was an election year. But there had been increased use of the Sydney Allowance, General Travel Allowance, Travel to Sydney Allowance, Skills Development Allowance and Travel Allowance for Recognised Office Holders.
94. Twenty-seven departures from the requirements of the Determination and Guidelines were examined and explained in the report. That reflecting a decrease from forty departures identified in the preceding two years.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

95. The Auditor General still recommended that the Department improve its quality review process and enhance its assessment of whether Members' expenditure claims comply with requirements of the Determination and its guidelines, in order to promptly advise Members about whether their claims are ineligible.
96. It was also recommended that the Department ensure its internal audits of Members' additional entitlements are adequately scoped, quality reviewed and endorsed prior to their commencement. That was because while the Determination requires specified additional entitlements to be internally audited, only the Communications Allowance claims had been subject to an audit, which had not been concluded by the time of the Auditor General's audit. This was not considered to be effective, given that the Department's findings were not available to the Auditor General and limited the training and education the Department was able to give Members to improve their compliance.
97. This is also of concern to the Tribunal. It recommends to the Parliament that consideration be given to improvement of the Department's processes, to ensure that its internal audit is completed and provided to the Audit Office, before the Auditor General's audit is commenced, as the Auditor General also recommended.
98. While there had been an improvement in Members' compliance, improved Departmental processes which provide greater clarity, training and education to Members were also recommended by the Auditor General. Given the other submissions which I have explained, this is supported by the Tribunal, which also encourages Members to provide the Department

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

with feedback about how its administrative processes can be improved, by the provision of examples which illustrate problems which they encounter.

99. The Auditor General also noted the history of the recommendation that the Department regularly publish details of Members expenditure on its website. The Tribunal has supported this proposal in the past, but it also requires statutory amendment, to permit the Tribunal to require such publication.
100. The Tribunal draws this recommendation to the Parliament's attention, given that it may be giving consideration to the provisions of the legislative scheme and how they might be improved.

Annual adjustment to quantum of Additional Entitlements

101. The Secretary of the NSW Treasury was provided with information about the draft 2025 Annual Determination and invited to make a submission, which has been taken into account. The response from the Secretary of NSW Treasury has been annexed at **Appendix 3**.
102. The Secretary submitted that its advice was that "Based on commencement from 1 July 2025, other entitlements are estimated to increase by \$209,144 over the 2024 Determination. These additional costs will be fully offset from within the existing 2025-26 Budget."

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

103. I am satisfied that advice supports the conclusions which I have reached about the adjustments I have determined should be made to certain of the additional entitlements.
104. For the reasons that follow, I have thus determined to adjust the following additional entitlements by 2.4%, in order to help ensure that these allowances continue to facilitate the efficient performance of Members' and Recognised Office Holders' parliamentary duties:
- Communications Allowance: Base Allocation
 - General Travel Allowance: Base Allocation and Additional Allocation
 - Sydney Allowance (daily rate)
 - Skills Development Allowance.
105. The Communications Allowance Additional Allocation has been adjusted to account for constituent numbers, based on the original costing factor, which was adjusted in 2020, as there explained: 2020 Annual Determination at p10.
106. The Committee Allowance will be increased by 4% in line with the basic salary, as this allowance has historically been increased in line with Members' salary increases.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

No increase to the Electoral Allowance

107. I have determined that the Electoral Allowance does not need to be increased on this review, for reasons which follow.
108. In the past this allowance has been adjusted in the same way as other allowances. But there remains an unresolved question about how this allowance should be adjusted, especially given that it is now apparent that Members do use part of it to supplement their basic salary, rather than to meet expenses which they incur in the performance of their parliamentary duties.
109. The submissions the Tribunal received did not assist the resolution of this question, which it will be necessary to consider further, following the consultation which the Presiding Officers intend to pursue.
110. Nor did the information received about the roles of the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser or the Parliament's Privileges Committees, to which some Members referred, assist in the resolution of this issue.
111. The role of the Ethics Adviser, appointed by a joint resolution of both Houses of Parliament, is to provide ethical guidance to any member of Parliament who requests advice, particularly on issues related to their parliamentary duties, the use of entitlements and managing potential conflicts of interest, operating within the framework of any Code of Conduct or guidelines adopted. The Ethics Advisor provides advice to Members and the Privileges Committees also meets with the Advisor and

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

tables annual reports in the Houses. But it was not suggested that any of them have dealt with the Electoral Allowance.

112. This is despite how this allowance should be adjusted having repeatedly arisen for consideration, as problems have been raised by Members for the Tribunal's consideration. They include the tension in how the legislative scheme regulates the Electoral Allowance: see for example 2023 Annual Determination from [70], 2024 Annual Determination at [36]-[53] and the General Review Report at [302]-[307].
113. The history of the current statutory provisions has been explained in past annual reports. They were introduced to overcome the effect of the statutory provisions originally enacted, which had the result that a Member would commit a criminal offence, if he or she did not use any part of the Electoral Allowance to meet expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, but instead retained it as income. That was addressed by adoption of the current legislative provisions.
114. But they have resulted in a tension in the legislative scheme, as well as ongoing complaints about pay inequity.
115. Like other allowances, the Electoral Allowance has continued to be fixed and adjusted over time by the Tribunal to enable Members to meet expenses incurred in the performance of their Parliamentary duties. It has not been adjusted in order that it can be used to supplement Members' basic salary.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

116. The information the Tribunal has received is that one consequence of the administrative arrangements by which the Parliament pays this allowance to Members is, however, that they have driven the receipt of part of the allowance as income. Choices which Members are free to make under the legislative arrangements, to use the allowance to supplement their basic salary, have also driven use of more of the allowance as income. This is what has led to complaints about pay inequity.
117. The Presiding Officers propose to consult further about these matters.
118. It is of course ultimately for the Parliament to determine the appropriateness of the current statutory arrangements. But given all the information received on this review, it must be concluded that the Electoral Allowance is currently fixed at an appropriate level, assessed on the basis that it is provided to Members to facilitate the efficient performance of their parliamentary duties: s10(1) of the Act and cl 2.1, and 5.2.1 (iii) of the Determination.
119. That is because the result of current administrative arrangements is that the last monthly payment of the Electoral Allowance is made to Members so close to the end of the financial year, that it is largely not available to be used to meet expenses and so is received as income.
120. Some Members choose to use even more of the allowance to supplement their basic salary. The Crown Solicitor has advised that this does not involve any breach of the Act, given the provision made in s10(2B)(9c) that this allowance is payable “as compensation in respect of all incidents of the performance of parliamentary duties”.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

121. This is facilitated by the Parliament giving Members the option to have income tax deducted from this allowance. The Presiding Officers submitted that the Parliament does not deduct income tax from the Electoral Allowance unless that is requested by a Member, before the allowance is paid and that this has no impact on the Tribunal's adjustment of the allowance.
122. But a decision to have income tax deducted may, of course, reflect a Member's decision to use the allowance to supplement the basic salary, rather than to meet expenses.
123. While not contrary to the statutory scheme, widespread use of significant portions of this allowance to supplement income, rather than to meet expenses, does not support the conclusion that this allowance is inadequate, as some submissions suggested. Nor does it establish that the allowance needs to be increased, in order to facilitate the efficient performance of Members' parliamentary duties. To the contrary, it suggests that the allowance is more than adequate for Members to meet the expenses they incur in the performance of their duties.
124. More of this allowance could plainly be made available to be used by Members to meet expenses, if it were paid to them at the beginning, rather than the end of the final month of the financial year. That is entirely within the Parliament's control.
125. In the General Review Report, it was explained that when inviting submissions for the 2025 Annual Review, Members would be asked to provide the Tribunal with information about their use of the Electoral

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

Allowance: at [343]. Members were thus invited to provide information about what proportion of the Electoral Allowance they received as income.

126. One Member, who submitted that there should be no change to current arrangements, estimated that in the 2024 financial year, only 6.9% of this allowance would be declared as taxable income. Others, that because of the time that the last monthly payment of this allowance was made, one twelfth was not able to be used to meet parliamentary expenses and thus become taxable income.
127. Even though in the case of the Greens, for example, that party's policy was that all of this allowance should be used on expenses and not to supplement income. But the timing of the payment could preclude this being achieved.
128. Another submission was that only 80-90% of the allowance was used to meet expenses.
129. The submission of the Nationals indicated that all its Members were unanimous in their support of the continuation of the current arrangements in relation to the use of this allowance and that any changes would "negatively impact their ability to effectively represent their constituents." They considered that the existing system offers essential flexibility, allowing Members to allocate funds efficiently. For instance, in order to cover the significant travel expenses incurred while navigating vast distances between communities in their electorate.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

130. They also referred to rising costs associated with vehicle operation, including insurance, which was said to be outpacing inflation. But information to support this was not provided. It was also noted that Members' use of the allowance is subject to taxation, with such financial matters being private and confidential, with any disclosure a matter for Members, unless compelled by Court Order.
131. The Opposition Whips did not address the Electoral Allowance in their written submission.
132. Despite these submissions it appears that the current administrative arrangements drive a use of this allowance not intended by the Determination. Albeit permitted by the legislative scheme, for the historical reasons earlier explained. This is what has driven ongoing complaints about pay inequity between Members.
133. The result is that adjustment of this allowance on the basis that it is all needed or will be used by Members to meet expenses, no longer has a proper basis. Nor can it be accepted that the allowance is presently inadequate, to permit Members to meet expenses which they incur in the performance of their duties, given the widespread use made of it to supplement income.
134. On this review it follows that it cannot properly be concluded that the Electoral Allowance needs to be increased in the same way as other additional allowances. That is, to reflect increases in expenses which Members incur in the performance of their parliamentary duties, which have to be met out of this allowance.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

135. In those circumstances I have concluded that an increase in the Electoral Allowance is not presently required to facilitate the efficient performance of Members' parliamentary duties.
136. What emerges from the consultation which the Presiding Officers intend to pursue and any consideration which the Parliament gives to the legislative scheme and its current administrative arrangements, will be relevant to a consideration of the adjustment of the Electoral Allowance in 2026.

Other changes to the Electoral Allowance entitlements

137. The Presiding Officers and Members generally did not support other possible changes to the Electoral Allowance discussed in the General Review Report, including any funds being redirected from that allowance to the Communications Allowance.
138. Other submissions were to different effect. One suggested an annual confidential disclosure by Members to the Clerks about general categories of use of the allowance and what uses had been taxed, which would then be provided to the Tribunal. With the Privilege and Ethics Committees making recommendations for how such a scheme would operate, each House currently being required to have such a committee: Part 7A Parliamentary ethical standards of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988* (NSW).

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

139. The functions of these committees include draft codes of conduct for Members and carrying out educative work relating to ethical standards applying to Members: s72C and 72E.
140. In the case of Members of the Legislative Council, the Greens' submissions included that the Communications Allowance appeared to be designed for Members of the Legislative Assembly and their needs to communicate with constituents in their electorates, rather than their need to communicate across the State about particular issues.
141. The result of the prohibition on using the Communications and other allowances for political campaigning was that there were insufficient claimable expenditure items that fall within the Communications Allowance, which is used to top up the General Travel Allowance, which Members drew down quickly and was considered to be inadequate. The result was that the Electoral Allowance had to be used. Diversion of funds from the Electoral Allowance to other allowances was thus opposed.
142. These are all matters which can be taken up in the further consultation the Presiding Officers propose to pursue.

The General Travel Allowance

143. Submissions that this allowance was not adequate were received. If it is inadequate, the Communications and Electoral Allowances can also be used. Given how the Electoral Allowance is being used, it is difficult to see that the funds provided for travel are generally inadequate and require adjustment other than to reflect increases in the CPI.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

144. The Opposition Whips submitted that this allowance should be increased by 2.5% to reflect additional Friday sittings.
145. The Greens provided examples of travel required as the result of reform being pursued by the Government in relation to water management, which required travel with a staff member to Broken Hill, which totalled \$3,029.70, to demonstrate that the General Travel Allowance for Members of the Legislative Council is inadequate.
146. They proposed an increase in that allowance for Members of the Legislative Council, as well as a dedicated allowance for staff travel to Sydney during sitting weeks, but did not propose any amount.
147. The Determination provides different travel allowances in three zones for Members of the Legislative Council:
 - Zone 1: \$7,340
 - Zone 2: \$7,340
 - Zone 3: \$18,355
148. The base allocation for the Communications Allowance is presently \$21,600 for Members of the Legislative Assembly, who also receive significant additional allocations reflective of elector numbers.
149. For the Members of the Legislative Council, the base allocation is \$5,505.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

150. The total of the base and additional Electoral Allowance for Members of the Legislative Council ranges from \$89,175 in Zone 1 to \$94,935 in Zone 3, by comparison to Members of the Legislative Assembly, which range from a total of \$ \$77,965 to \$203,140.
151. The General Travel Allowance has a long history. It is possible that the work required to be performed by Members of the Legislative Council now involves much more travel than in the past, with the result that this allowance is no longer adequate for the efficient performance of their parliamentary duties. But that is not established by the one example given of the cost of travel to Broken Hill.
152. What has been raised thus requires further investigation, which could conveniently be conducted together with a consideration of changes in Members' work generally. The Department could then, for example, usefully provide information about the use which Members of the Legislative Council have made of the General Travel and Communications Allowances, to meet their travel expenses.
153. That will help establish whether any use has had to be made of the Electoral Allowance to meet such expenses. Although it is only Members themselves who have information about their use of that allowance for travel. It is up to them to provide it to the Tribunal, if they wish to establish that the funds they are provided to meet the cost of such travel is inadequate.
154. There will be an opportunity in the 2026 Annual Review to provide such information. But the obvious point to make at this time is that while-ever

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

the Electoral Allowance is used to supplement the basic salary, it will be difficult to establish that Members do not have sufficient funds to meet travel expenses.

Use of caravans

155. The General Review Report dealt with using this allowance to meet travel costs incurred when a member tows a private caravan and stays in it at a camping site: at [208]-[212]. It was explained that the allowance can be used to meet such costs: at [209]-[210]. This is reflected in cl 6.4.1 of the Determination, which provides that the allowance “is provided to Members to meet all travel costs associated with their parliamentary or official duties within Australia”. And if it is not sufficient, they can be met out of the Communications Allowance or the Electoral Allowance: at [211].
156. The Presiding Officers submitted that the General Travel and Communications allowances should be limited to the cost of hire, rather than purchase of a caravan, with only the Electoral Allowance available to be used to purchase a caravan.
157. That already accords with cl 6.4, the General Travel Allowance being provided to Members to meet costs incurred when they travel, not to purchase a private vehicle which they may use as their mode of transport.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

Matters relating to staff

158. Various matters relating to staff were addressed in the submissions received.

Travel expenses

159. In the General Review Report changes were suggested, both to the Determination and current administrative arrangements, to address problems which Members had raised about the cost of staff travel and how it is not a deductible expense, when it is paid for by Members.
160. On this annual review the Presiding Officers submitted that Members' staff are not employed by the Parliament; that they travel at the direction of the Member for whom they work, and that they are deemed to be an additional entitlement, with their travel expenses funded out of the Members' General Travel Allowance.
161. The *Members of Parliament Staff Act 2013* provides that Members employ their staff on behalf of the State: s14. The State, not the Member, is thus the employer of such staff. Members who hold an office specified in Schedule 1 to that Act may also, in their capacity as a special office holder and in addition to the entitlement to employ staff under s14, employ a person on behalf of the State to assist the special office holder in exercising the functions of that office: s15.
162. The power to employ staff may only be exercised by Members in accordance with arrangements made by the relevant Presiding Officer,

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

subject to such conditions as they determine and in accordance with model agreements which they approve: s16 and 17. The Presiding Officers also determine staff conditions of employment, which are otherwise fixed by their written employment agreement: s19.

163. It is the number of staff who Members and special office holders may employ under ss14 and 15, which is determined by the Tribunal and specified in the Determination: s18. The additional entitlements the Determination can provide for includes staff: s10(3)(b) of the Act.
164. It is the Department of Parliamentary Services which administers the Determination and the Handbook with which Members must abide.
165. Members thus meet the cost of most staff travel expenses out of the additional entitlements provided by the Determination. Funds provided to Members under the Determination by way of the General Travel, Communications and Electoral Allowance are all available to be used to pay for staff travel. The Parliament also itself pays for some staff travel, without recourse to Members' additional entitlements.
166. In the General Review it was suggested that there would be various potential benefits in the Parliament paying all staff expenses itself, without recourse to Members, given how the funds Members receive as part of the Electoral Allowance are taxed, when claims are made for staff travel. That having the result of reducing the total funds actually available to meet staff travel expenses.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

167. Necessarily, change to the arrangements for meeting the cost of staff travel would require amendment to the Determination and involve a reduction of the additional entitlements currently paid to Members. But that would enable the Parliament to use those funds more effectively, to meet the cost of staff travel direct, without recourse to Members.
168. Some submissions received on this review resisted any change to the funding of staff travel as being complex and potentially having unintended consequences. It was also submitted that “the Parliament is not currently funded to cover staff travel on this scale and would require approval of considerable additional funding.”
169. That additional funding would be required to meet staff travel if administrative arrangements for their payment were changed, is difficult to accept. Especially given submissions received on past reviews about how inefficient those arrangements are, and that the Parliament would not be taxed in respect of such expenses.
170. What was raised in the General Review was not intended to increase the funds needed to meet the cost of staff travel, or to interfere with Members directing staff travel. Members could continue to have access to a budgeted amount for such travel. What would alter is Members’ involvement in the payment of those expenses and the taxing of those funds in their hands.
171. Not having to recoup from Members’ additional entitlements the cost of staff travel should thus be at least cost neutral and at best, should achieve cost savings. That being because administrative costs are likely to be

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

reduced and more funds are likely to be available to meet those costs, if they are paid direct by the Parliament.

172. The Presiding Officers thus propose to consider this further.
173. It is relevant to that consideration that information received on this review included that in the 2023-24 financial year, a little over \$231,000 in staff accommodation and meals had been claimed by Members from their General Travel Allowance, mostly in connection with travel with the Member outside Sydney, with only \$46,252 reimbursed for Sydney costs. But still there were submissions that the cost of staff travel was precluding Members having staff travel to work in Sydney.
174. How much of individual Member's Electoral Allowances was used to meet staff travel expenses is still unknown. But on the current information, Members do not appear to be using much of their Electoral Allowance to meet such expenses, contrary to some submissions which have been received.
175. In the General Review information received also included that the past practice of staff paying for Sydney accommodation costs direct and then seeking reimbursement from the Parliament, which then allocated those expenses against Members' entitlements, had been abandoned. That was because staff could no longer fund these expenses in the first instance, given cost of living increases. The result was that travel costs were being met direct by the Parliament in the first instance, that being an advantage because it was also able to command better prices for accommodation within reasonable proximity of the Parliament.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

176. Whether this remains the case is not clear.
177. But whether improvements can be achieved by an alteration in how staff travel is funded, is part of the matters which the Presiding Officers propose to pursue further in their consultation with Members and may thus be addressed further in the 2026 review.

Staff members working at Parliament House

178. There has also been ongoing complaint about non-metropolitan Members being unable to have a staff member travel to work with them at Parliament House when it is sitting, because of the expense involved. Unlike metropolitan Members whose staff live in Sydney and incur no travel expenses for which Members are responsible, when working there.
179. In the General Review Report a condition requiring all Members to have staff support when working at Parliament House was considered: at [84]-[96]. The proposal was to amend condition 7.2 (i) to insert, at the end of the condition:

“one of whom shall work at Parliament House with the Member,
when the Parliament is sitting”

180. This proposal was directed to the complaints that metropolitan based Members had an unfair advantage over their non-metropolitan colleagues, because they had to fund the staff travel costs involved, which reduced their ability to arrange for such support.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

181. In the General Review Report reference was made to the desirability of all Members having staff support when working at Parliament House, for the efficient performance of their parliamentary duties. As well as the undesirability of a Member choosing not to have such support, in order to use that part of their Electoral Allowance to supplement their basic salary.
182. On this review it was submitted by the Presiding Officers, however, that the proposed condition should not be introduced, because Members could already direct their staff to work at Parliament House when required and they had available funds to meet the expense involved.
183. The Greens' submission was to different effect, proposing separate funding for staff travel to Sydney whenever Parliament was sitting.
184. It may be that modern means of communication, in reality, permit Members not to be in close physical proximity to their staff, in order to have adequate support when working at Parliament House. But that is not what some submissions again advanced suggested, given the ongoing complaints about the need to fund staff travel expenses precluding Members having staff work with them at Parliament House, which those Members considered to be desirable.
185. Given the conflicting submissions which have been advanced, I am satisfied that this issue should be further considered by Members in consultation with the Presiding Officers. Submissions about the inclusion of a provision requiring all Members to be supported by a staff member when working at Parliament House will be invited in the 2026 Annual Review.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

Correction to a staffing anomaly

186. In the 2024 Annual Determination attention was drawn to the potential correction of an anomaly in clause 7 of the Determination, to which attention had been drawn: at [251] – [256]. In the general review there was no submission opposing its correction: at p[69].
187. On this review the Presiding Officers submitted that there should nevertheless be a transition to the introduction of the correction. Given that it would have the result of reducing the number of staff in the Barwon electorate from 12 to 10 and in the Murray electorate from 8 to 7.
188. In all of the circumstances, which includes that the result of this correction will be the loss of a number of staff positions, I am satisfied that the proposed transition should be accommodated.
189. Clause 7.2(ii) of the Determination will thus provide:

“Each Member elected as an Independent Member of the Legislative Assembly shall be entitled to one additional member of staff, effective from the 2027 state election.”

Additional staff for Members of the Shadow Cabinet

190. In the 2024 Annual Review Report, reference was made to submissions about additional staff for Members of the Shadow Cabinet: at [212]. On this review such additional staff was revisited, attention being drawn to Members of the Shadow Cabinet in the Commonwealth Parliament

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

receiving additional staffing of around 21% of that which Ministers receive, as well as additional staff provided for certain Members.

191. It was submitted by the Opposition Whips that Members of the Shadow Cabinet have significant responsibilities and functions beyond those of other Members. This includes Government accountability, developing policies for the 'Government in waiting' and engaging stakeholders in their portfolio. This playing a critical role in the democratic process which required Members to divert significant staffing resources to fulfill their duties, in the case of Members of the Legislative Assembly, at the expense of core electoral matters.
192. Still, I am satisfied that the additional staff proposed cannot be dealt with in the Determination, without legislative amendment.
193. The position of Members of the Shadow Cabinet has been considered from time to time in the past and the Tribunal has repeatedly indicated support for additional entitlements for all Shadow Ministers. Given that the duties which warrant the extra staff support do not result from their parliamentary duties, but from their appointment to the Shadow Cabinet.
194. In 2001 and 2002 the Tribunal had interpreted the Act as empowering it to determine some additional entitlements for Shadow Ministers. But, after seeking a special reference from the Minister, advice about its correct interpretation was obtained from the Crown Solicitor. Its advice included that:

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

4.8 *“While “all or some” members may be Provided with additional entitlements (s.2A(l)(d)) and different amounts may be fixed for different members or classes of members (s.10(2B)(d)), that does not mean that members may be provided with additional entitlements in respect of duties which they have other than as members. That recognises that there are differences between electorates and that in order to facilitate the performance of their parliamentary duties as members some members may need an entitlement which others do not have or that the amount of an entitlement may have to be different.*

4.9 *In order that additional entitlements can be provided which are referable to the duties which Shadow Ministers perform, it seems to me that Schedule 1 would have to be amended and that could only be done by regulation if a Shadow Minister holds an office.*

*There is no definition of “office” in the Act. Unless there is a contrary intention in the Act, “Office” includes ‘position’: s. 21(1), Interpretation Act 1987. I have some doubts as to whether ‘office’ was intended to be used in the strict common law sense in the context of an Act intended to provide a system for determining additional entitlements to be provided in respect of the performance of parliamentary duties. The word “office” is used in the Act in connection with members and also recognised office holders, such as Ministers, notwithstanding that in *Pratten v The Labour Daily Ltd* (1926) VLR 15 doubt was raised as to whether a member of the Commonwealth Parliament and a Minister of State for the Commonwealth holds an office in the strict common*

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

law sense. I also note that the Act refers to 'recognised' office holders (without explaining that word) and that the definition of 'parliamentary duties' refers to duties that a recognised office holder is "ordinarily expected" to undertake- These might be compatible with an intention that "office" embraces a parliamentary role which is recognised in practice.

However, the Commonwealth appears to have been concerned that the word "office" could have a restricted meaning and avoided the effect of such a construction by making its legislation in relation to entitlements not confined to the holding of an office. The Parliamentary Entitlements Act 1990 (Cth) operates relevantly by reference to a "Parliamentary office-holder" which is defined in s. 3 to mean a person holding a particular office, or performing particular functions, in or in relation to the Parliament or either House of the Parliament. While the Parliamentary Entitlements Regulations 1997 (Cth) appear to proceed on the basis a Shadow Minister is a parliamentary office -holder, it is not clear whether that is because they were considered to hold an "office' or because they perform particular functions in or in relation to the Parliament or the Houses. The additional benefits provided under s.7(l) of the Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973 (Cth) are likewise determined for members of Parliament "by reason of their membership of the Parliament or by reason of their holding particular offices, or performing particular functions, in or in relation to, the Parliament or either House of the Parliament".

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

While being a Shadow Minister involves the member performing certain duties' a feature of an office, and there is a sense of Shadow Minister being something which exists apart from the person who happens to be performing the duties for the time being, another feature of an office, it is also the case that a Shadow Minister is nominated at the discretion of the Leader of the opposition and that a shadow Minister is not regulated by law. The latter considerations may have caused the Commonwealth to think that Shadow Ministers may not have a right to public employment regulated by law and thus may not hold offices in the common law sense and to think that it would be better not to confine its definition to the holding of an office but refer also to the performance of functions.

The Second Reading Speech for the Parliamentary Remuneration Bill 1989 has provided no assistance in this regard.”

- “5.1 *“I do not consider that the duties performed by a Shadow Minister are duties which attach to the office of a member, with the result I do not consider the Tribunal may determine additional entitlements be provided to a member to facilitate the performance of those duties by a member.*
- 5.2 *If such entitlements are to be provided, the Tribunal must determine that they be provided to a recognised office holder.*

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

5.3 . Shadow Minister" is not specified in Schedule I to the Act as an office and thus the Tribunal cannot determine that such entitlements be provided to a Shadow Minister."

195. The Crown Solicitor also advised that the Act needed to be amended to provide the Tribunal with clear authority to determine additional entitlements for Shadow Ministers.
196. In the 2003 Annual Determination the important role which Shadow Ministers play in the Westminster system of Parliament was discussed. They providing the community with alternatives to government policies and putting forward counter arguments to government proposals: at p 2-3.
197. But still the result of the Crown Solicitor's advice was that additional entitlements earlier determined for Shadow Ministers were removed from the Determination.
198. Since then, the *Members of Parliament Staff Act 2013* has been enacted. Under it the Tribunal still does not have the power to provide for additional staff for all Members of the Shadow Cabinet, or for the Leader of the Opposition to allocate additional staff to them, as policy demands from time to time may require, as was also proposed. Schedule 1 providing that the special office holders defined in s 3 and dealt with in s18 are:
 - Government Whip
 - Opposition Whip

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

- Whip of a recognised party with 10 or more members in the Legislative Assembly (other than the Government or Opposition Whip)
- Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
- Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
- President of the Legislative Council
- Deputy President of the Legislative Council
- Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council
- Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council
- Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly

199. It follows that the position of Members of the Shadow Cabinet remains a matter for the Parliament to consider further.

Staff for Whips

200. Condition 7.2(viii) provides:

“The Whip of each recognised political party of not less than 10 Members to each shall be entitled to one staff member.”

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

201. This was dealt with In the General Review Report at [123]-[126]. It was proposed that the clause be amended to reflect Schedule 1 to the Act by providing:

“The Whip of each recognised political party not fewer than 10 Members of which are Members of the Legislative Assembly, shall be entitled to one staff member.”

202. The Presiding Officers submitted that the condition should rather be amended to provide:

“Each Whip as recognised in Schedule 1 of the Parliamentary Remuneration Act shall be entitled to one staff member.”

203. That was because, it was submitted, that if a whip was appointed to the Legislative Council for a party having ten or more members, the proposed condition could be interpreted as allowing for an additional staff member, which did not accord with Schedule 1.

204. I am not satisfied that this can be accepted. That Schedule refers to various Whips, but the Determination only provides for an additional staff member in the case of one Whip. What was advanced thus cannot be adopted.

205. Accordingly, I have determined that clause 7.2(viii) should refer precisely to the provision made in Schedule 1 of the Act. It will thus provide:

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

“The Whip of a recognised party with 10 or more members in the Legislative Assembly (other than the Government or Opposition Whip) shall be entitled to one staff member.”

Additional staffing generally

206. The Greens advanced a case for additional staffing for Members in the Legislative Council by a case study which analysed the hours of work per week performed by staff members over an average week, with staff members each working more than 50 hours per week. This having resulted in the employment of an additional part time staff member as a bookkeeper, paid for out of the electoral allowance.
207. Problems of staff burnout were also raised, a matter which has been referred to in earlier determinations. Other submissions touched on the reasons why staff support had generally become inadequate.
208. What was advanced raised a complex range of interconnected matters, not all of which the Tribunal has power to deal with. They including not only how much staff assistance Members now require for the efficient performance of their parliamentary duties, especially given changes in their work over time, but also whether all that Members are requiring their staff to do, is necessary to achieve this; whether remuneration currently paid to staff is adequate to attract people with the appropriate skills to perform such work for Members; whether insufficiently skilled staff has the result that the work required is not performed efficiently, that contributing to overwork by some staff; and whether the Parliament and Members are

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

meeting the obligations they owe staff under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW).

209. Some of these matters will have to be considered during the proposed re-evaluation of Members' salary. Some of them are for the Presiding Officers to deal with. Conclusions which they arrive at may have an impact on the Tribunal's determination, but that requires further consideration, both by the Presiding Officers and the Tribunal.
210. The Tribunal proposes to consult with the Presiding Officers about these matters and to invite submissions from Members in 2026 which provide actual data for it to consider, in determining whether a more general increase in staff support is warranted to facilitate the efficient performance of their parliamentary duties, given changes since staffing matters were last considered.

Staff Salaries

211. Various submissions again addressed staff salaries which the Tribunal has no power to determine. They included the Opposition Whip's proposal that Members be given greater flexibility in how they use their total staff budget, having a discretion within a band, such as \$60,000 to \$120,000, to determine individual staff salary.
212. This would seem to carry with it the possibility that staff performing the same functions for different Members would be quite differently remunerated. But that is not a matter for the Tribunal to consider, but rather for the Presiding Officers.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

213. The Greens submitted that staff salaries were so inadequate that the situation was becoming untenable, given cost of living pressures, as well as those resulting from untenable workloads, with unacceptable resulting staff turnover.
214. As always, the Tribunal will draw the Presiding Officers' attention to the submissions which have been received about matters which fall to them to determine under the *Members of Parliament Staff Act*. On this occasion, it will also seek to consult with them about how matters for which they are responsible impact the Tribunal's determination of matters which fall to it to determine in relation to additional entitlements under s10 of the Act.
215. In the General Review Report, the Tribunal suggested that how staff matters are regulated was a matter which the Parliament may wish to consider further: at [58]-[66]. That remains a matter for it to consider.

Use of entitlements

216. The Determination provides in cl 2.4.6 that "All accounts and Members' claims must be submitted to the Legislature for payment within 60 days of receipt or occurrence of the expense."
217. The Presiding Officers sought clarification about whether claims submitted after 60 days could still be paid, as was the current practice. Late claims usually being made as the result of issues beyond a Member's control, including problems arising from suppliers/vendors, change of staff/administrative oversights, or the Member being unaware that an expense could be claimed. Members then being reminded of the condition

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

and required to provide a brief explanation for the delay to be included in the claim, for audit purposes.

218. The Presiding Officers thus sought that the clause be amended to provide:

“All accounts and Members’ claims must be submitted to the Parliament for payment within 60 days of receipt or occurrence of the expense. As all claims are subject to audit, Members must retain sufficient evidence to support claims that have been submitted more than 60 days late.”

219. Given the Parliament’s administrative practice and the reasons for it, I consider that the condition should be amended to provide:

“All accounts and Members’ claims must be submitted to the Parliament for payment within 60 days of receipt or occurrence of the expense. All claims are subject to audit, as explained in cl 2.4.7. Members must thus retain sufficient evidence to support their claims and if they are submitted for payment after 60 days, that evidence should be provided with the claim, without which payment may be refused.”

220. Other submissions raised practical problems Members can encounter when submitting claims. For example, when tax invoices are not available, only receipts being provided. The Parliament’s practice is to require the same type of evidence of expenditure as the Commissioner of Taxation, who requires tax invoices, which contain specified information. I can see

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

no problem with this approach and do not consider that the Determination requires any change.

Sydney Allowance

221. Two matters were raised by the Presiding Officers about the Sydney Allowance.
222. Clause 5.3.3(i) now provides that “A Member can choose to receive the Sydney Allowance as either an annual fixed allowance or a daily rate. The election is to be made at the commencement of each financial year.”
223. Despite what was discussed in the General Review Report at [227]-[232], the Presiding Officers urged that the Determination recognise the Parliament’s current practice of paying this allowance in equal monthly instalments with salary, if a Member elects to have it paid as an annual allowance. That assisting both the Parliament and Members with cashflow and budgeting. And also mitigating administrative and other problems, in the event that a Member ceases to be a member of Parliament during the course of a year, having to make a large repayment to the Parliament.
224. It was thus proposed that the condition be amended to provide:

“A Member can choose to receive the Sydney Allowance as either an annual fixed allowance paid as equal monthly instalments, or a daily allowance paid after each overnight stay. The election is to be made at the commencement of each financial year.”

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

225. Given that what is proposed reflects what has apparently long been the Parliament's practice, I accept that it is appropriate to adopt the Presiding Officer's proposal. In the event that the new clause gives rise to any practical problems, they can be raised on a later review.
226. The second matter related to how Members must substantiate their presence in Sydney, when claiming this allowance: cl 5.3.3(ix). It was proposed that this provision be amended to permit House security pass records to be used for substantiation. Given how that system operates, I am satisfied that the proposal should be adopted.
227. The clause will thus provide:

Members are required to maintain records that clearly document the parliamentary purpose and occasions they stayed in Sydney in connection with their parliamentary duties. Members attending Parliament House on parliamentary business when Parliament is not sitting are required to sign the **parliamentary register or utilise their Parliament House security pass records, to substantiate their presence in Sydney**. When a Member is in Sydney on parliamentary business which does not require them to attend Parliament House, the Member must provide sufficient documentary proof of each such occasion to the Chief Executive in accordance with Parliament's administrative guidelines. Such records are to be retained for a minimum period of two (2) years,

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

for the purpose of substantiating claims Members submit to Parliament (emphasis added).

228. Some Members submitted that the Sydney Allowance was inadequate. In 2024 it was increased by 3.6% to a daily rate of \$368. It will again be adjusted in this review.
229. Information provided to the Tribunal included that Government rates available to Members for a standard room in a hotel in close proximity to Parliament House ranged from \$240 to \$309 per night, very considerably less than rates commercially available. They ranged up to \$509 per night and considerably more for more luxurious rooms.
230. But one submission was that at times Government rates were even higher than those commercially available. How this may have occurred is not apparent. But suggests that the Department of Parliamentary Services could usefully examine how the scheme is now operating and whether it always does provide hotel rates lower than those commercially available. If it does not, the amount of the Sydney Allowance may have to be reviewed.
231. Members who have actual examples of the operation of the scheme in the way submitted, are urged to provide them to the Department for review.
232. On the information presently available, it cannot be concluded that this allowance is inadequate or requires a greater increase than that determined. If Members have further relevant information to advance, it will of course be considered on the next review.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

Committee Allowance

233. Committee Allowances are paid to Chairpersons of Joint, Select and Standing Committees, those appointed by the Presiding Officers to the Temporary Chairs of Committees Panel, or the Panel of Temporary Speakers in recognition of their additional responsibilities: cl 5.4.1.
234. Because of the nature of their roles, it is also paid to the Public Accounts Committee and Temporary Chairs of Committees Panel or the Panel of Temporary Speakers.
235. In the General Review it was concluded that clause 5.4.2 could be amended to provide:

Members:

- (i) serving as Chairpersons of Joint Committees, Select Committees and Standing Committees who are not in receipt of a salary of office as specified in Schedule 1 of the Act, shall be paid the sum of \$220 for each day upon which they attend a meeting or an official visit of inspection if that day is one upon which the Legislative Council (so far as a Member of the Council is concerned) or the Legislative Assembly (so far as a Member of the Assembly is concerned) is not sitting.
- (ii) of the Public Accounts Committee, Panel of Temporary Chairs of Committees and Temporary

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

Speakers Panel, other than the Chairperson of the Committee or another Committee in receipt of a salary of office as specified in schedule 1 of the Act, shall be paid a committee allowance of \$5,085 per annum.

236. The Presiding Officers proposed that Chairpersons who are in receipt of a salary of office, other than for a role as chairperson, should also be entitled to the daily additional payment when attending committee meetings.
237. That was because “the work of a Committee Chair is parliamentary in nature and not related to executive Government functions, thus it appears reasonable to assume that the additional work would not overlap with the duties of other position holders other duties”. This would be achieved by the addition of the sentence **“This will not apply if the Member is in receipt of a salary of office as Chair, for a committee as specified in Schedule 1 of the Act.”**
238. I accept this submission, but take the view that it can better be accommodated by cl 5.4.2(i) providing:
- (i) serving as Chairpersons of Joint Committees, Select Committees and Standing Committees, **who do not receive additional salary for an office of Chair of a committee** specified in Schedule 1 of the Act, shall be paid the sum of \$220 for each day upon which they attend a meeting or an official visit of inspection if that day is one upon which the Legislative Council (so far as a Member of the Council is concerned) or the Legislative Assembly (so

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

far as a Member of the Assembly is concerned) is not sitting
(emphasis added).

Electorate/Zone to Sydney Travel

239. In the General Review Report this allowance, for economy travel to Sydney from an electorate was dealt with at [243]-[249]. It was proposed that cl 6.2.2(ii) be amended to require a Member seeking reimbursement for travel by car rather than by air, to provide proof of the cost of a commercial airfare.
240. The Presiding Officers suggested that because it had been established that the cost of an airfare can vary significantly, but still exceed the cost of driving a private vehicle, the cost of which is reimbursed at the cents per kilometre rate determined by the Australian Tax Office and given the administrative burden of establishing what the cost of airfare is at different times, cl 6.2.2(ii) could sensibly be removed. The cost of administering the current provision outweighing any potential financial gains.
241. In all of these circumstances, I am satisfied that this condition can be removed from the Determination.

The Communications Allowance

242. A number of submissions were advanced about this allowance.
243. Clause 6.3.5 deals with the conditions which apply to this allowance. In cl 6.3.5(vi) provision is made for Members to receive details of prospective

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

constituents from the NSW Electoral Commission. This was dealt with at [165] – [167] of the General Review Report.

244. Further investigation by the Department has resulted in advice from the NSW Electoral Commission, that under the Electoral Act 2017 (NSW), it cannot now provide the information which the Determination requires and that this would require legislative amendment.
245. In those circumstances I am satisfied that the condition must be deleted, as the Presiding Officers proposed.
246. The Nationals submitted that greater flexibility was required, to reflect current means of communication and challenges which non metropolitan Members faced. It urged the Tribunal to review which forms of media were allowable under this allowance. Urging the view that it was the content of a communication rather than its form, which should be determinative, so that the same information ought to be able to be communicated by a newspaper ad and a billboard.
247. This allowance provides an annual budget to permit Members to meet costs associated with communicating with constituents in accordance with the Parliament's administrative guidelines: cl 6.3.1. There various forms of communication are specified. They include newsletters and brochures, letterhead and flyer, audio posters and other e-publications, websites and other social media, email distribution service, advertisements, other forms of communications approved by Parliament and engaging a consultant.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

248. That the Parliament has unreasonably refused approval for other forms of communication was not established. Nor that its administrative processes are inappropriate.
249. Conditions for use of the allowance are specified in cl 6.3.5. They include that the allowance may not be used for the production of specified promotional material: cl 6.3.5(ix). I am not persuaded that this is no longer appropriate. The use of the allowance to produce promotional material has been repeatedly raised, considered and rejected in past determinations.
250. If Members wish to advance specific amendments to the conditions specified in the Determination or the administrative guidelines, they will be considered in the 2026 Annual Review.

Skills Allowance

251. Some submissions raised the administration of this allowance, the purpose of which is identified in cl 6.6.1 to be to provide training to Members and their staff directly relevant to their roles.
252. An example given was the refusal to approve use of the allowance to fund training in a community language, which would appear to be contemplated by the allowance. It was suggested that consideration be given to the Parliament publishing to Members training programs accepted as falling within the purpose for which the allowance is specified.

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

253. This appears to be potentially useful. The Tribunal encourages the Parliament to adopt this suggested improvement and the Department to revisit how the allowance is administered.

Audit of entitlements

254. Audit of entitlements is dealt with in cl 2.4.7:

“Members’ additional entitlements in the nature of fixed allocations and the Sydney Allowance provided to Members shall be audited annually for compliance through the Parliament’s internal audit function. In addition to any internal audit conducted by the Parliament, Members’ additional entitlements in the nature of fixed allocations and the Sydney allowance shall be the subject of an external assurance engagement conducted by the Auditor-General of NSW. The cost of any assurance engagements shall be met by the Parliament. Members should ensure they maintain appropriate records of expenditure for the purpose of any audit or assurance engagements. Records are to be retained for a minimum period of two (2) years for the purpose of substantiating claims submitted to Parliament.”

255. The Presiding Officers proposed that this be amended to provide for audits of all or specific types of additional benefits, which I accept could be of benefit, although use of the Electoral Allowance, also an additional benefit, does not result in claims for payment or audits. The clause will thus provide:

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

“Members’ use of their additional entitlements, other than the Electoral Allowance, shall be audited annually by the Parliament, either by way of a general audit or in relation to a specific additional entitlement or entitlements. In addition Members shall also be the subject of an external assurance engagement conducted by the Auditor-General of NSW. The cost of any assurance engagements shall be met by the Parliament. Members should ensure that they maintain appropriate records of expenditure for the purpose of any audit or assurance engagement. Records are to be retained for a minimum period of two (2) years for the purpose of substantiating claims Members submitted to Parliament.”

Members’ caring responsibilities

256. The Presiding Officers submitted that it was a matter for the Tribunal to provide additional staff or an extra allowance to Members with caring responsibilities and that any entitlement it determined would be implemented.
257. In the General Review Report it was pointed out that the Parliament had no formal arrangements or guidelines for such Members; that the adoption of then proposed benefits required further consideration; that Members are entitled to use their Electoral Allowance to meet their childcare expenses; that if a separate allowance was to be pursued, information about other arrangements which had been adopted by Local Government, which were

Section 4 – Additional Entitlements

relied on, would have to be provided; and the amount of any benefit sought, as well as the form of the clause proposed to be adopted in the Determination would also have to be provided. As well as information about current ad hoc arrangements and their operation and an examination of the cost involved in what was proposed: at [362]-[375].

258. The Tribunal also said in the General Review Report that it thus had insufficient information about any new benefits for Members with caring responsibilities, to be able to come to any conclusions. But that they could be pursued in an annual review.
259. On this review the Tribunal has not been provided with any further information. It thus still has insufficient information on which to come to any views about the necessity for and terms of any new additional entitlement needed for the efficient performance of such Members' parliamentary duties.
260. If relevant information is provided on a later review when a proposal for a new benefit is formulated and advanced, it will of course be considered.

Section 5 – General Summary of the Determination

2025 Adjustments

Basic salary and additional entitlements	Adjustments and Amendments
Basic Salary	4.0 % increase
Electoral Allowance:	
Base Allowance	No Increase
Additional Allowance	No Increase
Recognised Office Holder Allowance (except Independents)	No Increase
Independents Allowance	No Increase
Sydney Allowance	2.4% increase
Communications Allowance:	
Base Allocation	2.4% increase
Additional Allocation	Adjusted to reflect changes in constituent numbers
Committee Allowances	4.0% increase
Panel of Temporary Chairs of Committee and Temporary Speakers Panel (except Chairperson of the Committee or another Committee)	4.0% increase
General Travel Allowance:	
Base Allocation	2.4% increase
Additional Allocation	2.4% increase
Skills Development Allowance	2.4% increase
Travel Allowances	As per Australian Tax Office Determination TD2025/4
Staff members for Independent Members of the Legislative Assembly	Correction to staffing anomaly at clause 7.2:

Section 5 – General Summary of the Determination

Basic salary and additional entitlements	Adjustments and Amendments
	“Each Member of the Legislative Assembly who is elected as an Independent Member, shall be entitled to four staff members employed in each electorate office, until the 2027 state election. Effective from the 2027 state election. each Member elected as an Independent Member of the Legislative Assembly shall be entitled to one additional member of staff.”

The Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal



Hon A/Justice Schmidt AM
Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal

The Hon Acting Justice M Schmidt
Dated: 22 July 2025

The Determination Index

1. Definitions.....	83
2. Guidelines and General Conditions Regarding Additional Entitlements for Members in Connection with Parliamentary Duties	85
2.1 – 2.3 Circumstances upon which the additional entitlements may be used for parliamentary duties.....	85
2.4 Conditions	89
2.5 List of Tables Relating to Additional Entitlements	93
3. Basic Salary	94
4. Electoral Groupings and Zones for Fixing Additional Entitlements	95
5. Additional Entitlements in the Nature of Allowances	97
5.1 Summary	97
5.2 Electoral Allowance.....	97
5.2.1 Basis	97
5.2.2 Entitlement.....	98
5.3 Sydney Allowance	100
5.3.1 Purpose and Operation of the Provisions.....	100
5.3.2 Entitlement.....	101
5.3.3 Conditions.....	108
5.4 Committee Allowances	110
5.4.1 Purpose and Operation of the Provision	111
5.4.2 Entitlement.....	111
6. Additional Entitlements in the Nature of Fixed Allocations	112
6.1 Summary	112
6.2 Electorate/Zone to Sydney Travel	112
6.2.1 Purpose and Operation of the Provisions.....	112
6.2.2 Conditions.....	114
6.3 Communications Allowance.....	115
6.3.1 Purpose	115
6.3.2 Entitlement.....	116
6.3.3 Carry over/forfeiture of entitlement.....	119

The Determination Index

6.3.4 Special Conditions.....	119
6.3.5 Conditions.....	120
6.4 General Travel Allowance.....	121
6.4.1 Purpose.....	122
6.4.2 Entitlement.....	122
6.4.3 Carry over/forfeiture of entitlement.....	123
6.4.4 Conditions.....	123
6.5 Recognised Office Holder Additional Entitlements	127
6.5.1 Additional loadings	127
6.5.2 Carry over/forfeiture of entitlement.....	129
6.5.3 Conditions.....	129
6.6 Skills Development Allowance	129
6.6.1 Purpose.....	129
6.6.2 Entitlement.....	130
6.6.3 Carry over/forfeiture of entitlement.....	130
6.6.4 Conditions.....	131
7. Additional Entitlements/Resources	133
7.1 Equipment, Services and Facilities	133
7.2 Staff.....	134
7.2.1 Emergency Relief Staff	135

The Determination

Pursuant to ss10(2) and 11(1) of the Act, the Tribunal makes the following Determination:

With effect on and from 1 July 2025 and pursuant to s10(6) of the Act, all previous Determinations of the Tribunal are revoked. This Determination shall constitute the annual Determination and shall operate on and from 1 July 2025.

1. Definitions

Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1989, referred to hereinafter in the Determination as ‘the Act’.

“Member” or “Members” refers to a duly elected Member or Members of the Parliament of New South Wales (referred to hereinafter in this Determination as “the Parliament”).

Recognised Office Holder refers to a Recognised Office Holder as contained in Schedule 1 of the Act.

“Cross bench members” means Members who are not members of a major political party or an Independent member, but a member of a minor political party.

In this Determination the expression “additional entitlements” is to be understood in the sense used in Pt 3 of the Act.

“Basic salary” has the meaning given by s4 of the Act.

“Parliamentary duties” has the meaning attributed to it by s3 of the Act.

Parliamentary Resources means Parliament House offices, electoral offices, staff, equipment and hardware provided by the Parliament to Members.

The Determination

“Electoral groups” are the groups of electorates specified in Table 1.

“Zones” are the areas for Members of the Legislative Council as specified in Table 2.

Commercial costs means accommodation in a commercial establishment such as a hotel, motel, or serviced apartment, including Airbnb or similar accommodation.

Incidental expenses means minor but necessary expenses associated with work related travel, such as a car parking fee, bus ticket or a charge for using the phone or internet for work related purposes at overnight accommodation.

“Approved relatives” means:

- One person who meets any of the following criteria:
 - wife or husband of the Member;
 - a person living with the Member in a domestic relationship as defined in the *Property (Relationships) Act 1984*; and/or
 - an immediate family member of the Member (parent, siblings or children who are not minors i.e. below 16 years of age) who is nominated as an approved relative.
- Members may nominate as approved relatives:
 - one or more dependent child under 16 years of age in the care of the Member who is legally responsible (alone or jointly with another person) for the child’s day-to-day care, welfare and development, and/or
 - a dependent over the age of 16 years who has ongoing day to day care needs and who remains in the full-time care of the Member.

The Determination

Under special circumstances a Member may apply through the Presiding Officers to the Tribunal for an exception to the criteria. This will need to be based on the ability of the Member to meet their parliamentary duties and individual circumstances that apply at the time.

2. Guidelines and General Conditions Regarding Additional Entitlements for Members in Connection with Parliamentary Duties

Every class of “additional entitlements” described in this Determination is provided pursuant to s10(1)(a) of the Act “for the purpose of facilitating the efficient performance of the parliamentary duties of Members.” The following guidelines shall apply to the receipt, use and operation of additional entitlements.

2.1 – 2.3 Circumstances upon which the additional entitlements may be used for parliamentary duties

2.1 Additional entitlements, including the Electoral Allowance, are provided to facilitate the efficient performance of the following particular parliamentary duties of Members as follows:

2.1.1 Activities undertaken in representing the interests of constituents but excluding activities of a direct electioneering or political campaigning nature.

2.1.2 Performing electorate work for a Member’s electorate and participation in official and community activities to which the Member

The Determination

is invited because of the Member's status as a parliamentary representative.

2.1.3 Attending and participating in sessions of Parliament.

2.1.4 Participation in the activities of parliamentary committees.

2.1.5 Attending Vice-Regal, parliamentary and State ceremonial functions.

2.1.6 Attending State, Commonwealth and Local Government functions.

2.1.7 Attending official functions to which a Member is invited because of the Member's status as a parliamentary representative, e.g., receptions and other community gatherings hosted by Members of the diplomatic corps, educational and religious institutions, community and service organisations, business associations, sporting bodies or other special interest groups.

2.1.8 Participation in the activities of recognised political parties, including participation in national, State and regional conferences, branch meetings, electorate council meetings, executive meetings, committee meetings, and meetings of the Members of the parliamentary political party, its executive and committees.

2.1.9 For a Member elected to the Parliament as an independent, participation in activities that are reasonable alternatives to participation in the activities of recognised political parties.

2.1.10 A Member who is elected to the Parliament as a representative of a recognised political party and who subsequently resigns from that party Membership and thereafter sits as an independent Member, howsoever described, shall continue to receive the same

The Determination

entitlements as they received as a Member of the party prior to resignation and not the additional entitlements provided to elected independents. The Member is also not entitled to the benefit of the rule in cl 2.1.9 above.

2.1.11 Participation within Australia in the activities of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) organised by the CPA provided such activities arise directly from Membership of the New South Wales Branch and officially endorsed by the Branch. Members may utilise Frequent Flyer Points which have been accrued as a result of the use of public funds to purchase international flights or obtain an upgrade in seat class in order to attend CPA activities.

2.1.12 Participation in a Parliamentary Friendship Group; provided that, such group is approved in writing by the President of the Legislative Council and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

2.2 Where any additional entitlement fixed by this Determination is to be used for the purpose of facilitating Members' participation in the activities of recognised political parties, the Tribunal sets out the following guidelines as to the use of that additional entitlement:

2.2.1 Parties registered under the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912* and included in the register of parties maintained by the Electoral Commissioner, are to be treated as recognised political parties.

2.2.2 Additional entitlements should not be used to fund:

The Determination

- (i) activities such as those associated with party Membership drives;
- (ii) mail distributions for non-electorate or non-parliamentary activities;
- (iii) costs associated with election campaigning for an individual Member;
- (iv) party fundraising for a Member's own political use and/or other party political Members such as the purchase of raffle tickets, raffle prizes or tickets to attend functions etc;
- (v) costs previously borne by political parties which are not principally related to a Member's parliamentary or electorate duties; and
- (vi) costs associated with pre-selection activities.

2.2.3 The electorate office provided for a Member of the Legislative Assembly is not to be used as an election campaign office.

2.3 The Tribunal sets out the following additional and general guidelines:

2.3.1 Some intermingling of a Member's parliamentary duties and non-parliamentary duties is in practical terms not always easily avoided. The onus is always on the Member to show that expenditure or any claims for reimbursement relate to parliamentary duties. Where there is intermingling of non-parliamentary activity, which is incidental to a Member's parliamentary duties, such incidental non-parliamentary use is permissible. If it is not practical to separate intermingled parliamentary and non-parliamentary use a Member must estimate

The Determination

the component of non-parliamentary use and, using the Member's best efforts, meet these costs independently.

2.3.2 The Member entitlements and resources which should not be intermingled under any circumstances include:

- Parliamentary staff;
- Parliamentary offices; and
- Official business stationery

2.3.3 In the case of parliamentary work, any activities in which a Member's involvement may reasonably be regarded as deriving from the Member's responsibilities as a parliamentary representative should be treated as parliamentary duties.

2.3.4 In the case of a Member's activities within the broader community outside the Member's electorate, activities that may reasonably be regarded as deriving from the Member's status as a parliamentary representative should be treated as parliamentary duties.

2.4 Conditions

The following general conditions will apply to all additional entitlements determined hereunder. These conditions are in addition to any special conditions attaching to the provision of allowances or other benefits (as specified later in this Determination):

2.4.1 The use of Members' additional entitlements will be subject to Parliament's administrative guidelines. The administrative guidelines should assist Members in carrying out their functions and duties.

The Determination

Members must comply with the Parliament's administrative guidelines where they are consistent with the Determination and guidelines and conditions contained herein.

2.4.2 All procurement by Members will be in accordance with the Parliament's Procurement and Contract Framework.

2.4.3 . Members must ensure that they have sufficient funds to meet expenses which they claim to have reimbursed out of their additional entitlements.

2.4.4 All entitlements, except for the Electoral Allowance, shall be administered by the Chief Executive, Department of Parliamentary Services (the Chief Executive). Members should be advised by the Department of Parliamentary Services each month as to the balance of these allocations.

2.4.5 Nothing shall prevent the use of the Electoral Allowance for legitimate electorate expenses which might also fall within the categories of expenses such as those covered by the Communications Allowance, General Travel Allowance and Skills Development Allowance.

2.4.6 All accounts and Members' claims must be submitted to the Parliament for payment within 60 days of receipt or occurrence of the expense. All claims are subject to audit, as explained in cl 2.4.7. Members must thus retain sufficient evidence to support their claims and if they are submitted for payment after 60 days, that evidence should be provided with the claim, without which payment may be refused.

The Determination

- 2.4.7 Members' use of their additional entitlements, other than the Electoral Allowance, shall be audited annually by the Parliament, either by way of a general audit or in relation to a specific additional entitlement or entitlements. In addition, Members shall also be the subject of an external assurance engagement conducted by the Auditor-General of NSW. The cost of any assurance engagements shall be met by the Parliament. Members should ensure that they maintain appropriate records of expenditure for the purpose of any audit or assurance engagement. Records are to be retained for a minimum period of two (2) years for the purpose of substantiating claims Members submitted to Parliament.
- 2.4.8 Expenditure is only to be incurred in connection with the parliamentary duties of Members (and in this respect the Member should refer to the guidelines in this Determination and those issued by the Parliament).
- 2.4.9 The various allowances determined here, are for the sole use of the Member and are not to be transferred to other persons or organisations including community groups and Members. The Member may use his/her entitlements to meet official costs of the approved relatives and/or staff employed by the Parliament when that expenditure is in connection with official parliamentary duties.
- 2.4.10 Benefits accrued by a Member by way of loyalty/incentive schemes such as frequent flyers, as a consequence of the Member using his or her additional entitlements, are to be used only for parliamentary duties and not for private purposes. Any outstanding benefits of this nature, when the Member ceases to be a Member, are to be forfeited.

The Determination

Members shall be required to complete an annual declaration form provided by the Parliament's administration at the end of each financial year or within 30 days of ceasing to be a Member declaring that they have not used loyalty/reward benefits accrued through the use of their additional entitlements for non-parliamentary or electorate purposes.

2.4.11 Payment of accounts relating to the use of a Member's additional entitlements in the nature of fixed allocations will be paid directly by the Parliament and debited to the Member's account or paid in the first instance by the Member who would then seek reimbursement from the Parliament.

The Determination

2.5 List of Tables Relating to Additional Entitlements

Table 1	Electoral Groupings for the Legislative Assembly – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Table 2	Zones for Legislative Council – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Table 3	Electoral Allowance Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Table 4	Sydney Allowance Daily Rates – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Table 5	Electorate/Zone to Sydney Travel Entitlements – Additional Entitlements for Recognised Office Holders – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Table 6	Communications Allowance – Base Allocation – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Table 7	Communications Allowance – Additional Allocation – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Table 8	General Travel Allowance – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Table 9	Travel Allowances Indicative Upper Limits for Members – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Table 10	Recognised Office Holder and Other Member Additional Entitlements – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Table 11	Skills Development Allowance – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

The Determination

3. Basic Salary

With effect from 1 July 2025 the basic salary of Members, pursuant to s 4 of the Act, shall be **\$179,479** per annum.

The Determination

4. Electoral Groupings and Zones for Fixing Additional Entitlements

The electoral groupings for the Legislative Assembly and Zones for the Legislative Council to be used for the purposes of determining the quantum of additional entitlements shall be as follows:

Table 1: Electoral Groupings for the Legislative Assembly			
Group 1			
Auburn	Drummoyne	Londonderry	Riverstone
Badgerys Creek	East Hills	Macquarie Fields	Rockdale
Balmain	Epping	Manly	Ryde
Bankstown	Fairfield	Maroubra	Strathfield
Blacktown	Granville	Miranda	Summer Hill
Cabramatta	Heffron	Mount Druitt	Sydney
Camden	Holsworthy	Newtown	Vaucluse
Campbelltown	Hornsby	North Shore	Wahroonga
Canterbury	Kellyville	Oatley	Wakehurst
Castle Hill	Kogarah	Parramatta	Willoughby
Coogee	Lane Cove	Penrith	Winston Hills
Cronulla	Leppington	Pittwater	
Davidson	Liverpool	Prospect	
Group 2			
Blue Mountains	Heathcote	Shellharbour	Wallsend
Charlestown	Keira	Swansea	Wollondilly
Gosford	Lake Macquarie	Terrigal	Wollongong
Hawkesbury	Newcastle	The Entrance	Wyong
Group 3			
Ballina	Kiama	Port Macquarie	South Coast
Cessnock	Maitland	Port Stephens	Tweed
Coffs Harbour	Myall Lakes		
Group 4			
Albury	Clarence	Lismore	Tamworth
Bathurst	Dubbo	Orange	Wagga Wagga
Bega	Goulburn	Oxley	
Group 5	Cootamundra	Monaro	Upper Hunter
Group 6	Northern Tablelands		
Group 7	Murray	Group 8	Barwon

The Determination

Table 2: Electoral Zones for Legislative Council			
Zone 1			
Auburn	Drummoyne	Londonderry	Riverstone
Badgerys Creek	East Hills	Macquarie Fields	Rockdale
Balmain	Epping	Manly	Ryde
Bankstown	Fairfield	Maroubra	Strathfield
Blacktown	Granville	Miranda	Summer Hill
Cabramatta	Heffron	Mount Druitt	Sydney
Camden	Holsworthy	Newtown	Vaucluse
Campbelltown	Hornsby	North Shore	Wahroonga
Canterbury	Kellyville	Oatley	Wakehurst
Castle Hill	Kogarah	Parramatta	Willoughby
Coogee	Lane Cove	Penrith	Winston Hills
Cronulla	Leppington	Pittwater	
Davidson	Liverpool	Prospect	
Zone 2			
Blue Mountains	Heathcote	Shellharbour	Wallsend
Charlestown	Keira	Swansea	Wollondilly
Gosford	Lake Macquarie	Terrigal	Wollongong
Hawkesbury	Newcastle	The Entrance	Wyong
Zone 3			
Albury	Cootamundra	Myall Lakes	Port Stephens
Ballina	Dubbo	Northern Tablelands	South Coast
Barwon	Goulburn	Orange	Tamworth
Bathurst	Lismore	Oxley	Tweed
Bega	Kiama	Port Macquarie	Upper Hunter
Cessnock	Maitland		Wagga Wagga
Clarence	Monaro		
Coffs Harbour	Murray		

The Determination

5. Additional Entitlements in the Nature of Allowances

5.1 Summary

The entitlements in this category comprise the following:

Electoral Allowance

- Base Allowance
- Additional Allowance
- Recognised Office Holder Allowance (except Independents)
- Independents Allowance

Sydney Allowance

Committee Allowances

5.2 Electoral Allowance

5.2.1 Basis

- (i) The allowance is based upon those factors which have historically been taken into account in assessing the quantum of the allowance (including the additional costs associated with the performance by Members of their parliamentary duties in their electorates) and such other factors as may be determined from time to time as appropriate to be taken into account by the Tribunal under the Act.

The Determination

- (ii) The establishment of the additional allowance took into account the costs previously met from the abolished LSA – Communications (electronic) and LSA - Printing and Stationery, Office Supplies and Services.
- (iii) The allowance is intended to be used by Members to pay for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. The types of expenses which it is envisaged may be met from the Electoral Allowance include:
 - a) leasing or purchasing a motor vehicle and additional vehicle equipment expenses;
 - b) telephone, internet, office and equipment expenses which are not met by the Parliament;
 - c) Member and staff travel expenses not compensated for by the Parliament and or the Sydney, Travel and Communications Allowances;
 - d) expenses incurred in communicating with constituents not compensated for by the Communications and Travel Allowances; and
 - e) staff expenses incurred in addition to those borne by the Parliament.

5.2.2 Entitlement

- (i) Each Member of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council shall receive an electoral allowance. The quantum of that allowance shall be fixed in accordance with the electoral grouping or zone for the electorate of the Member as follows:

The Determination

Table 3: Electoral Allowance - Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council - 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 (inclusive)			
Electoral Group/Zone	Base Allowance	Additional Allowance	Total
Legislative Assembly			
Group 1	\$59,890	\$18,075	\$77,965
Group 2	\$70,140	\$19,985	\$90,125
Group 3	\$82,670	\$19,985	\$102,655
Group 4	\$90,250	\$19,985	\$110,235
Group 5	\$95,985	\$19,985	\$115,970
Group 6	\$105,220	\$19,985	\$125,205
Group 7	\$123,065	\$19,985	\$143,050
Group 8	\$168,295	\$34,845	\$203,140
Legislative Council			
Zone 1	\$70,140	\$19,035	\$89,175
Zone 2	\$70,140	\$19,985	\$90,125
Zone 3	\$70,140	\$24,795	\$94,935

- (ii) A further allowance of \$4,660 per annum is payable to each Recognised Office Holder in the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council.
- (iii) A further allowance of \$2,325 per annum is payable to each Member elected as an Independent in the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council, who is not a Recognised Office Holder.
- (iv) The electoral allowances shall be payable per calendar month in arrears in conjunction with salary payments.

The Determination

5.3 Sydney Allowance

5.3.1 Purpose and Operation of the Provisions

- (i) The Sydney Allowance is provided to Members who reside in non-metropolitan electorates to compensate for the additional costs including commercial accommodation, meals and incidental costs associated with staying in Sydney to attend sessions of Parliament, meetings of parliamentary committees or other parliamentary business.
- (ii) Members whose principal place of residence is a minimum distance of 70 kms by road from Parliament House are eligible to receive the Sydney Allowance.
- (iii) Members may receive the lower or greater amount of overnight stays based on the following distance criteria:
 - Members whose principal place of residence is between 70 kms and 140 kms by road from Parliament House are eligible to receive the Sydney Allowance at the lower amount of overnight stays.
 - Members whose principal place of residence is a distance greater than 140 kms by road from Parliament House are eligible to receive the Sydney Allowance at the greater amount of overnight stays.
- (iv) The Tribunal considers the Member's principal place of residence to be that residence where the Member would normally return and reside when not attending Sydney on parliamentary duties.

The Determination

- (v) To establish the principal place of residence each Member will be required to complete the Parliament's checklist and certify that the residence nominated is the principal place of residence.

5.3.2 Entitlement

- (i) The daily rate (including the number of overnight stays) for the Sydney Allowance for eligible Members shall be in accordance with *Table 4: Sydney Allowance Daily Rates - 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 (inclusive)* below. Where a Member elects for a daily rate, he/she shall be entitled to the daily rate for the number of overnight stays per annum specified in that Table, except as provided in the conditions.

The Determination

Table 4: Sydney Allowance Daily Rates – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 (inclusive)				
Office	Principal place of residence	Overnight stays p.a.	Overnight in Sydney where accommodation costs are incurred	In transit to and from Sydney where no overnight stay is involved
Minister who is Leader of Government Members in the Legislative Council Minister who is Deputy Leader of Government Members in the Legislative Council Senior Ministers, being Ministers not referred to above who are designated as Senior Ministers by the Premier Other Ministers	A minimum of 70 kms by road from Parliament House	180	\$377.00	Actual reasonable expenses for meals and incidentals up to a maximum of \$201.35 per day

The Determination

President of the Legislative Council				
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly				
Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council				
Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council (when leader of a party)				
Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council (when not leader of a party)				
Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly				
Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly				
Leader in the Legislative Assembly (other than the Leader of the				

The Determination

Opposition or the Deputy Leader of the Opposition) of a recognised political party not fewer than 10 members of which are members of the Legislative Assembly and of which no member is a Minister				
Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Deputy President and Chair of Committees in the Legislative Council Government Whip in the Legislative Council Deputy Government Whip in the Legislative Council Opposition Whip in the Legislative Council	A minimum of 70 kms by road from Parliament House	140	\$377.00	As above

The Determination

Deputy Opposition Whip in the Legislative Council				
Government Whip in the Legislative Assembly				
Opposition Whip in the Legislative Assembly				
Whip in the Legislative Assembly of a recognised political party not fewer than 10 members of which are members of the Legislative Assembly				
Deputy Whip in the Legislative Assembly of a recognised political party not fewer than 40 members of which are members of the Legislative Assembly				
Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier (Leader of the House) in the Legislative Assembly				

The Determination

Parliamentary Secretary in the Legislative Council				
Parliamentary Secretary in the Legislative Assembly				
Assistant Speaker of the Legislative Assembly				
Assistant President in the Legislative Council				
Deputy Leader in the Legislative Assembly (other than the Leader of the Opposition or the Deputy Leader of the Opposition) of a recognised political party not fewer than 10 members of which are members of the Legislative Assembly and of which no member is a Minister with not less than 10 Members.				

The Determination

Chairs of Standing/Select Committees specified in Schedule 1 of the <i>Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1989</i>	A minimum of 70 kms by road from Parliament House	140	\$377.00	As above
Legislative Council Members	Greater than 140 kms by road from Parliament House	135	\$377.00	As above
	Between 70 kms and 140 kms by road from Parliament House	105	\$377.00	As above
Legislative Assembly Members	Greater than 140 kms by road from Parliament House	135	\$377.00	As above
	Between 70 kms and 140 kms by road from Parliament House	105	\$377.00	As above

The Determination

5.3.3 Conditions

The following conditions apply to the Sydney Allowance:

- (i) A Member can choose to receive the Sydney Allowance as either an annual fixed allowance paid as equal monthly instalments, or a daily allowance paid after each overnight stay. The election is to be made at the commencement of each financial year.
- (ii) If a Member chooses to receive the annual fixed allowance the Department of Parliamentary Services will calculate the annual entitlement by multiplying the number of overnight stays for the particular Member or Recognised Office Holder by the daily rate.
- (iii) In order to receive the Sydney Allowance each Member must certify to the Chief Executive, Department of Parliamentary Services their principal place of residence in accordance with Parliament's administrative guidelines.
- (iv) Where a Member chooses to receive the daily rate of allowance the Member shall receive the overnight daily rate as specified in *Table 4: Sydney Allowance Daily Rates*. The Member is entitled to the number of overnight stays per annum specified in *Table 4: Sydney Allowance Daily Rates* without the need to substantiate to the Parliament expenses up to the daily rate.
- (v) Where a Member chooses to receive the daily rate of allowance and the Member exceeds the number of overnight stays Members will be reimbursed actual costs, up to the daily maximum upon the production of tax invoices/receipts for each such occasion.
- (vi) Members in receipt of the Sydney Allowance when travelling to Sydney for parliamentary business or home from Sydney following an overnight stay and where there is no overnight stay required en-route, will be entitled up to the

The Determination

maximum provided in the “In transit...” column of *Table 4: Sydney Allowance Daily Rates* for:

- (a) incidentals which will be paid in accordance with the non-executive arrangements applying to Crown employees under the Public Service Conditions of Employment, Reviewed Award 2009, or its successors without substantiation; and
 - (b) the actual cost of meals, which must be substantiated
- (vii) Members may not claim this entitlement in their hometown closest to their principal place of residence, at their nominated home airport or within a 70 km radius of Parliament House for which Sydney Allowance payments are provided.
- (viii) When in receipt of the annual allowance Members will be subject to a bi-annual reconciliation and are required to certify halfway and at the end of the financial year the number of occasions they stayed in Sydney and that on each occasion the stay was for parliamentary business. Members who nominate to receive the annual allowance may also claim for additional overnight stays in excess of those specified in *Table 4: Sydney Allowance Daily Rates*, which will be paid, up to the daily maximum, upon substantiation.
- (ix) Members are required to maintain records that clearly document the parliamentary purpose and occasions they stayed in Sydney in connection with their parliamentary duties. Members attending Parliament House on parliamentary business when Parliament is not sitting are required to sign the parliamentary register or utilise their Parliament House security pass records, to substantiate their presence in Sydney. When a Member is in Sydney on parliamentary business which does not require them to attend Parliament House, the Member must provide sufficient documentary proof of each such

The Determination

occasion to the Chief Executive in accordance with Parliament's administrative guidelines. Such records are to be retained for a minimum period of two (2) years, for the purpose of substantiating claims Members submit to Parliament.

- (x) Members in receipt of the annual amount will be required to provide a reconciliation of their annual payments twice per year. The first reconciliation will be required by 31 January of each year for payments made in the previous period of 1 July to 31 December. A further reconciliation will be required by 31 July of each year for payments made in the subsequent six months. The first reconciliation is only to be used for the purpose of validating the number of nights claimed during the period. Any financial adjustments will be calculated in consideration of the total number of nights validated over the whole financial year. Where applicable, Members will return to Parliament any part of the annual amount that they have not substantiated by 30 September each year or within 30 days of ceasing to be a Member.
- (xi) Members who do not reimburse outstanding amounts by 30 September each year are to have their annual entitlement suspended and are to revert to the daily rate of Sydney Allowance until the reimbursement is made.
- (xii) Members are not to claim the Sydney Allowance if they stay in Government owned or funded accommodation including Parliament House.
- (xiii) In determining eligibility Members will need to nominate their principal place of residence immediately following their election to Parliament. Members are not to relocate during the parliamentary term for the purposes of meeting the eligibility criteria.

5.4 Committee Allowances

The Determination

5.4.1 Purpose and Operation of the Provision

Committee Allowances are paid to recognition of additional responsibilities in the case of certain Chairpersons of committees, the Public Accounts Committee, the Temporary Chairs of Committees Panel and the Panel of Temporary Speakers.

Because of the statutory nature of the Public Accounts Committee and their roles in Government activities, the annual rate of allowance is payable to them. Because of the nature of their responsibilities and how it arises to be performed, it is also payable to those appointed to the Temporary Chairs of Committees Panel or the Panel of Temporary Speakers.

5.4.2 Entitlement

- (i) Members serving as Chairpersons of Joint Committees, Select Committees and Standing Committees who do not receive additional salary for an office of Chair of a committee specified in Schedule 1 of the Act, shall be paid the sum of \$230 for each day upon which they attend a meeting or an official visit of inspection if that day is one upon which the Legislative Council (so far as a Member of the Council is concerned) or the Legislative Assembly (so far as a Member of the Assembly is concerned) is not sitting.
- (ii) Members of the Public Accounts Committee, Panel of Temporary Chairs of Committees and Temporary Speakers Panel, other than the Chairperson of the Committee or another Committee in receipt of a salary of office as specified in sch 1 of the Act, shall be paid a committee allowance of \$5,290 per annum.

The Determination

6. Additional Entitlements in the Nature of Fixed Allocations

6.1 Summary

The entitlements in this category comprise the following:

Electorate/Zone to Sydney Travel	
Communications Allowance	– Base Allocation
	– Additional Allocation
General Travel Allowance	– Base Allocation
	– Additional Allocation
Travelling Allowances for Recognised Office Holders	
Skills Development Allowance	

6.2 Electorate/Zone to Sydney Travel

6.2.1 Purpose and Operation of the Provisions

- (i) Members who are eligible to receive the Sydney Allowance qualify for return air travel journeys between their electorate or principal place of residence and Sydney.
- (ii) These entitlements are provided for the performance of parliamentary duties.
- (iii) All eligible Members shall receive 104 single economy class journeys per annum between electorate/zone and Sydney.

The Determination

- (iv) Where eligible, each of the below mentioned recognised office holders shall be entitled to the following additional electorate/zone to Sydney travel entitlements per annum:

Table 5: Electorate/Zone to Sydney Travel Entitlements – Additional Entitlements for Recognised Office Holders – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 (inclusive)	
Office holder	Electorate to Sydney travel entitlement
Minister who is Leader of Government Members in the Legislative Council	32 single journey entitlements
Minister who is Deputy Leader of Government Members in the Legislative Council	32 single journey entitlements
Senior Ministers, being Ministers not referred to above who are designated as Senior Ministers by the Premier	32 single journey entitlements
Other Ministers	32 single journey entitlements
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly	32 single journey entitlements
President of the Legislative Council	32 single journey entitlements
Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council	32 single journey entitlements
Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly	32 single journey entitlements
Leader in the Legislative Assembly (other than the Leader of the Opposition or the Deputy Leader of the Opposition) of a recognised political party not fewer than 10 members of which are members of the Legislative Assembly and of which not member is a Minister	32 single journey entitlements
Deputy President and Chair of Committees in the Legislative Council	32 single journey entitlements.
Assistant Speaker of the Legislative Assembly	32 single journey entitlements.
Assistant President in the Legislative Council	32 single journey entitlements.
Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly	32 single journey entitlements
Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council	16 single journey entitlements
Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly	16 single journey entitlements
Deputy Leader in the Legislative Assembly (other than the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Opposition) of a recognised political party not fewer than 10 members of which are members of the Legislative Assembly and of which no member is a Minister	16 single journey entitlements

The Determination

6.2.2 Conditions

- (i) All travel between the Member's electorate or principal place of residence and Sydney and return is restricted to economy class. The entitlement may be used to meet the cost of travel using a motor vehicle in lieu of air travel. Members will be reimbursed actual costs for rental vehicles and the Australian Taxation Office 'cents per kilometre' method for private vehicles.
- (ii) A minimum of one entitlement is required to be surrendered for each single journey; a return trip will require the surrender of at least two journey entitlements.
- (iii) Entitlements are not transferable between Members, or approved relatives, or Members' staff.
- (iv) Members may use the electorate to Sydney entitlements to defray part of the cost of intrastate and interstate parliamentary travel when such travel is via Sydney.
- (v) Members may charter a plane in lieu of travelling on commercial flights if travel is for electorate and/or parliamentary business and that sufficient entitlements based on the equivalent commercial cost of each person travelling are surrendered. The cost of Members' approved relatives travelling on the charter is to be met from the Member's General Travel Allowance. It is a condition of all air transport charters that the Member responsible for organising the charter obtains a passenger manifest from the charter operator and attaches it to the invoice when it is sent for payment.
- (vi) A Member's air transport booking for parliamentary duties and that of their spouse/approved relatives and staff are to be made by the Member with an appropriate transport provider.

The Determination

- (vi) Members will need to maintain records or other relevant evidence that clearly document parliamentary purpose and the occasions they travelled to Sydney in connection with their parliamentary duties. A copy of this documentation including airline boarding passes if travelling by commercial air is to be retained for subsequent review by internal and/or external auditors if required. Records are to be retained for a minimum period of two (2) years for the purpose of substantiating claims submitted to Parliament.

6.3 Communications Allowance

6.3.1 Purpose

The Communications Allowance is an annual budget provided to Members to meet the costs associated with communicating with their constituents including:

- paper-based and electronic communications including translation services;
- Software subscriptions;
- Advertising costs – print, digital ads, radio and television;
- Website and social media costs including design, hosting and domain name renewals;
- Email distribution services;
- Video conferencing software and subscriptions;
- Interactive voice responses and surveys;
- Engaging a consultant to devise, implement or manage a Member's electronic communications system and/or to use it to communicate on behalf of the Member; and

The Determination

- Other forms of communications and software approved by Parliament.

6.3.2 Entitlement

- (i) The Communications Allowance comprises a base annual allocation and an additional allocation for Members of the Legislative Assembly based on the number of enrolled voters.
- (ii) The base annual allocation for each electoral group or zone shall be as follows:

Table 6: Communications Allowance – Base Allocation – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 (inclusive)	
Member	Base Allocation
Legislative Assembly	\$22,120
Legislative Council	\$5,635

- (iii) The additional annual allocation for each Member of the Legislative Assembly shall be as follows:

Table 7: Communications Allowance – Additional Allocation		
Electoral District	Number of Electors¹⁶	Annual entitlement
1. Albury	61,858	\$95,261
2. Auburn	60,260	\$92,800
3. Badgerys Creek	64,464	\$99,275
4. Ballina	61,443	\$94,622
5. Balmain	59,152	\$91,094
6. Bankstown	61,467	\$94,659
7. Barwon	54,632	\$84,133
8. Bathurst	60,232	\$92,757
9. Bega	60,344	\$92,930
10. Blacktown	59,307	\$91,333
11. Blue Mountains	60,436	\$93,071
12. Cabramatta	63,333	\$97,533

¹⁶ Number of Electors as at 1 February 2025 on the NSW Electoral Commission website

The Determination

Table 7: Communications Allowance – Additional Allocation

Electoral District	Number of Electors ¹⁶	Annual entitlement
13. Camden	65,107	\$100,265
14. Campbelltown	60,298	\$92,859
15. Canterbury	58,849	\$90,627
16. Castle Hill	61,524	\$94,747
17. Cessnock	66,040	\$101,702
18. Charlestown	62,023	\$95,515
19. Clarence	59,383	\$91,450
20. Coffs Harbour	59,215	\$91,191
21. Coogee	58,928	\$90,749
22. Cootamundra	56,633	\$87,215
23. Cronulla	60,172	\$92,665
24. Davidson	60,694	\$93,469
25. Drummoyne	59,215	\$91,191
26. Dubbo	59,739	\$91,998
27. East Hills	61,772	\$95,129
28. Epping	59,864	\$92,191
29. Fairfield	63,774	\$98,212
30. Gosford	58,821	\$90,584
31. Goulburn	59,279	\$91,290
32. Granville	64,688	\$99,620
33. Hawkesbury	67,030	\$103,226
34. Heathcote	59,631	\$91,832
35. Heffron	53,700	\$82,698
36. Holsworthy	59,720	\$91,969
37. Hornsby	61,208	\$94,260
38. Keira	58,832	\$90,601
39. Kellyville	62,358	\$96,031
40. Kiama	61,976	\$95,443
41. Kogarah	60,328	\$92,905
42. Lake Macquarie	60,721	\$93,510
43. Lane Cove	59,898	\$92,243
44. Leppington	67,244	\$103,556
45. Lismore	58,494	\$90,081
46. Liverpool	62,331	\$95,990
47. Londonderry	67,671	\$104,213
48. Macquarie Fields	61,991	\$95,466

The Determination

Table 7: Communications Allowance – Additional Allocation

Electoral District	Number of Electors ¹⁶	Annual entitlement
49. Maitland	62,967	\$96,969
50. Manly	62,783	\$96,686
51. Maroubra	60,105	\$92,562
52. Miranda	61,094	\$94,085
53. Monaro	60,795	\$93,624
54. Mount Druitt	64,169	\$98,820
55. Murray	59,653	\$91,866
56. Myall Lakes	62,282	\$95,914
57. Newcastle	60,599	\$93,322
58. Newtown	59,061	\$90,954
59. North Shore	57,334	\$88,294
60. Northern Tablelands	58,844	\$90,620
61. Oatley	57,998	\$89,317
62. Orange	58,636	\$90,299
63. Oxley	64,481	\$99,301
64. Parramatta	60,053	\$92,482
65. Penrith	60,972	\$93,897
66. Pittwater	57,242	\$88,153
67. Port Macquarie	63,051	\$97,099
68. Port Stephens	61,883	\$95,300
69. Prospect	60,313	\$92,882
70. Riverstone	69,223	\$106,603
71. Rockdale	57,266	\$88,190
72. Ryde	62,496	\$96,244
73. Shellharbour	62,534	\$96,302
74. South Coast	61,849	\$95,247
75. Strathfield	58,774	\$90,512
76. Summer Hill	58,949	\$90,781
77. Swansea	62,032	\$95,529
78. Sydney	61,393	\$94,545
79. Tamworth	62,293	\$95,931
80. Terrigal	58,948	\$90,780
81. The Entrance	59,929	\$92,291
82. Tweed	59,953	\$92,328
83. Upper Hunter	63,613	\$97,964
84. Vacluse	59,230	\$91,214

The Determination

Table 7: Communications Allowance – Additional Allocation		
Electoral District	Number of Electors ¹⁶	Annual entitlement
85. Wagga Wagga	57,839	\$89,072
86. Wahrenonga	59,902	\$92,249
87. Wakehurst	59,500	\$91,630
88. Wallsend	60,835	\$93,686
89. Willoughby	61,138	\$94,153
90. Winston Hills	62,926	\$96,906
91. Wollondilly	63,132	\$97,223
92. Wollongong	59,311	\$91,339
93. Wyong	58,574	\$90,204

- (iv) Recognised Office Holders receive an additional loading on the Communications Allowance Base Allocation in accordance with *Table 10 Recognised Office Holder and Other Member Additional Entitlements -1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026* (inclusive).

6.3.3 Carry over/forfeiture of entitlement

End of each financial year (within 4-year parliamentary term):

Base Allocation: Unexpended amounts not exceeding the maximum of the annual allocation can be carried forward.

End of parliamentary term/earlier dissolution of LA:

Base Allocation and Additional Allocations: Remaining balances are forfeited

6.3.4 Special Conditions

- (i) Upon the gazettal of new electoral districts following an electoral redistribution (undertaken pursuant to s27(1)(c) of the *Constitution Act 1902*), Members of the Legislative Assembly may use their Communications Allowance to communicate with prospective constituents from neighbouring electorates who at the time of

The Determination

the next election following the gazettal of the new electoral districts will become constituents of the Member's electorate.

- (ii) When an electoral redistribution results in the abolition or renaming of an electorate, that Member may communicate with prospective constituents in a new or renamed electorate, subject to the new or renamed electorate comprising the majority of the constituents who would have resided in the Member's former electorate prior to the gazettal of the new electoral districts.

6.3.5 Conditions

- (i) Members will receive a monthly report containing expenditure and balance of their account.
- (ii) All procurement of services will be in accordance with the Parliament's Procurement and Contract Management Framework.
- (iii) No supplementation to the allocation will be considered. Where funds are exhausted, any additional costs may be met from unexpended funds from the Member's General Travel Allowance or from the Member's Electoral Allowance. The conditions that apply to the use of the Communications Allowance apply when using funds from the General Travel Allowance for the purpose of producing or sending communications. A Member may not use the General Travel Allowance to fund the kind of communications that would normally be funded from the Communications Allowance, during the blackout period, from 26 January in an election year until the election day.
- (iv) Members may use the Communications Allowance for the purpose of communicating with constituents using a range of communication services in accordance with Parliament's administrative guidelines.

The Determination

- (v) Members are encouraged to submit material they are proposing to print or produce using the Communications Allowance to the Department of Parliamentary Services for a pre-production assessment.
- (vi) Communications with constituents/prospective constituents will be limited to matters affecting the Member's electorate.
- (viii) Members will not be permitted to use their Communications Allowance for the production and distribution of any publication or communications (paper based or electronic) intended for distribution either electronically, by mail, letterbox drop, newspaper supplement/insert or handout during the period from 26 January in a State election year to the election date or beyond the issue of the writ for a by-election within an electorate for which a by-election is being held. This includes all written, drawn or pictorial matter, including advertisements, but not general office correspondence as defined by Parliament's administrative guidelines.
- (ix) Members will not be permitted to use the Communications Allowance for purchasing, producing, contributing towards the cost of producing and distributing promotional material including but not limited to fridge magnets, calendars, wall planners, rainfall/tide charts, notepads, shopping lists, bowling scorecards, pens, key rings, balloons, clothing etc.
- (x) Members are required to maintain records that clearly document the costs claimed against the Communications Allowance budget. Records are to be retained for a minimum period of two (2) years for the purpose of substantiating claims submitted to Parliament.

6.4 General Travel Allowance

The Determination

6.4.1 Purpose

The General Travel Allowance is provided to Members to meet all travel costs associated with their parliamentary or official duties within Australia.

6.4.2 Entitlement

- (i) The General Travel Allowance comprises a base annual allocation for Members of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council and an additional allocation for Members of specified electoral groups.
- (ii) The annual base allocation and additional allocation for each electoral group/zone shall be as follows:

Table 8: General Travel Allowance – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026			
Electoral Group/Zone	Base Allocation	Additional Allocation	Total General Travel Allowance
Legislative Assembly			
Group 1	\$7,515		\$7,515
Group 2	\$11,295		\$11,295
Group 3	\$15,095		\$15,095
Group 4	\$15,095		\$15,095
Group 5 (and Port Macquarie)	\$15,095	\$12,735	\$27,830
Group 6	\$18,860	\$20,780	\$39,640
Group 7	\$18,860	\$38,435	\$57,295
Group 8	\$43,315	\$76,305	\$119,620
Legislative Council			
Zone 1	\$7,515		\$7,515
Zone 2	\$7,515		\$7,515
Zone 3	\$18,795		\$18,795

The Determination

- (iii) Recognised Office Holders receive an additional loading on the General Travel Allowance - Base Allocation in accordance with *Table 10 Recognised Office Holder and Other Member Additional Entitlements – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 (inclusive)*.

6.4.3 Carry over/forfeiture of entitlement

End of each financial year (within 4-year parliamentary term):	Base Allocation: Unexpended amounts not exceeding the maximum of the annual allocation can be carried forward Additional Allocations: Unexpended amounts are forfeited
End of parliamentary term/earlier dissolution of LA:	Base Allocation and Additional Allocations: Remaining balances are forfeited

6.4.4 Conditions

- (i) A Member may use the General Travel Allowance to travel to any place in Australia, subject to the following requirements:
- (a) Travel must be for parliamentary or electorate duties.
 - (b) The cost of travel must be reasonable.
 - (c) There must be sufficient funds in the Member's Account to pay for the expenses involved at the time of the making of reservations (if applicable) or incurring the expense.
- (ii) A Member may use the General Travel Allowance for the following modes of transport:

The Determination

- (a) Private vehicles and private caravans (to be reimbursed by the Australian Tax Office 'cents per kilometre' method).
- (b) Car-with-driver transport (hire cars, taxi transport, regulated car sharing services).
- (c) Self-drive hire cars (reimbursement to include insurance excess reduction and fuel costs).
- (d) Air transport (including charter transport).
- (e) Public transport costs (bus, train, ferry, light rail).
- (iii) A Member who incurs parking costs (at either a commercial parking station or a parking meter) may be reimbursed these costs from the General Travel Allowance when the travel relates to attending a meeting or event.
- (iv) It is a condition of all air transport charters that the Member responsible for organising the charter obtains a passenger manifest from the charter operator and attaches it to the invoice when it is submitted for payment to the Parliament. Only the cost of the Member's approved relatives or Member of staff accompanying the Member may be met for charter transport costs.
- (v) The Member for Port Macquarie shall receive a General Travel Allowance - Additional Allocation commensurate with that provided to Members located in electoral Group 5 and shall include costs associated with up to four return trips to Lord Howe Island per year, flying from Port Macquarie or from Sydney subject to available flights.
- (vi) A Member representing the Electorate of Murray and a Member representing the Electorate of Barwon who flies his/her own aircraft, may claim

The Determination

reimbursement against this allowance for the cost of fuel, landing fees and one annual service.

- (vii) All travel costs associated with Members' staff travel and with the travel of staff of Recognised Office Holders provided for by this Determination, may be met from this entitlement. Such travel shall be paid in accordance with the *Members' Staff Conditions of Employment – Determination of the Presiding Officers*.
- (viii) All associated travel expenses for Members and Members' staff including registration costs for conferences, conventions, symposiums, forums or similar and associated caravan, camping and other accommodation and meal costs approved by the Parliament shall be met from this entitlement. Such costs shall however exclude professional development for Members, overseas travel, electorate to Sydney travel and costs met from the Sydney Allowance.
- (ix) Members and their approved relatives, when travelling in connection with the Member's parliamentary duties, may claim reasonable actual accommodation and meal expenses from the Member's General Travel Allowance. The payment of actual travelling expenses will be paid subject to the production of tax invoices/receipts. The reimbursement of these expenses may not exceed the travel allowance rates as determined for Members in *Table 9: Travel Allowances – Indicative Upper Limits for Members*.

Table 9: Travelling Allowances Indicative Upper Limits for Members – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 (inclusive)		
Destinations	Amount	Where no overnight stay is required
Adelaide	\$431.20	Actual reasonable meal expenses
Brisbane	\$477.20	
Canberra	\$466.20	
Darwin	\$513.20	
Hobart	\$455.20	
Melbourne	\$485.20	

The Determination

Table 9: Travelling Allowances Indicative Upper Limits for Members – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 (inclusive)		
Destinations	Amount	Where no overnight stay is required
Perth	\$485.20	
Other areas	\$427.20	

- (x) The entitlement may not be used to meet or defray the cost of any individual, office holder or other party not included in these conditions.
- (xi) Some Recognised Office Holders are provided with non-parliamentary funded budgets to meet the costs of travel which they undertake in connection with the performance of the duties of those offices. While they must use those funds when travelling to perform the functions of those offices, when travelling to perform their other parliamentary duties, including their electorate duties, they may use their general travel allowance.
- (xii) Members should ensure that records are maintained that clearly document each occasion and the parliamentary purpose of any travel met from this entitlement for stays in Sydney or other locations when travelling in connection with the Member's parliamentary duties. Such documentation including airline boarding passes if applicable is to be retained for subsequent review by internal and external auditors if required. Records are to be retained for a minimum period of two (2) years for the purpose of substantiating claims submitted to Parliament.
- (xiii) A Member and his or her approved relatives may travel together or separately in connection with attendance at a function in the course of Parliamentary duties. Dependent children may only travel in the company of the Member or other approved relative.

The Determination

- (xiv) Members undertaking training using the Skills Development Allowance may use the General Travel Allowance to meet their travel costs. Other staff training costs are to be met by the Legislature.
- (xv) Where funds are exhausted, any additional costs may be met from unexpended funds from the Member's Communications Allowance or from the Member's Electoral Allowance. The conditions that apply to the use of the General Travel Allowance apply when using funds from the Communications Allowance to meet travel costs.

6.5 Recognised Office Holder Additional Entitlements

6.5.1 Additional loadings

Additional loadings for Recognised Office Holders and Members listed below shall be as follows:

Table 10: Recognised Office Holder Additional Entitlements – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 (inclusive)		
Recognised Office Holder	General Travel Allowance Base Allocation	Communications Allowance Base Allocation
President of the Legislative Council	30%	175%
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly	30%	55%
Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly	20%	140%
Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council		175%
Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council	10%	15%

The Determination

Table 10: Recognised Office Holder Additional Entitlements – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 (inclusive)		
Recognised Office Holder	General Travel Allowance Base Allocation	Communications Allowance Base Allocation
Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly	10%	
Government Whip in the Legislative Council		15%
Opposition Whip in the Legislative Council		15%
Deputy Opposition Whip in the Legislative Council		15%
Leader in the Legislative Assembly (other than the Leader of the Opposition or the Deputy Leader of the Opposition) of a recognised political party not fewer than 10 members of which are members of the Legislative Assembly and of which not member is a Minister	15%	
Deputy Leader in the Legislative Assembly (other than the Leader of the Opposition or the Deputy Leader of the Opposition) of a recognised political party not fewer than 10 members of which are members of the Legislative Assembly and of which no member is a Minister	10%	
Deputy Leader in the Legislative Council (other than the Leader of the Opposition or the Deputy Leader of the Opposition) of a recognised political party not fewer than 9 members of which are members of the Legislative Council and of which no member is a Minister	10%	

The Determination

6.5.2 Carry over/forfeiture of entitlement

**End of each financial
year (within 4 year
parliamentary term):**

Balance of loadings forfeited

**End of parliamentary
term/earlier dissolution
of LA:**

Balance of loadings forfeited

6.5.3 Conditions

The following conditions shall apply in respect of this allowance:

- (i) Recognised Office Holders referred to in Table 10: Recognised Office Holder and Other Member Additional Entitlements may receive this additional entitlement for only one office; that office being the office which attracts the greater level of entitlement.
- (ii) These entitlements, as they apply to Recognised Office Holders, are to be available only for Recognised Office Holder duties.
- (iii) Where entitlements formerly provided for the Recognised Office Holder's approved relatives these have been included in the allocation.
- (iv) Where an entitlement is followed by (A) or (C) it applies only to the Office Holder in either the Assembly or the Council.

6.6 Skills Development Allowance

6.6.1 Purpose

The Skills Development Allowance is provided to Members and Members' staff for training that is directly relevant to the role of Members and Members' staff, including but not limited to:

The Determination

- media skills training;
- public speaking and voice coaching;
- community and social media engagement;
- use of graphic design software
- use of video editing software;
- website and social media design and maintenance;
- writing skills for reports and media releases; and
- conflict resolution and dealing with difficult constituents.

6.6.2 Entitlement

The Skills Development Allowance comprises an annual allocation for Members of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council and staff members and shall be as follows:

Table 11: Skills Development Allowance – 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 (inclusive)	
Member/Members' Staff	Annual entitlement
Members of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council	\$1,795
Members' staff (each full-time equivalent position)	\$600

6.6.3 Carry over/forfeiture of entitlement

End of each financial year (within 4 year parliamentary term):

Unexpended amounts not exceeding the maximum of the annual allocation can be carried forward

End of parliamentary term/earlier dissolution of LA:

Balance of allowances forfeited

The Determination

6.6.4 Conditions

The following conditions shall apply in respect of this allowance:

- (i) Entitlements are not transferable between Members.
- (ii) Entitlements may be transferred from Members to staff and between staff in the same office subject to the expenditure not exceeding the total budget allocation provided to a Member for skills training. Members may not however use training funds available to staff to meet their own training needs.
- (iii) As a general principle, the Member should ensure that the training requirements of staff members are considered equitably. Where a staff member does not get an opportunity to use the allowance during one financial year, they should where possible, be given priority in the subsequent year.
- (iv) Members should prioritise the training of full-time and part-time staff members. Training from the allowance should only be provided to short term temporary staff members if resources remain from the allocation of training to full-time and part-time staff members.
- (v) No supplementation to the allocation will be considered.
- (vi) All travel expenses for Members and Members' staff and associated accommodation and meal costs to attend training under the Skills Development Allowance may be met from the General Travel Allowance subject to Parliament's administrative guidelines. Such travel for Members' staff shall be paid in accordance with the *Members' Staff Conditions of Employment – Determination of the Presiding Officers*.
- (vii) Members are required to maintain records that clearly document the costs claimed against the Staff Development allocation. Records are to be retained for

The Determination

a minimum period of two (2) years for the purpose of substantiating claims submitted to Parliament.

The Determination

7. Additional Entitlements/Resources

7.1 Equipment, Services and Facilities

Members of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council shall be provided by the Parliament with the equipment, services and facilities necessary to perform their parliamentary duties as follows:

7.1.1 All Members shall receive at Parliament House, Sydney, a fitted out, equipped and maintained office.

7.1.2 Each Member of the Legislative Assembly shall receive a suitably located, fitted out, equipped and maintained Electorate Office to an appropriate standard which must have regard to safety requirements.

- (i) The Member for Barwon shall be provided with an additional two electorate offices (a total of three).
- (ii) The Member for Murray shall be provided with one additional electorate office (a total of two).
- (iii) The Member for Cootamundra shall be provided with one additional electorate office (a total of two).
- (iv) The Member for Northern Tablelands shall be provided with one additional electorate office (a total of two).

7.1.3 In electorates with two or more electoral offices, the Parliament will assist Members who wish to establish a satellite office to operate on up to two days per week, to identify suitably located premises, co-located with other Government offices, which it will fit out and equip. Such an office will be staffed by:

The Determination

- (i) existing staff in electorates with more than two electoral offices; and
- (ii) an additional staff member to be employed up to two days per week in electorates with two electoral offices.

7.2 Staff

Section 18 of the *Members of Parliament Staff Act 2013* provides for the number of staff to be determined by the Tribunal. The number of staff allocated to Members and Office Holders as they appear in Schedule 1 of the Act is as follows:

- (i) Each Member of the Legislative Assembly shall be entitled to three staff members employed at each electorate office.
- (ii) Each Member of the Legislative Assembly who is elected as an Independent Member, shall be entitled to four staff members employed in each electorate office, until the 2027 state election. Effective from the 2027 state election each Member elected as an Independent Member of the Legislative Assembly shall be entitled to one additional member of staff.
- (iii) Each Member of the Legislative Assembly, who is elected as a crossbench member, shall be entitled to one additional staff member.
- (iv) Each Member of the Legislative Council shall be entitled to one staff member.
- (v) Each Member of the Legislative Council who is elected as a cross bench Member shall be entitled to two staff members.
- (vi) The Parliament will provide relief arrangements to Members of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council when any staff member is absent on approved leave on any full working day. Parliament will be fully funded to provide relief arrangements to comply with this condition.

The Determination

- (vii) Relief arrangements and minimum staffing requirements will be provided in accordance with the provisions set out in the *Members' Staff Conditions of Employment Determination of the Presiding Officers*.
- (viii) The Whip of a recognised party with 10 or more members in the Legislative Assembly (other than the Government or Opposition Whip) shall be entitled to one staff member.
- (ix) The Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council and Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council shall be entitled to one staff member each.
- (x) Nothing in this determination removes from the employer of staff other obligations arising under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*. *Safety Act 2011*.

7.2.1 Emergency Relief Staff

- (i) Members are entitled to make a request to the Chief Executive, Department of Parliamentary Services for short term staffing assistance
 - (a) due to a temporary increase in constituent demand arising from an emergency or public health order such as border closures during a pandemic or as a result of a natural disaster or declared emergency pursuant to s 44 of the Rural Fires Act 1997 and the aftermath of such incidents.
 - (b) In order to respond to a work health and safety issue including in relation to security.
 - (c) on a temporary basis to permit handover and training where required on departure of staff to ensure the smooth running of the Members' office.

The Determination

The Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal



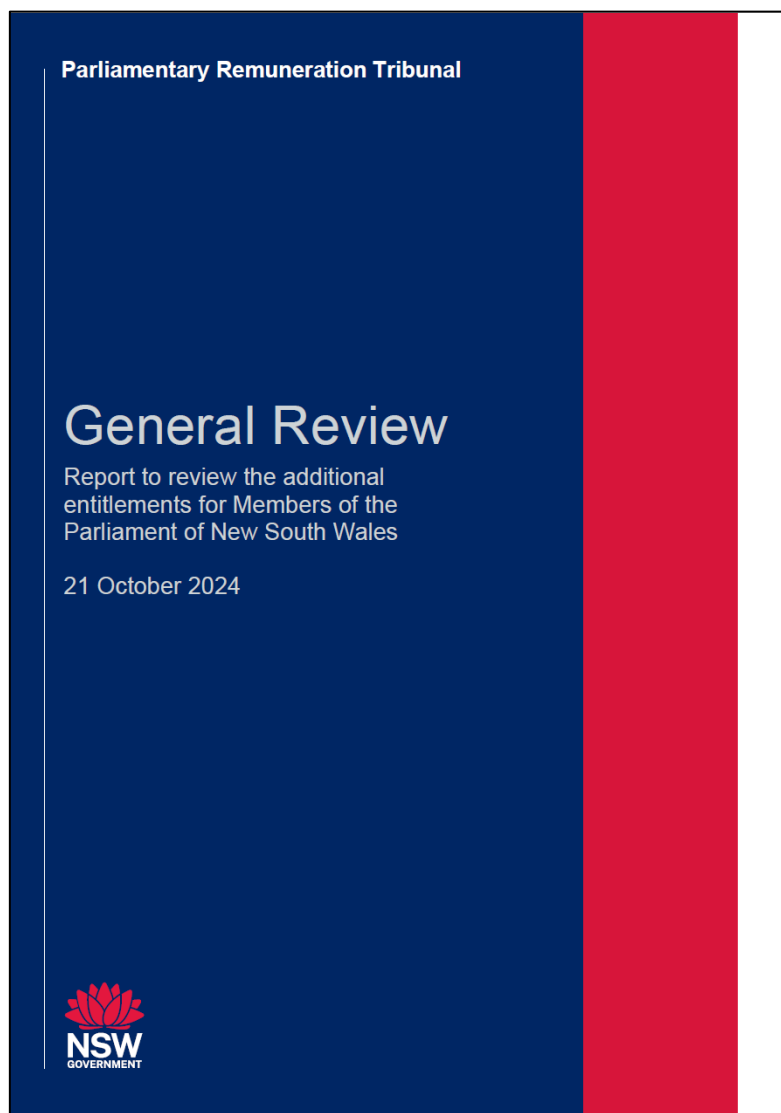
Hon A/Justice Schmidt AM
Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal

The Hon Acting Justice M Schmidt
Dated: 22 July 2025

Appendices

Appendix 1 – General Review – Report to review the additional entitlements for Members of the Parliament of New South Wales

Attached as a separate document, on the NSW Remuneration Tribunal's website, or equivalent.



Appendices

Appendix 2 – NSW Treasury Advice regarding

NSW Treasury



NSW Government's Fiscal Position and Outlook
 In support of the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal's
 Annual Review 2025

Tuesday, 29 April 2025

Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report outlines the NSW Government's fiscal strategy, position and outlook based on the 2024-25 Half-Yearly Review for the General Government Sector.
- 1.2. The NSW Government is committed to achieving a sustainable fiscal position¹. Two fiscal principles guiding the State's fiscal strategy in the 2024-25 NSW Half-Yearly Review are:
 - 1.2.1. Returning to a sustainable operating position (which can be measured by returning to a Budget Result surplus)
 - 1.2.2. Returning to and maintaining a sustainable debt position (which can be measured by reducing the State's cash deficits to limit the increases in the State's gross debt and interest expenses, and maintaining a strong credit rating).
- 1.3. Maintaining a sustainable operating and debt position ensures the Government can respond effectively (and in a cost-efficient manner) to future economic and fiscal shocks.
- 1.4. The 2024-25 NSW Half-Yearly Review projects material Budget Result deficits and cash deficits, which are contributing to increasing debt levels and interest expenses (see Tables B1, B2 and B3 on pages 38 to 42 of the 2024-25 Half-Yearly Review). This position is placing fiscal pressure on the State's bond yields and credit rating.
- 1.5. Given the current fiscal position, any additional expenditure, not offset by savings or additional revenue, places further fiscal pressure on the State's fiscal strategy by worsening the Budget Result, the State's cash deficit, gross debt and interest expenses, and the State's debt burden and interest burden as assessed by credit rating agencies.

Fiscal Strategy, Position and Outlook

Fiscal stability and the Government's fiscal strategy

- 3.1. Manageable levels of debt and sufficient fiscal buffers can help the Government better manage future economic challenges and shocks. This in turn supports ongoing, stable delivery of essential services to citizens.
- 2.1. Both the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the IMF have highlighted the importance of government debt management as:

¹ Fiscal sustainability is the ability of a government to maintain public finances at a credible and serviceable position over the long term (OECD 2013). This allows governments to sustain services provided to their citizens.

1

Appendices

- 2.1.1. stronger efforts to contain spending, enhance revenues, and increase growth would improve debt sustainability and resilience (OECD 2024a),
- 2.1.2. without (remedial fiscal) action, future debt burdens will rise significantly as borrowing costs increase (OECD 2024a),
- 2.1.3. market access is more favourable when the private sector trusts the government's commitment to fiscal sustainability, as this increases creditworthiness, and
- 2.1.4. commitment to fiscal discipline and clear communication of policy priorities, backed by fiscal transparency, can reduce borrowing costs (IMF 2021).
- 2.2. The NSW Government is committed to achieving a sustainable fiscal position. The two fiscal principles guiding the State's fiscal strategy, as included in the 2024-25 NSW Half-Yearly Review are as follows:
 - 2.2.1. Returning to a sustainable operating position
 - 2.2.2. Returning to and maintaining a sustainable debt position.

The NSW Government's fiscal position and outlook

- 2.3. The fiscal position and outlook are challenging, with large Budget Result deficits and cash deficits contributing to increasing debt at the same time as interest rates (or the cost of borrowing) have increased.

Budget Result

- 2.4. The Budget Result has been in deficit since 2019-20. The 2024-25 Half-Yearly Review projects operating deficits over the forward estimates to 2027-28, with the operating deficit projected to reduce to \$1.3 billion by 2027-28 (0.1 per cent of GSP).

Employee Expenses

- 2.5. The NSW Government is the largest single employer across New South Wales. Employee expenses (including superannuation) are on average around 45 per cent of General Government expenditure across the four years from 2024-25 to 2027-28 and are expected to grow from \$54.5 billion in 2024-25 to \$59.2 billion by 2027-28.
- 2.6. The 2024-25 NSW Half-Yearly Review includes the financial impact of the Government's approved bargaining parameters for industrial instruments due for renewal (NSW Treasury 2024b)².
- 2.7. Factors that can impact the employee expense estimates are final approved wage agreements and determinations, determinations by the Industrial Relations Commission, Industrial Relations Court or Fair Work Commission, future wage policies, productivity enhancing reforms, new initiatives, and other policy or parameter changes (NSW Treasury 2024b).

Cash Deficits

- 2.8. Over the four years to 2027-28, the 2024-25 NSW Half-Yearly Review projects a total General Government Cash Deficit of \$51.5 billion. The cash deficit is primarily driven by the State's infrastructure program (\$86.1 billion in General Government capital expenditure over the four years to 2027-28) and a weakened operating position due to high levels of expenses and lower average revenue growth.

² The 2024-25 Budget contains the impact of the NSW Government's updated wages offer to employees dated 20 May 2024, <https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/essential-services-pay-offer>.

Appendices

- 2.9. As the State is currently running large cash deficits, if the Government seeks to maintain existing services in the absence of significant revenue uplift, any increases in expenses, including additional wage-related expenses, will require further borrowings. As a result, this will increase gross debt, interest expenses, and the State's debt and interest burdens as assessed by Moody's.

Levels of Gross Debt and Interest Expenses

- 2.10. Elevated levels of expenses and debt-funded infrastructure have deteriorated the State's overall debt position. General Government gross debt³ is projected to increase to \$199.9 billion by June 2028.
- 2.11. General Government interest expenses have risen from \$2.1 billion in 2019-20 (or 2.6 per cent of revenue) to \$6.0 billion in 2023-24 (or 5.5 per cent of revenue). Overall, the General Government Sector is projecting to pay a total of \$32.0 billion in interest expenses over the four years from 2024-25 to 2027-28.
- 2.12. As interest expenses are not a discretionary expense (i.e., the State must pay them to avoid defaulting on its debt obligations), the higher the proportion of interest expenses to revenue, the less revenue the Government has to fund service delivery and programs.

Credit Rating Implications

- 2.13. Rising debt levels and interest expenses have credit rating implications for the State by increasing the State's debt burden⁴ and interest burden⁵.
- 2.14. S&P downgraded NSW's credit rating from AAA to AA+ in December 2020 due to operating deficits and rising debt. On 27 November 2024, S&P Global reaffirmed the State's AA+ credit rating and revised the rating outlook from stable to negative, because of a delayed improvement in budgetary performance "due to strong government spending" (S&P Global 2024a), of which employee expenses are a risk. The negative outlook reflects S&P's view that the State's financial management could weaken within the next two years.
- 2.15. NSW maintains a Aaa credit rating with Moody's and a AAA credit rating with Fitch, with the State's 2023 and 2024 credit opinions highlighting the State's operating deficits and increasing debt levels as credit challenges or risks. Following a periodic review, on 28 March 2025 Moody's reaffirmed the State's triple A credit rating. However, Moody's indicated that wages represent a risk to the State in its February 2025 Sector Comment – "Wage negotiations add to spending risks" (Moody's 2025).
- 2.16. Section 3 (1) of the *Fiscal Responsibility Act 2012* indicates that the object of the Act is to maintain the AAA rating of the State of New South Wales.

³ Gross debt is the sum of deposits held, advances received, borrowings at amortised costs, and borrowings and derivatives at fair value. High levels of gross debt can impose a call on future revenue flows to service that debt (e.g. interest expenses) (NSW Treasury 2024b).

⁴ Debt burden is a credit rating metric used by Moody's. It is calculated as the Total State Debt (less the balance of the NSW Generations Fund) divided by Non-Financial Public Sector revenues. Moody's indicates that debt burden provides an important indication of regional and local government's (RLG) debt repayment capacity based on its operating revenue (Moody's 2024).

⁵ Interest burden is a credit metric used by Moody's. It is calculated as Non-Financial Public Sector interest payments divided by Non-Financial Public Sector revenues (Moody's 2024).

Appendices

Likely effect of the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal's proposed increase on the Government's fiscal position and outlook

- 3.2. The Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal ("the Tribunal") is considering the appropriate basic salary increase for Members of Parliament as part of the 2025 annual review.
- 3.3. The Tribunal has indicated in correspondence to the Premier that an increase of 4 per cent is being considered. This is 1 per cent above what has been provided for in the 2024-25 Budget, as the 4 per cent under consideration does not include the legislated increase to the minimum rate of superannuation scheduled from 1 July 2025.
- 3.4. The estimated cost would be \$0.5 million in 2025-26 and \$2.1 million over the four years to 2028-29.
- 3.5. The cost of implementing the basic salary increase under consideration would worsen the Budget Result deficit and increase the gross debt by \$2.3 million over the four years to 2028-29. This amount includes:
 - 3.5.1. \$2.1 million increase in employee expenses, and
 - 3.5.2. \$0.2 million increase in interest expenses (assuming additional expenses are debt-funded, as the NSW Budget is currently running large cash deficits).
- 3.6. The effect of the making of the proposed determination on the Government's fiscal position and outlook is immaterial.

References

1. International Monetary Fund, 2021, *Strengthening the Credibility of Public Finances*. Washington DC.
2. Moody's Ratings, 2024, *Rating Methodology*, Moody's, accessed 17 February 2025, <<https://www.moodys.com>>.
3. Moody's Ratings, 2025, *Midyear state budgets highlight rising fiscal strain as challenges to governance emerge*, Sector Comment, Moody's, accessed 17 February 2025, <<https://www.moodys.com>>.
4. NSW Treasury, 2021, *2021-22 NSW Intergenerational Report*, accessed 17 February 2025, <<https://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au>>.
5. NSW Legislation, *Fiscal Responsibility Act 2012 No 58*, accessed 30 April 2025.
6. NSW Treasury 2024a, *Budget Paper No. 1 - Budget Statement*, 2024-25 NSW Budget Papers.
7. NSW Treasury 2024b, *How to Read the Budget Papers*, 2024-25 NSW Budget Papers.
8. NSW Treasury 2024c, *2024-25 Half-Yearly Review*, *NSW Budget*.
9. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2013, *Government at a Glance 2013*, OECD Publishing.
10. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2024a, *OECD Economic Outlook, Volume 2024 Issue 1: An unfolding recovery*, OECD Publishing, Paris.
11. S&P Global, 2024, *New South Wales Outlook Revised To Negative On Delayed Improvement In Budgetary Performance; 'AA+/A-1+' Ratings Affirmed*, Ratings Direct, accessed 17 February 2025, <<https://www.capitaliq.spglobal.com>>.

Appendices

Appendix 3 – Submission of the Secretary of NSW Treasury

In a letter dated 25 June 2025 the Secretary of NSW Treasury, Mr Michael Coutts-Trotter provided the following statement in respect to the financial implications of the Determination pursuant to s12A of the Act.

