PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL AND STUDY ALLOWANCE

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL REPORT (FOR THE 42ND PARLIAMENT)

MEMBER: Hon Nick Goiran MLC

ELECTORATE: Western Australia

In accordance with Part 6 of this Determination, within 90 days of expending moneys for international expenses using the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance, Members must submit to the Tribunal:

- *a report including details of:*
  - *how moneys were expended; and*
  - *the expected benefit to the State from the expenditure.*
- *certification that:*
  - *use of moneys has complied with principles set out in section 1.6; and*
  - *expenses related to the Member's Parliamentary business.*

Members must submit the certification and report to submissions@sat.wa.gov.au

Reports provided by Members will be published on the Tribunal's website.

PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL AND STUDY ALLOWANCE (PART 6 OF DETERMINATION)	
INTERNATIONAL EXPENSES ONLY	
TRAVEL DATES: 19/09/2025 – 05/10/2025	
DESTINATIONS VISITED: Queensland, Italy and United Kingdom	
ALLOWANCE CLAIMED:	**$5,394.30**
REPORTED EXPENDITURE:	
• Airfares	$3,669.30
• Fees for conferences or short courses	$1,725.00
• Accommodation	-
○ Number of nights	-
• Incidentals	-
• Other (please identify)	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**$5,394.30**
TOTAL SURPLUS/DEFICIT	$0

EXPECTED BENEFIT TO THE STATE FROM THE EXPENDITURE

The rationale for the travel was a mixture of duties in my capacities as Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, Shadow Attorney General and Shadow Minister for Child Protection.

For example, I was invited as Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council to speak at CPAC Australia 2025 in Queensland. Thereafter, I was as Shadow Attorney General a guest speaker at the Pan Europe Asia Conference 2025 in Italy. The travel concluded with conferral as Shadow Minister for Child Protection with advocacy group Stop Surrogacy Now UK.

Travel was required to attend these two conferences because I had been requested to present.

Similar to the benefits derived from the travel of former Shadow Attorney Generals during their term/s of service, it is important that the alternative first law officer of our State is continuously updated on law reform in other jurisdictions together with the challenges and consequences that arise from changes to the law.

The community driver to undertake this travel was in harmony with that of predecessors when they were Shadow Attorney General in that when injustice affects one part of our society, it affects us all.

At both conferences, I delivered presentations based on a paper I co-authored entitled "Freedom of Association Laws in Western Australia – A Case Study in Government Inconsistency". The paper (which I attach below) argues that the Western Australian Government's approach misapplies the principle of freedom of association. It undermines its integrity by extending it where it should not apply, i.e. to serious offenders exploiting union cover. Meanwhile it contracts the principle where it should be defended most vigorously, i.e. among law-abiding parents and faith communities exercising their right to educate children in line with their beliefs. This distortion does not arise from a good faith balance between competing rights. It arises from the unequal treatment of associations depending on political context.

Meanwhile, both conferences afforded professional development opportunities, particularly relevant to the shadow Attorney General portfolio, with special highlights including but not limited to presentations and deliberations on:

1. Family law
2. The Use of Artificial Intelligence
3. Children's Criminal Law
4. Discrimination Law
5. Case Law from the European Court of Human Rights
6. Medical Law
7. Construction Law
8. Estate Law
9. Evidence Law
10. Appellate Law

The outcome of this travel is consistent with that of my predecessors: the continuing professional development of the Opposition's most senior legally qualified parliamentarian.

Freedom of Association Laws in Western Australia – A Case Study in Government Inconsistency[1]

Hon. Nick Goiran MLC[2], Mrs Bianca Cobby[3]

I. Introduction

1.1 Freedom of association is one of the fundamental freedoms in a modern democracy. It is closely linked with other fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of speech and freedom of religion. As a collection of freedoms they enable individuals to assemble to pursue shared interests, whether for social, cultural, political, religious or economic purposes.

1.2 Pursuant to international human rights law, Article 22 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (***ICCPR***) (to which Australia is a party) enshrines freedom of association as a right, subject only to narrow limitations necessary in a democratic society. The purpose of this right is clear. It is designed to protect citizens as they gather in pursuit of lawful purposes.

1.3 Because freedom of association is inherent to so many aspects of life in a modern democracy, governments must apply it consistently and transparently. It is, of course, even in international law not an absolute right. It can be limited to prevent crime or protect the rights of others, but any limit must be necessary, proportionate, and non-discriminatory. Consistency matters. Yet the Western

[1] The authors would like to thank Tony Proposch for reviewing this article. Any errors or omissions are those of the authors.
[2] LLB, B Com. Shadow Attorney General. Member of the Legislative Council of Western Australia.
[3] LLB.

Australian Government's approach to this freedom in recent years has been inconsistent, even hypocritical.

1.4 On the one hand, the WA Government has enacted the *Criminal Law (Unlawful Consorting and Prohibited Insignia) Act 2021* (WA) (***Anti-Consorting Act***), rightly seeking to disrupt criminal networks from assembling. However, with its next pen stroke it inserted into that very law an extraordinary defence that allows consorting when it occurs under the cover of union activity. That defence is not grounded in necessity like family life, health care, education, legal advice, or compliance with orders.

1.5 On the other hand, that same Government has expressed an intention to restrict freedom of association for parents and staff at faith-based schools by threatening to remove or significantly narrow section 73 of the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* (WA) (***Equal Opportunity Act***), a longstanding exemption that allows such schools to preference the employment of staff who uphold and live out their ethos. That protection gives practical effect to parental rights under Article 18(4) of the *ICCPR* and to the freedom of faith-based communities to associate for education in accordance with their convictions.

1.6 This paper argues that the Western Australian Government's approach misapplies the principle of freedom of association. It undermines its integrity by extending it where it should not apply, i.e. to serious offenders exploiting union cover. Meanwhile it contracts the principle where it should be defended most vigorously, i.e. among law-abiding parents and faith communities exercising their right to educate children in line with their beliefs. This distortion does not arise

from a good faith balance between competing rights. It arises from the unequal treatment of associations depending on political context.

1.7 If a government distorts freedom of association in contexts that help powerful allies while contracting it for peaceful communities it disfavours, public trust erodes and the rule of law suffers.

II. The Principle of Freedom of Association

2.1 Freedom of association is one amongst the collection of fundamental freedoms that underpin the proper functioning of a democratic society. This freedom enables individuals to assemble together, form groups, pursue collective objectives, and create institutions independent of the State.

2.2 The importance of voluntary associations has long been advocated for within the liberal political tradition. John Locke argued that individuals enter society not only to secure their individual rights but to form associations that promote shared goods and mutual protection.[4] John Stuart Mill also emphasised that the liberty of individuals to unite for lawful purposes is a cornerstone of a free society, and that interference with such associations is only justified where harm to others can be demonstrated.[5] Centuries later, these insights remain profoundly relevant in jurisdictions such as Australia where parliamentary democracy relies upon citizens assembling for political, industrial, religious, and cultural purposes.

2.3 Catholic social teaching has also strongly defended this freedom. In *Rerum Novarum* (1891), Pope Leo XIII affirmed freedom of association as a natural right, warning that any State which sought to prohibit associations would contradict its own foundations. He upheld the legitimacy of workers' unions and private associations and insisted that such bodies could only be suppressed by public

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[4] John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (first published 1689, Cambridge University Press rev ed, 1960) bk II, §§87–89; John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (translated by William Popple, 1689) 32 https://historyofeconomicthought.mcmaster.ca/locke/toleration.pdf.

[5] John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (John W Parker and Son, 1859) ch I https://www.gutenberg.org/files/34901/34901-h/34901-h.htm.

authority in certain circumstances with the goal to maintain peace and good order. Of note is the following passage:

> Private societies, then, although they exist within the body politic, and are severally part of the commonwealth, cannot nevertheless be absolutely, and as such, prohibited by public authority. For, to enter into a "society" of this kind is the natural right of man; and the State has for its office to protect natural rights, not to destroy them; and, if it forbid its citizens to form associations, it contradicts the very principle of its own existence, for both they and it exist in virtue of the like principle, namely, the natural tendency of man to dwell in society.[6]

2.4 This freedom is also contemporarily reaffirmed in secular society as a right in international human rights law. Article 22(1) of the *ICCPR* provides:

> Everyone shall have the right to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his interests.[7]

2.5 This general guarantee is subject to Article 22(2), which permits restrictions that are:

> prescribed by law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.[8]

2.6 Relevantly, the United Nations Human Rights Committee has stated that freedom of expression, assembly and association are essential conditions for the right to vote and engage in public affairs must be fully protected. The Committee

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[6] *Rerum Novarum: Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on Capital and Labour* (15 May 1891) para 51, Vatican.va https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html

[7] International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, opened for signature 19 December 1966, 999 UNTS 171 (entered into force 23 March 1976) art 22(1).

[8] Ibid art 22(2).

has further clarified that any restrictions on these freedoms must not be unreasonable or discriminatory.[9]

2.7 In addition to the *ICCPR*, international law recognises the freedom of association in other contexts. Article 8 of the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* guarantees the right of everyone to form trade unions and join the union of their choice. The International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions also provide extensive protections for freedom of association in the workplace.[10] These provisions reflect a global consensus that associative rights are indispensable both for democratic participation and for the protection of economic and social interests.

2.8 Australia ratified the *ICCPR* in 1980. While the Covenant has not been fully incorporated into domestic law, it informs statutory interpretation and guides the development of the common law.[11] Courts have sometimes invoked it as a source of interpretive principle, particularly where legislation is ambiguous. In addition, governments at both state and federal level have enacted statutory regimes that operationalise associative freedoms. Indeed, just months ago, the Associations and Co-operatives Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 was assented to in Western Australia, which modernises and improves the operation and effectiveness of the legislation used by not-for-profit community groups.

2.9 European jurisprudence provides further context. Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights protects freedom of association, and Article 2 of

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[9] Human Rights Committee, *General Comment No 25: The Right to Participate in Public Affairs, Voting Rights and the Right of Equal Access to Public Service (Article 25)*, UN Doc CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.7 (27 August 1996).
[10] International Labour Organization, *Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No 87)*, opened for signature 9 July 1948, 68 UNTS 17 (entered into force 4 July 1950)
[11] *Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs v Teoh* (1995) 183 CLR 273, [28] (Mason CJ & Deane J).

Protocol 1 to the Convention guarantees that states must "respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching is in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions."[12]

2.10 Other common law jurisdictions reinforce the point. Section 2(d) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees freedom of association, and section 2(a) guarantees freedom of religion. In the United States, the First Amendment protects both freedom of association and free exercise of religion.

2.11 At the constitutional level, Australia does not have an express right to freedom of association. Unlike Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms or the United States Bill of Rights, the Australian Constitution is silent on the matter. However, the High Court has recognised an implied freedom of political communication, necessary for the system of representative and responsible government established by the Constitution.[13] In *Australian Capital Television Pty Ltd v Commonwealth*, the Court held that freedom of political communication was essential to the operation of ss.7 and 24 of the Constitution, which require that members of the Parliament be "directly chosen by the people."[14] In this case, former Justice McHugh also expressly stated that "to fail to give effect to the rights of participation, association and communication identifiable in ss.7 and 24 would be to sap and undermine the foundations of the Constitution."[15] Although not identical to freedom of association, the implied

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[12] Equality and Human Rights Commission (UK), *Protocol 1, Article 2: Right to Education* (Web Page, 4 May 2016, updated 3 June 2021) >https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/human-rights/human-rights-act/article-2-first-protocol-right-education>

[13] *Australian Capital Television Pty Ltd v Commonwealth* (1992) 177 CLR 106.

[14] Ibid.

[15] n 14, [21] (McHugh J).

freedom of political communication has been interpreted as protecting certain associative activities, particularly where they are directed to political ends.[16]

2.12 Beyond the Constitution, freedom of association has been recognised in case law as a value underlying common law rights. In *Kruger v Commonwealth*, the High Court acknowledged that while there was no free-standing right to association in the Constitution, the principle nonetheless informed the interpretation of statutes and the limits of executive power.[17] The absence of a codified right has meant that Australians must rely upon statutory and common law protections, which are vulnerable to alteration by the Parliament of the day.

2.13 Of course, freedom of association is not absolute. Both international law and domestic practice recognise that it may be curtailed where necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or the rights of others. Criminal law has long prohibited associations directed to unlawful ends. For example, statutes against criminal organisations, anti-consorting provisions, and restrictions on terrorist organisations all represent instances where the state has limited association to prevent serious harm.[18] In Western Australia, the *Criminal Organisations Control Act 2012* (WA) enables courts to declare organisations criminal and to prohibit members from associating, with breaches attracting criminal penalties. The point, however, is that any limitations on the freedom of association must be proportionate and not extend beyond what is necessary.

2.14 The principle of freedom of association therefore serves both as a shield and a boundary. It shields lawful associations, such as religious communities, political

[16] See, eg, *Mulholland v Australian Electoral Commission* (2004) 220 CLR 181.
[17] *Kruger v Commonwealth* (1997) 190 CLR 1.
[18] See, eg, *Criminal Organisations Control Act 2012* (NSW); *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth) pt 5.3.

parties, trade unions and cultural organisations, from arbitrary interference. However, it also sets boundaries for action by the State, ensuring that restrictions are lawful, necessary, and proportionate. But it also delineates the limits of permissible association, excluding those directed to crime, violence, or the subversion of democratic order. The danger arises when governments apply the principle inconsistently, for example shielding criminal associations under political cover, while contracting lawful associations for communities of faith. That tension lies at the heart of the Western Australian experience examined in this paper.

III. Western Australia's Unlawful Consorting Law and Special Union Defence

3.1 The *Anti-Consorting Act* was introduced by the McGowan Government in Western Australia with the declared aim of disrupting serious organised crime.[19] The Act grants police powers to issue an "unlawful consorting notice" to a person who is a "relevant offender", defined as being a person who has been convicted of certain serious offences including drug trafficking and child sex offences.[20] Once a notice is served, it becomes an offence for the individual to consort with another named person on two or more occasions.[21] The penalty is significant with up to five years' imprisonment on indictment or two years on summary conviction.[22]

3.2 The rationale for such laws is the well-documented capacity of organised crime groups, particularly outlaw motorcycle gangs, to engage in serious criminal activity by maintaining networks of association. By prohibiting repeat contact between known offenders, the Act seeks to disrupt these networks and thereby reduce crime. Comparable provisions exist in all other states and in the Northern Territory, with a bill recently being introduced in the ACT during 2024.[23]

3.3 Recognising that human relationships and ordinary social interactions cannot be entirely prohibited, the Act sets out a range of statutory defences. These include

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[19] Western Australia, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 14 October 2021 (John Quigley).
[20] *Criminal Law (Unlawful Consorting and Prohibited Insignia) Act 2021* (WA) s 6, sch 1.
[21] Ibid s 17(1).
[22] Ibid.
[23] *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW) s93X; *Serious Crime Control Act 2009* (NT) Part 4; *Summary Offences Act 1953* (SA) Part 14A; *Criminal Organisations Control Act 2012* (VIC) s 124A; *Police Offences Act 1935* (TAS) s 20C; *Criminal Code Act 1899* (QLD) s 77B.

consorting between family members in reasonable circumstances[24], consorting in the course of lawful employment[25] or education[26], receiving health or welfare services[27], obtaining legal advice[28], or complying with a court order[29]. These defences are carefully tailored to protect necessary aspects of life while still enabling the law to achieve its objective of disrupting criminal networks.

3.4 In this context, the inclusion of section 18(2)(a)(viii) is striking. This provision creates a defence where consorting occurs "during activities undertaken by members of an organisation of employees registered under the *Industrial Relations Act 1979* (WA) for the purposes of the business of the organisation."[30] In effect, it grants a union-specific defence. In other words, convicted criminals subject to a consorting notice may lawfully associate if they can adduce evidence that they were engaged in union activities.

3.5 This union defence is irregular. Unlike the other defences, which protect essential elements of personal and civic life, the union carve-out is neither necessary for subsistence nor unavoidable in daily life. Rather, it creates a privileged exception for trade unions.

3.6 The practical effect is that a person with serious convictions, including members of outlaw motorcycle gangs, could continue to consort provided they do so under

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[24] *Criminal Law (Unlawful Consorting and Prohibited Insignia) Act 2021* (WA) s 18(1).
[25] Ibid s18(2)(a)(i).
[26] Ibid s18(2)(a)(ii).
[27] Ibid s18(2)(a)(iii).
[28] Ibid s18(2)(a)(v).
[29] Ibid s18(2)(a)(vii).
[30] Ibid s18(2)(a)(viii).

the banner of union business. This undermines the very purpose of the *Anti-Consorting Act*. As Dr David Honey observed during the second reading debate:

> "People in outlaw motorcycle gangs are not ordinary citizens, and they are not ordinary union members ... I am not sure why the Bill would allow people meeting for trade union activities to override the concern about the consorting of members of outlaw motorcycle gangs."[31]

3.7 Hon Nick Goiran MLC similarly condemned the provision in the Legislative Council:

> "We understand that a defence will be provided specifically for child sex offenders and others who indicate that they need to consort and associate for union activity purposes. The opposition's question is: Why has the government snuck in the provision for union activities? Why do we need to have child sex offenders consorting with one another with their defence being, 'I've got my union hat on. We're engaging in official union activities'?"[32]

3.8 These parliamentary contributions highlight the danger of the defence. Unlike family or health-related defences, which are grounded in unavoidable human needs, the union provision is a political choice that risks facilitating criminal association under a veneer of legitimacy.

3.9 Despite the clarity of these objections, the Government proceeded. In August 2024, when asked whether this union defence could be abused by motorcycle gang members and whether Labor would consider closing this loophole, Western

[31] Western Australia, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 9 November 2021 (Dr David Honey).
[32] Western Australia, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Council, 30 November 2021 (Hon Nick Goiran).

Australian Premier Roger Cook (who had been Deputy Premier when the Bill passed in 2021) dismissed opposition concerns when he said:

> "I do not believe it is a loophole from the way the member has described it; therefore, no."[33]

3.10 The Premier's reply reflects an unwillingness to engage with the substantive issue, i.e. that the law, designed to disrupt criminal associations, expressly allows them to continue in certain circumstances.

3.11 The risks are evident. First, the provision creates a pathway for criminal networks to maintain contact under the cover of union activity. Given the history of criminal infiltration into some unions, this is not a hypothetical concern.[34] Second, it erodes the credibility of the law. When a statute intended to combat organised crime contains exceptions favouring politically powerful organisations, public trust in its integrity is weakened. Third, it undermines the principle of equal application of the law. Why should a person subject to a consorting notice be permitted to consort under union cover but not in other contexts?

3.12 With the exception of Victoria, all other Australian jurisdictions do not include union-specific defences in their consorting laws.[35] Their legislation contain defences which aim to preserve family, health, legal, and civic obligations.

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[33] Western Australia, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly,15 August 2024 (Roger Cook).
[34] Sarah Martin, "Convicted CFMEU official to face court on new common assault charge," *The West Australian* (online, 14 October 2017) https://thewest.com.au/news/wa/convicted-cfmeu-official-to-face-court-on-new-common-assault-charge-ng-b88627743z; "CFMEU official barred from Federal worksites free to recruit WA local government workers", *The West Australian* (online, 11 May 2025) https://thewest.com.au/news/wa/cfmeu-official-banned-from-federal-worksites-free-to-recruit-was-local-government-workers-c-15451381; Dean Faulkner, "Criminal elements still influential in CFMEU construction division, report finds," *ABC News* (online, 16 September 2024) https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-09-16/cfmeu-report-bikies-construction-administration-corruption/104355234.
[35] *Criminal Organisations Control Act 2012* (VIC) ss 124A(4)(f).

Victoria is the outlier, and it is worth noting that it hosts the largest concentration of union headquarters in the country. Many national offices are based in Melbourne, including the Finance Sector Union, the Health Services Union, the National Tertiary Education Union, the Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union, the Australian Services Union, the United Workers Union, and the Australian Council of Trade Unions itself. Western Australia's alignment with Victoria's model is therefore striking.

3.13 The inclusion of section 18(2)(a)(viii) is a distortion of the freedom of association principle. Instead of limiting association where necessary to prevent crime, it permits associative rights to convicted criminals in a manner inconsistent with the statute's purpose. In privileging union activity, the law grants a political exception that undermines its legitimacy and risks facilitating the very criminal networks it sought to disrupt.

IV. Western Australia's Equal Opportunity Law and Exemption for Faith-based Schools

4.1 The *Equal Opportunity Act* was enacted to prohibit discrimination in employment, education, and the provision of goods and services.[36] At the same time, it recognised that certain exemptions were necessary to preserve other fundamental rights, particularly religious liberty. Section 73 of the Act provides that "an educational institution that is conducted in accordance with the doctrines, tenets, beliefs or teachings of a particular religion or creed" may discriminate in employment on the ground of religious belief if done "in good faith in order to avoid injury to the religious susceptibilities of adherents of that religion or creed."[37] This provision has long allowed faith-based schools to preference staff whose beliefs and conduct are consistent with the school's ethos.

4.2 The rationale for section 73 is uncomplicated. Faith-based communities have the right to establish educational institutions consistent with their faith, and parents have the right to ensure their children are educated in line with their convictions. This is consistent with Article 18(4) of the *ICCPR*, which provides:

> "The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions."[38]

4.3 This guarantee recognises that freedom of religion and freedom of association are intertwined. Parents associate together to create schools that embody their

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[36] *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* (WA) s3.
[37] Ibid s73(1).
[38] *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, opened for signature 19 December 1966, 999 UNTS 171 (entered into force 23 March 1976), art 18(4).

values by employing staff who uphold and live out their ethos. Removing the ability of faith-based schools to preference such staff undermines both parental rights and the collective autonomy of faith-based communities.

4.4 In 2019, then Attorney General Hon John Quigley referred the Equal Opportunity Act to the Law Reform Commission of Western Australia (**Commission**) for review.[39] The Commission's Final Report, tabled in August 2022, recommended narrowing the scope of the religious educational institutions employment exception which is currently contained in section 73.[40] It proposed replacing them with an "inherent requirements" test, under which a school could preference staff of faith only if it could demonstrate that adherence to the religion was an inherent requirement of the role. The Commission further conceded that this would likely result in discrimination not being permitted when employing maths teachers, gardeners and various teaching and non-teaching staff, and would likely be limited to chaplains and principals.[41]

4.5 The Commission argued that this approach would balance equality with religious freedom. Critics, however, contended that it would undermine the ethos of faith-based schools. As Christian Schools Australia submitted, ethos is not confined to a handful of positions but permeates the entire school environment.[42] Teachers of mathematics or science, no less than those of religion, contribute to the spiritual and moral formation of students. The "inherent requirements" test therefore risks fragmenting the integrity of religious education.

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[39] Law Reform Commission of Western Australia, *Annual Report 2018–2019* (Report, 11 September 2019) 7.
[40] Law Reform Commission of Western Australia, *Project 111: Review of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA) – Final Report* (2022) recs 79–81.
[41] Ibid 181.
[42] Christian Schools Australia, Submission to LRCWA Review of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA), 2021.

4.6 Despite this, the Western Australian Government has indicated its intention to legislate reforms. In May 2023, Hon John Quigley stated that he was working on a "rewrite and modernisation" of the Act.[43] During the 2024 Budget Estimates hearings, the Equal Opportunity Commissioner confirmed that his office was preparing materials for the implementation of a new Act.[44] Current Attorney General Hon Dr Tony Buti has publicly committed to introducing reforms before the end of 2025.[45]

4.7 These statements have created uncertainty and grave concern among faith-based schools and parents. The prospect of repeal or narrowing of section 73 has been widely interpreted as a threat to the autonomy of faith-based communities and the rights of parents under international law.

4.8 That concern has been demonstrated in various forums. One such example was a petition tabled in Western Australia's Legislative Council on 29 November 2022. That petition titled "Protecting the Rights of Parents and Role of Faith-Based Schools" was tabled with 10,234 signatures, affirming the right of faith-based schools to uphold their ethos through staffing policies.[46]

4.9 Submissions to parliamentary committees have reinforced these concerns. A wide range of organisations, including the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, the Coalition for Jewish Values, the Sikh Association of WA, Christian

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[43] The West Australian, 'Attorney-General John Quigley quashes speculation that he will quit politics' (online, 31 May 2024).
[44] Western Australia, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, Estimates Committee A, 23 May 2024, 366b-376a, 4. (Dr John Byrne, Equal Opportunity Commissioner).
[45] The West Australian, 'Tony Buti reveals which agenda items in new Attorney General role 'keep me up at night'' (online, 7 June 2025).
[46] Parliament of Western Australia, Petition No 075, *Protecting the rights of parents and role of faith-based schools* (petition, 29 November 2022).

Schools Australia, and the Australian Association of Christian Schools, have expressed opposition to repeal.[47] They warned that removing section 73 would:

a) Undermine the right of religious schools to maintain a coherent ethos.

b) Conflict with Article 18(4) of the ICCPR.

c) Increase the risk of vexatious complaints and regulatory overreach.

d) Disproportionately burden minority faith communities with compliance costs.

4.10 As outlined above, international law strongly supports the rights of parents and religious communities in education. Article 18 of the *ICCPR* recognises both individual and collective religious freedom. Article 18(4) specifically protects parental liberty in education. The European Court of Human Rights has similarly affirmed that states must respect parental convictions in education under Article 2 of Protocol No 1 to the European Convention on Human Rights.[48]

4.11 Repealing or weakening section 73 would have several adverse consequences. First, it would undermine the integrity of faith-based schools by preventing them from ensuring that staff uphold the ethos of the institution. Second, it would violate Australia's obligations under Article 18(4) of the *ICCPR*. Third, it would erode pluralism in education by forcing uniformity across faith-based and secular schools. Fourth, it would exacerbate tensions between the state and minority faith communities, who rely heavily on faith-based schools to transmit cultural and religious values.

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[47] Hon Nick Goiran MLC and others, *Protecting the rights of parents and role of faith-based schools* (Submission to Petition No 075, 22 December 2022).

[48] *Kjeldsen, Busk Madsen and Pedersen v Denmark* (1976) 1 EHRR 711

4.12 Section 73 of the *Equal Opportunity Act* embodies a careful balance between equality and religious liberty. It preserves the autonomy of parents and communities to associate together for the purpose of educating children in accordance with their convictions. Its proposed repeal would distort this balance, contracting freedom of association where it deserves protection, even as the Government has extended it inappropriately to convicted criminals under consorting laws.

V. Hypocrisy and Double Standards

5.1 The preceding two sections reveal a striking inconsistency in the Western Australian Labor Government's approach to freedom of association. On the one hand, the *Anti-Consorting Act* permits convicted criminals to invoke a statutory defence when consorting under the cover of union activity. On the other, the Government has proposed repealing section 73 of the *Equal Opportunity Act*, thereby curtailing the right of parents and faith-based schools to preference staff in accordance with their religious ethos. The juxtaposition of these two policies demonstrates not only inconsistency but hypocrisy: association is shielded where it facilitates political allies and contracted where it burdens law-abiding faith communities.

5.2 Upon its introduction, the Western Australian Labor Government expressly stated the purpose of the *Anti-Consorting Act* was to disrupt and restrict communication and networking of criminal offenders and to restrict the ability of members of identified organisations to gather in public.[49] Yet the Government introduced into the legislation a union-specific defence, which undermines that purpose. Parliamentary debates illustrate that this provision was politically motivated. As outlined above, the Opposition questioned why the Bill privileged union activity and further warned that the law effectively created a defence for child sex offenders if they claimed to be consorting for union purposes.

5.3 Despite these warnings, the WA Labor Government pressed on and the Premier denied any existence of there being a loophole. Preserving the union defence

[49] Western Australia, Parliamentary Debates, *Legislative Assembly,* 14 October 2021, *Criminal Law (Unlawful Consorting and Prohibited Insignia) Bill 2021,* 4509c-4513a.

created a statutory privilege to a class of organisations which has demonstrable political ties while also weakening the coherence of the criminal law and undermining the rule of law. Recent reporting on union links to outlaw motorcycle gangs and the WA Labor Party underscores the risk, with the WA branch of the CFMEU under formal investigation for alleged organised-crime connections, with probes sparked by revelations of bikie involvement in the union's construction arm.[50]

5.4 Meanwhile, the contrast between the WA Labor Government's attitude towards union members with the rights of parents who send their children to faith-based schools is stark. Section 73 of the *Equal Opportunity Act* protects the ability of religious communities to maintain educational institutions consistent with their ethos. This is not a novel or radical right; it has been evidenced in writing for over a century and reflects Australia's obligations under Article 18(4) of the ICCPR. Despite this, the WA Labor Government has declared its intention to repeal or substantially weaken this safeguard by introducing a "inherent requirements" test pursuant to the Commission's recommendations, which critics argue would undermine the ability of schools to cultivate a community of shared faith and values.[51]

5.5 In 2017, the Australian Government appointed an expert panel into religious freedom, chaired by the Hon Philip Ruddock, to examine whether Australian law adequately protects the human right to freedom of religion. Following this, the *Religious Freedom Review* (**Ruddock Review**) was published in 2018 and

[50] The West Australian, 'Pressure builds on CFMEU amid Ian Baxter's alarming bikie revelations' (online, 15 August 2024).
[51] n 47; Australian Association of Christian Schools, 'AACS Meets with WA Attorney General' (Web Page, n.d.) https://www.aacs.net.au/wa-attorney-general.

recommended that religious schools retain the ability to employ staff consistent with their ethos, provided policies were clear, public, and disclosed.[52] By contrast, the 2022 Law Reform Commission of Western Australia's report[53] and the 2023 ALRC Report[54] both proposed replacing exemptions with an "inherent requirements" test, sharply narrowing schools' discretion. This marks a sudden departure from the Ruddock Review's position, raising the question whether the shift reflects a genuine change in principle or simply the change in government from Liberal to Labor.

5.6 As touched upon above, Parliamentary petitions have demonstrated broad public opposition to the proposed reforms. In November 2022, over 10,000 Western Australians signed a petition which reaffirmed support for the important role faith-based schools play in educating children consistently with the faith and values of their parents.[55] In October 2023, a further 5,000 signed a second petition which made the same affirmation while also urging delay to any changes to the *Equal Opportunity Act*.[56] In relation to the 2022 petition, submissions were made and supported by various faith-based groups from Christian, Islamic, Jewish, and Sikh backgrounds. These groups warned that removing the religious exemption from the *Equal Opportunity Act* would erode pluralism and breach Australia's international obligations.[57]

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[52] Attorney-General's Department, *Religious Freedom Review: Expert Panel Report 2018* (Report, 18 May 2018) rec 5.
[53] Above n 40.
[54] Australian Law Reform Commission, *Maximising the Realisation of Human Rights: Religious Educational Institutions and Anti-Discrimination Laws* (Report No 142, December 2023) rec 7.
[55] Above n 46.
[56] Parliament of Western Australia, Petition No 110, *Leave faith-based schools alone* (petition, 3 August 2023).
[57] Above n 47.

5.7 Notwithstanding the above, the WA Labor Government has remained committed to reform. In July 2025, Attorney General Tony Buti confirmed reforms to the *Equal Opportunity Act* would be introduced before the end of the year.[58] Unlike the union defence, which extends the freedom of association to convicted criminals and members of organised crime gangs, the repeal of section 73 would unreasonably contract this freedom for law-abiding citizens acting in accordance with their religious convictions.

5.8 The double standard is explicable only in political terms. The union movement has long been a core constituency of the Australian Labor Party, and the preservation of union freedom of association even in criminal contexts serves political allies. By contrast, faith-based schools have often been aligned with more conservative constituencies and have been subjected to criticism from self-labelled progressive advocates. The selective extension and contraction of associative freedoms reveals that principle has been subordinated to politics.

5.9 Hansard debates reinforce this point. During debate on the Anti-Consorting Bill, opposition members' concerns about the union defence were dismissed or minimised.[59] Meanwhile, in public commentary on equal opportunity law reform, WA Labor Members of Parliament have expressed a need to modernise the law but rarely acknowledged the significance of parental rights or Article 18(4) of the ICCPR. Such rhetorical asymmetry reflects not principled balancing but ideological preference.

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[58] Above n 45.

[59] Western Australia, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 10 November 2021, 5223c-5236a (John Quigley); Western Australia, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Council, 2 December 2021, 6108b-6135a (Matthew Swinbourn); Western Australia, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Council, 7 December 2021, 6176b-6199a (Matthew Swinbourn).

5.10 This inconsistency undermines public trust in the integrity of the legal system. Laws are perceived as legitimate when they apply consistently and are justified by coherent principle. When freedom of association is extended to convicted criminals but curtailed for law-abiding parents, the appearance of bias is inescapable. Such bias erodes confidence in the rule of law and raises questions about the government's commitment to equal treatment.

5.11 The principle of equality before the law is central to liberal democracy. Article 26 of the *ICCPR* affirms that "all persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law." Yet Western Australia's current trajectory appears to afford unequal protection: privileging union association for offenders while threatening lawful religious association for parents.

5.12 International human rights law requires that restrictions on freedom of association must not be unreasonable or discriminatory. By granting a privileged exception to unions while targeting faith-based schools, the WA Government risks breaching these principles. Other jurisdictions provide more consistent approaches. Besides Victoria, all other Australian jurisdictions do not contain union-specific defences in their anti-consorting laws. Exemptions in anti-discrimination law permitting religious schools to make employment decisions in accordance with their ethos have historically been recognised across jurisdictions, and where they have been removed, this has occurred only in recent times. The Ruddock Review confirmed that such employment-related exemptions remained in place nationwide at that time.[60] Western Australia's

[60]Above n 52, 56.

combination of extending freedom for criminal consorting while contracting it for faith-based communities is distinctive and troubling.

5.13 The Government's approach exemplifies hypocrisy. Freedom of association has been manipulated: expanded to shield criminal networks aligned with political allies, while restricted for law-abiding communities whose convictions diverge from the Government's ideological stance. This double standard erodes public trust, undermines equality before the law, and distorts the very principle it purports to uphold. A principled government would apply freedom of association consistently: curbing it only where necessary to disrupt crime and protecting it robustly where it enables families and communities to educate their children in accordance with their religious convictions.

VI. Reform Proposals

6.1 Western Australia's record on freedom of association shows inconsistency driven by political convenience. To rebuild coherence and credibility, reforms are needed. They must rest not only on domestic law and practice, but also on Australia's binding commitments under international human rights law.

6.2 The first and most immediate reform is the repeal of section 18(2)(a)(viii) of the *Anti-Consorting Act.* Its inclusion was likely a political concession rather than a principled safeguard. Further, the union defence undermines the very purpose of the *Anti-Consorting Act,* which is to disrupt criminal networks by limiting habitual contact among serious offenders.

6.3 Repealing section 18(2)(a)(viii) would realign the *Anti-Consorting Act* with its purpose. It would also restore public confidence that laws targeting organised crime are applied consistently and without political favour. Comparative analysis supports this reform: all Australian jurisdictions besides Victoria do not have a union defence in their consorting laws. Western Australia and Victoria stand as outliers, a position that lacks principled justification when, in practice, it allows convicted drug traffickers and child sex offenders to consort under the cover of union activity.

6.4 The second essential reform is to preserve section 73 of *the Equal Opportunity Act* in its current form. Its repeal would undermine religious liberty, parental rights, and pluralism in education. Not only would removing this safeguard place Western Australia in breach of international law, but it would also follow a trend that is neither uniform across Australia nor compelled by principle. While some

jurisdictions have in recent years removed the religious exemption and introduced an "inherent requirements" test for employment in religious schools, this shift only occurred after the 2018 Ruddock Review. That review did not recommend such a change. Rather, it affirmed the importance of continuing exemptions for faith-based schools. The fact that certain states have since moved in a different direction does not oblige Western Australia to do the same, particularly when jurisdictions such as New South Wales, South Australia and Queensland continue to preserve exemptions, albeit in limited form, recognising the legitimate right of religious schools to maintain their ethos.[61]

6.5 Faith-based schools argue, with justification, that ethos permeates all aspects of education. A mathematics or science teacher contributes no less to the moral formation of students than a religious education teacher. Limiting the exemption to narrowly defined "inherent requirements" would undermine the integrity of the school environment and invite litigation over contested definitions.

6.6 Retaining section 73 also respects the pluralism that is essential in a liberal democracy. Families should be able to choose educational institutions aligned with their values, whether secular or religious. Curtailing this choice in the name of equality paradoxically undermines diversity.

6.7 These two reforms would promote consistency by ensuring that the same principles apply across contexts. It is incoherent and inappropriate to expand rights for convicted criminals while contracting them for law-abiding parents.

[61] Above n 54, 344.

6.8 A third reform could also include enshrining the freedom of association in the Western Australian Constitution. Constitutional recognition would elevate the right beyond the reach of short-term political agendas, requiring that any limitation be subject to strict justification. It would align Western Australia with international human rights standards, provide greater certainty for citizens and institutions, and reinforce the principle that such a freedom is foundational to democratic governance.

6.9 Critics may argue that repealing the union defence could unduly burden legitimate industrial relations activity. Yet this concern is misplaced. Under the above proposed reforms, union members not subject to consorting notices would remain free to associate. Only those convicted of serious offences and served with notices would be restricted, which is precisely the individuals whom the *Anti-Consorting Act* was designed to target.

6.10 Others may contend that retaining section 73 of the *Equal Opportunity Act* entrenches discrimination. Yet this misunderstands the nature of the exemption. Section 73 does not authorise arbitrary discrimination; it allows religious schools to maintain their ethos, consistent with international law. Equality is not served by erasing pluralism. True equality respects difference and ensures that diverse communities can flourish.

6.11 A common criticism of enshrining freedom of association in the WA Constitution is that it could limit parliamentary sovereignty and reduce legislative flexibility, allowing harmful, discriminatory, or extremist groups to claim protection and shifting power from Parliament to the courts. However, constitutional rights are never absolute. Enshrining freedom of association would not prevent regulation

of criminal or dangerous groups but would instead require that any restrictions be clear, proportionate, and demonstrably justified. In this way, courts act as a safeguard against arbitrary or politically motivated incursions, strengthening rather than weakening democratic accountability by ensuring that core freedoms are only limited where truly necessary in the public interest.

VII. Conclusion

7.1 Western Australia needs reform to bring coherence to its approach to freedom of association. This can be achieved by repealing the union defence in the *Anti-Consorting Act*, retaining section 73 of the *Equal Opportunity Act*, and enshrining freedom of association in the State Constitution. Together, these measures would reaffirm the traditional conception of this freedom, uphold Australia's international obligations, and restore public confidence in the rule of law.

7.2 Freedom of association is a cornerstone of democratic society. It is the right that allows individuals to join together to form families, communities, religious institutions, unions, political parties, and voluntary organisations. It sustains pluralism and diversity, and it provides a counterbalance to the power of the state. Without it, other freedoms, such as the freedom to vote and engage in public affairs, are hollow. It is therefore essential that governments apply the principle consistently, transparently, and in good faith.

7.3 The Government has simultaneously created a privileged exemption for unions in criminal law while moving to strip long-standing protections for faith-based schools in equal opportunity law. This juxtaposition is indefensible. It reveals a pattern of hypocrisy: extending freedom of association where it shields criminal consorting under political cover, while curtailing it where it protects law-abiding communities of faith. The principle has been inverted. Those who should enjoy its protection are denied it; those who have forfeited it by serious criminal conduct are afforded it.

7.4 Ultimately, freedom of association is too important to be manipulated for political advantage. It must be applied impartially, limited only where genuinely necessary to protect public safety, and preserved robustly where it enables families and communities to flourish. Western Australia stands at a crossroads. It can persist with hypocrisy, privileging criminals while burdening parents, or it can recommit to principle. The outcome will determine whether the State upholds the rule of law or surrenders it for political expedience.

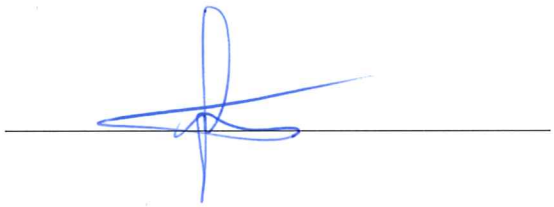
CERTIFICATION

To be signed by Member of Parliament before submission

This report reflects all expenditure for international expenses using the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance.

Expenditure detailed in this report conforms to the:

- *conditions of use of the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance; and*
- *principles for use of allowances provided in this 1.6 of this Determination, which states that Members must:*
  - *(a) use allowances for Parliamentary business:*
  - *(b) adhere to any conditions for using allowances;*
  - *(c) be prepared to be personally responsible and accountable for the use of allowances;*
  - *(d) be prepared to publicly justify use of allowances; and*
  - *(e) act ethically and in good faith when using, and accounting for the use of allowances.*

Signed: 

Date: 17/12/25

APPENDIX 2 - PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL AND STUDY ALLOWANCE: INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL REPORT (FOR THE 42ND PARLIAMENT)

MEMBER: Frank Paolino MLA

ELECTORATE: Mount Lawley

In accordance with Part 6 of this Determination, within 90 days of expending moneys for international expenses using the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance, Members must submit to the Tribunal:

- *a report including details of:*
  - *how moneys were expended; and*
  - *the expected benefit to the State from the expenditure.*
- *certification that:*
  - *use of moneys has complied with principles set out in section 1.6; and*
  - *expenses related to the Member's Parliamentary business.*

Members must submit the certification and report to submissions@sat.wa.gov.au

Reports provided by Members will be published on the Tribunal's website.

PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL AND STUDY ALLOWANCE (PART 6 OF DETERMINATION)	
INTERNATIONAL EXPENSES ONLY	
TRAVEL DATES: 22.08.2025 – 31.08.2025	
DESTINATIONS VISITED: Italy & Sweden	
ALLOWANCE CLAIMED:	**$ 8,752.03**
REPORTED EXPENDITURE:	
• Airfares	6,425.68
• Fees for conferences or short courses	
• Accommodation	2,326.35
o Number of nights	7
• Incidentals	
• Other (please identify)	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**$ 8,752.03**
TOTAL SURPLUS/DEFICIT	($21,247.97)

EXPECTED BENEFIT TO THE STATE FROM THE EXPENDITURE

Please outline the following:

1. What was the rationale for the travel/why is the travel warranted?

2. Why was travel required to achieve this?

3. In what way will the travel benefit the electorate and/or State?

4. What was the community driver to undertake this travel?

5. Who was the host organisation for any conference(s) attended? What other organisations and/or individuals did you meet with and in which locations?

6. What will be the outcome of this travel?

CERTIFICATION

To be signed by Member of Parliament before submission

This report reflects all expenditure for international expenses using the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance.

Expenditure detailed in this report conforms to the:

- *conditions of use of the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance; and*
- *principles for use of allowances provided in this 1.6 of this Determination, which states that Members must:*
  - *(a) use allowances for Parliamentary business:*
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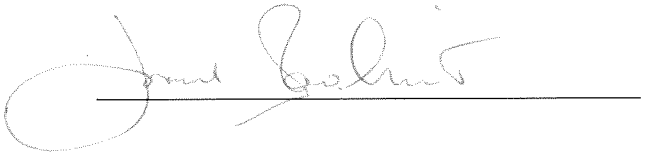
  - *(c) be prepared to be personally responsible and accountable for the use of allowances;*
  - *(d) be prepared to publicly justify use of allowances; and*
  - *(e) act ethically and in good faith when using, and accounting for the use of allowances.*

Signed: 

Date: 25/02/2026

BRIEF MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

MISSION TO ITALY AND SWEDEN ON 22-31 AUGUST 2025

- It is with great pleasure that I update the House on my mission to Italy and Sweden last month.

- With a total of fifteen engagements across six days, I had the opportunity to promote Western Australia as a reliable, competitive and innovative destination for investment and cooperation, through meetings that covered a range of topics including infrastructure, renewable energy, manufacturing, transport and, of course, sport.

- My mission built on the Western Australian Government's 2022 mission to Italy and served to promote Western Australia and develop opportunities for collaboration with our State to stakeholders in these markets.

- While in Italy, I met with senior executives of several prominent companies in the infrastructure and energy sectors.

- This included meetings with:
    - Webuild Group, contractors for Western Australia's new Women and Babies Hospital;
    - Confindustria – Assolombarda;
    - NHOA Energy;
    - Saipem, and
    - Energy Dome.

- Each engagement provided the opportunity to explore potential for collaboration across industries including energy storage and battery systems, large-scale engineering projects, chemical supply chains, as well as opportunities to learn from our European partners on initiatives to support Western Australia´s infrastructure and clean energy transition.

- My visit was timely, following shortly after the AC Milan pre-season visit to Perth in July this year as I had the opportunity to meet with Serie A officials to discuss potential future opportunities for partnerships or events in Western Australia.

PREPARED FOR PARLIAMENT

- In Rome, I met with Edmondo Cirielli, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and I attended meetings with the Australian Ambassador to Italy and the Italian Ministries of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and Tourism, to promote the longstanding ties that Western Australia shares with Italy.

- I then travelled to Sweden where I visited the Port of Gothenburg, a major European commercial port, to learn about green port operations, port land redevelopment and rail integration, providing lessons for our ports in Fremantle, Kwinana, and the Pilbara.

- I also met with senior Volvo Penta executives at their testing and development facility in Gothenburg, acquiring insights into leading-edge electric and hybrid power systems, which will inform and support Western Australia's ambitions to locally build and maintain electrified buses and ferries.

- The mission built upon the State's connections with Italy and Sweden, and leveraged Western Australia's demonstrated capabilities in clean energy, advanced manufacturing and major infrastructure to attract the partnerships and investment needed to create more local jobs.

- I also want to thank the Member for Mount Lawley for his support as part of this mission, utilising his previous diplomatic experience.

- I feel very privileged to have been able to undertake this visit and to help progress our Government's economic diversification agenda.

- I table a copy of the itinerary.

[Word count - 423]

ATTACHMENT 1

DEPUTY PREMIER MISSION TO ITALY AND SWEDEN
ITINERARY
22-31 AUGUST 2025

Date	Event & Attendees
Saturday, 23 August	<u>Meeting with AC Milan and AC Milan match</u> • Paolo Scaroni, President, AC Milan • Giorgio Furlani, CEO, AC Milan • Maikel Oettle, CCO, AC Milan • Francesca Montini, Chief Brand Officer, AC Milan • Daniele Massaro, Ambassador, AC Milan • Luca Bertarini, Business Development Director, AC Milan
Sunday, 24 August	<u>Site tour of AC Milan Training Facility</u> • Luca Bertarini, Business Development Director, AC Milan
	<u>Introductory meeting with Lega Serie A, Como 1907 and Como 1907 match</u> • Mirwan Suwarso, President, Como 1907 • Luigi De Siervo, CEO, Lega Serie A • Michele Ciccarese, Commercial and Marketing Director, Lega Serie A
Monday, 25 August	<u>Meeting with WeBuild</u> • Pietro Salini, CEO, WeBuild • Claudio Lautizi, General Manager, Global Operations, WeBuild • Marco Assorati, Executive Director, WeBuild
	<u>Meeting with Confindustria – Assolombarda</u> • Chiara Fanali, Director of the International Affairs and Foreign Trade Area
	<u>Meeting with NHOA Energy</u> • Mr Giuseppe Artizzu, CEO, NHOA Energy • Adrian Marziano (VP Australia & Pacific), NHOA Energy • Teresa Pogliani, Group Head of Engagement and Corporate Communication, NHOA Energy
	<u>Meeting with Saipem</u> • Rossella Carrara, Director of External Communication and Public Affairs, Saipem • Davide Manunta, Head of Sustainable Infrastructure Department, Saipem • Alessandro Motta, Head of International and Public Affairs, Saipem
	<u>Meeting with Energy Dome</u> • Claudio Spadacini, CEO, Energy Dome • Francesco Oppici, CPO, Energy Dome

Date	Event & Attendees
	• Paul Smith, Senior Vice President of Global Sales, Energy Dome • Daniel O'Doherty, VP Business Development Australia, Energy Dome
	<u>Meeting with Lega Serie A and Inter Milan match</u> • Luigi De Siervo, CEO, Lega Serie A • Michele Ciccarese Commercial and Marketing Director, Lega Serie A
Tuesday, 26 August	<u>Meeting with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation</u> • Edmondo Cirielli, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
Wednesday, 27 August	<u>Meeting with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation</u> • Riccardo Guariglia, Secretary General, Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
	<u>Meeting with Ambassador of Australia to Italy</u> • HE Julianne Cowley, Ambassador of Australia to Italy • Siddhartha Chakrabarti, Deputy Head of Mission Australian Embassy in Rome • Nazli Bahmani, Second Secretary (Bilateral Engagement), Australian Embassy in Rome
	<u>Meeting with Ministry of Tourism</u> • Dr Simone Landini, Diplomatic Adviser, Ministry of Tourism • Dr Barbara Casagrande, Secretary General, Ministry of Tourism • Mr Francesco Felici, Director General for Regulation, Procurement, Training and Tourism Professions, Ministry of Tourism • Ms Paola Cianfriglia, Director, Office for Strategic Planning Coordination, Organisation, European Funds and International Relations, General Secretariat, Ministry of Tourism
Friday, 29 August	<u>Meeting with Volvo Penta and site tour</u> • Anna Muller, President, Volvo Penta • Francesco Giudice, Director, Yacht and Superyacht Sales, Volvo Penta • Felix Engstrom, Product Manager, Electromobility, Volvo Penta • Jacob Viero, Senior Global Sales Projects, Passenger Transport, Volvo Penta • Lar Persson, Sales Projects, Volvo Penta
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- My mission built on the Western Australian Government's 2022 mission to Italy and served to promote Western Australia and develop opportunities for collaboration with our State to stakeholders in these markets.

- While in Italy, I met with senior executives of several prominent companies in the infrastructure and energy sectors.

- This included meetings with:
    - Webuild Group, contractors for Western Australia's new Women and Babies Hospital;
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- Each engagement provided the opportunity to explore potential for collaboration across industries including energy storage and battery systems, large-scale engineering projects, chemical supply chains, as well as opportunities to learn from our European partners on initiatives to support Western Australia´s infrastructure and clean energy transition.

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PREPARED FOR PARLIAMENT

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APPENDIX 2 - PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL AND STUDY ALLOWANCE: INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL REPORT (FOR THE 42ND PARLIAMENT)

MEMBER: ____Hon Kate Doust_____ MLA/(MLC) (circle one)

ELECTORATE: ___Member for Western Australia_____

In accordance with Part 6 of this Determination, within 90 days of expending moneys for international expenses using the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance, Members must submit to the Tribunal:

- *a report including details of:*
  - *how moneys were expended; and*
  - *the expected benefit to the State from the expenditure.*
- *certification that:*
  - *use of moneys has complied with principles set out in section 1.6; and*
  - *expenses related to the Member's Parliamentary business.*

Members must submit the certification and report to submissions@sat.wa.gov.au

Reports provided by Members will be published on the Tribunal's website.

PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL AND STUDY ALLOWANCE (PART 6 OF DETERMINATION)	
INTERNATIONAL EXPENSES ONLY	
TRAVEL DATES: Thursday 2 October 2025 – Sunday 12 October 2025	
DESTINATIONS VISITED: London, England and Bridgetown, Barbados	
ALLOWANCE CLAIMED:	**$14,470.32**
REPORTED EXPENDITURE:	
• Airfares	**10,327.34**
• Fees for conferences or short courses	**0**
• Accommodation ○ Number of nights - 4	**1,600.00**
• Meals ○ Number of days - 4	**1,660.00**
• Incidentals - 10 days	**600.00**
• Other (please identify) travel insurance	**282.98**
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**$14,470.32**
TOTAL SURPLUS/DEFICIT	$0

EXPECTED BENEFIT TO THE STATE FROM THE EXPENDITURE

Please outline the following:

1. What was the rationale for the travel/why is the travel warranted?

Attendance at the 68th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) and the 9th Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference in Bridgetown, Barbados provided an important opportunity to engage with parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth to exchange knowledge, strengthen parliamentary practice, and contribute to collective efforts to advance democratic values and gender equality. These conferences are recognised as key international forums for addressing current challenges in governance, representation, and legislative reform.

Given my roles as Deputy Chair of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians International Network, and Chair and Australian Region Steering Committee Representative, as well as being a nominee for election as CWP International Chairperson, my attendance was both appropriate and warranted to fulfil these responsibilities and to represent the Western Australian Parliament and the Australian Region in these deliberations.

2. Why was travel required to achieve this?

The CPC is hosted on a rotational basis among member parliaments to promote shared leadership and collaboration across the Commonwealth.

Participation in the conference, CWP Business Meeting and the CWP Steering Committee Meeting could only occur in person. Much of the value of the conference lies in its facilitated workshops, direct dialogue, and structured knowledge-sharing with other parliamentarians.

3. In what way will the travel benefit the electorate and/or State?

My attendance at the CPC and CWP Conference delivered a number of benefits to my work as a Member of the Western Australian Parliament, it enabled me to share Western Australia's experiences and learn from the innovative practices of other jurisdictions.

The sessions provided new perspectives on leadership, legislative reform, gender equality, and inclusive parliamentary practice. These insights will support ongoing efforts to strengthen gender-sensitive reforms within the Western Australian Parliament and ensure that parliamentary processes better reflect and serve the diverse communities of our State.

4. What was the community driver to undertake this travel?

This travel was undertaken to support the community's expectation that Parliament continues to improve its capacity to create safer, fairer and more inclusive outcomes for all Western Australians.

Western Australia continues to experience high rates of domestic and family violence and ongoing challenges in achieving gender equality and improving women's representation in public life. These are issues of strong concern across the community, particularly among service providers, victim-survivors, advocacy groups, and local leaders who are calling for better prevention strategies and more effective legislative and policy responses.

Attending the conference provided an opportunity to learn from other jurisdictions that are trialling or delivering successful reforms in these areas. The community driver was to bring back practical insights, evidence-based approaches, and improved policy frameworks that can strengthen Western Australia's response to domestic violence and support greater gender parity within public institutions.

5. Who was the host organisation for any conference(s) attended? What other organisations and/or individuals did you meet with and in which locations?

The 68th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference was hosted by the Parliament of Barbados and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Barbados Branch with assistance from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Secretariate in London.

Throughout the conference, I met with parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth, sharing Western Australia's experiences and discussing strategies to advance gender equality and inclusive governance.

Whilst in London in transit I met Australia's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, The Hon Stephen Smith.

6. What will be the outcome of this travel?

The outcome of this travel will be the application of insights gained from the CPC and CWP Conference to strengthen gender equality and inclusive parliamentary practice in Western Australia. Participation in the workshops provided valuable learnings on gender-sensitive parliaments, legislative reform to advance women's rights, and coordinated responses to harassment and violence against women in politics.

The travel has supported professional development and strengthened international collaboration, enabling the sharing of Western Australia's experience while gaining practical approaches being implemented across other Commonwealth jurisdictions. The relationships established with women parliamentarians and CPA officials will assist ongoing cooperation on gender equality initiatives.

These outcomes will inform parliamentary contributions, engagement with community and advocacy organisations, and efforts to support cultural and structural reforms within the Western Australian Parliament. The insights gained will contribute to continuing work to promote safer, more inclusive and representative democratic institutions in Western Australia.

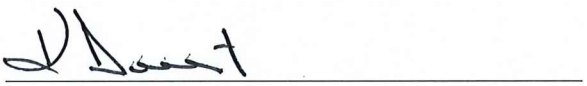
CERTIFICATION

To be signed by Member of Parliament before submission

This report reflects all expenditure for international expenses using the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance.

Expenditure detailed in this report conforms to the:

- *conditions of use of the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance; and*
- *principles for use of allowances provided in this 1.6 of this Determination, which states that Members must:*
  - *(a) use allowances for Parliamentary business:*
  - *(b) adhere to any conditions for using allowances;*
  - *(c) be prepared to be personally responsible and accountable for the use of allowances;*
  - *(d) be prepared to publicly justify use of allowances; and*
  - *(e) act ethically and in good faith when using, and accounting for the use of allowances.*

Signed: 

Date: 3.11.2025

APPENDIX 2 - PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL AND STUDY ALLOWANCE: INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL REPORT (FOR THE 42ND PARLIAMENT)

MEMBER: **LIBBY METTAM MLA**

ELECTORATE: **VASSE**

In accordance with Part 6 of this Determination, within 90 days of expending moneys for international expenses using the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance, Members must submit to the Tribunal:

- *a report including details of:*
  - *how moneys were expended; and*
  - *the expected benefit to the State from the expenditure.*
- *certification that:*
  - *use of moneys has complied with principles set out in section 1.6; and*
  - *expenses related to the Member's Parliamentary business.*

Members must submit the certification and report to submissions@sat.wa.gov.au

Reports provided by Members will be published on the Tribunal's website.

PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL AND STUDY ALLOWANCE (PART 6 OF DETERMINATION)	
INTERNATIONAL EXPENSES ONLY	
TRAVEL DATES: **6th Sept 2025 to 14 Sept 2025**	
DESTINATIONS VISITED: **United Kingdom - London**	
ALLOWANCE CLAIMED:	**$2125.00**
REPORTED EXPENDITURE:	
• Airfares Booked by Minister's office	
• Fees for conferences or short courses	
• Accommodation - Great Scotland Yard – Pounds/Stirling 881.73	
○ Number of nights Booked by Ministers Office - 5 nights	
• Incidentals	$300.00
• Other (please identify) Meals	$1825.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**$**
TOTAL SURPLUS/DEFICIT	$

EXPECTED BENEFIT TO THE STATE FROM THE EXPENDITURE

Please outline the following:

1. What was the rationale for the travel/why is the travel warranted?

I was invited as by the Minister for Defence Industries, Hon Paul Papalia as Shadow Minister for Defence & AUKUS.

My presence with the Minister would demonstrate a unified front to the international defence sector and Western Australia's growing interest in support national and international Defence objectives. There were also a large number of Western Australian small businesses in attendance, and I was providing additional support to them.

2. Why was travel required to achieve this?

Minister Invited me to attend in her capacity as Shadow Minister.

Ministerial delegation with Minister Paul Papalia MLA (Defence & AUKUS).

The delegation aligns with the WA Defence and Defence industry Strategy 2025 which outlines an ambitious vision for WA Contribution to sovereign capability and global partnership.

3. In what way will the travel benefit the electorate and/or State?

Growing our defence industries is a major part of the plan to diversify Western Australia's economy. Made in WA is one part. Another is WA becoming a renewable energy powerhouse. We have growing tourism and hospitality, agriculture, life sciences, medical research and space industries, all of which will contribute to making more things here in WA.

4. What was the community driver to undertake this travel?

The Minister led a delegation of more than 20 WA businesses to the world's largest defence expo in London where they met with some of the biggest defence companies. The Minister secured two memoranda of understanding to grow WA's defence capabilities.

The first is with BAE, Europe's largest defence contractor. The collaboration with BAE will support workforce training and development in WA. It will also help to integrate local businesses into international supply chains. The second MOU was signed with Rolls–Royce, a company that has powered the Royal Navy's nuclear submarines for more than six decades. Like the first MOU, it will focus on advancing the WA workforce in preparation for the AUKUS sustainment.

5. Who was the host organisation for any conference(s) attended? What other organisations and/or individuals did you meet with and in which locations?

Attended Defence Security Equipment International DSEI 2025 – Daily visiting, attending Forums/Meetings, including the signing of the significant MoU's involving Western Australian companies.

Attended defence Industry forum & High Commissioner reception.

Met with QinetiQ. Rolls Royce Submarines, High Commissioner Australia, Babcock Davenport Site Visit, UK Sub Club.

6. What will be the outcome of this travel?

The purpose of the travel was to create opportunities for Western Australia small to medium size businesses to enter international markets.

The trip translated into workforce development, international partnerships, and concrete business opportunities that position WA as a key defence industry hub;

- Two major MOUs secured
    - BAE Systems: Agreement to support workforce training and development in WA and integrate WA businesses into global defence supply chains.
    - Rolls-Royce: Agreement focused on preparing and upskilling the WA workforce for AUKUS submarine sustainment.
- Strong exposure at the world's largest defence expo
    - A WA-led delegation of 20+ local businesses engaged directly with major global defence companies.
- Direct commercial wins for WA companies
    - Critical Infrastructure Technologies (Fremantle) signed an MOU with Babcock for self-deploying mobile communications infrastructure.
    - Franmarine (Henderson) selected to provide biofouling services for AUKUS submarines rotating through WA from next year.
- Strategic economic impact
    - Strengthened WA's role in global defence supply chains.
    - Advanced workforce readiness for AUKUS.
    - Supported broader economic diversification under Made in WA, reinforcing local capability, jobs, and industry growth.

CERTIFICATION

To be signed by Member of Parliament before submission

This report reflects all expenditure for international expenses using the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance.

Expenditure detailed in this report conforms to the:

- *conditions of use of the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance; and*
- *principles for use of allowances provided in this 1.6 of this Determination, which states that Members must:*
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  - *(d) be prepared to publicly justify use of allowances; and*
  - *(e) act ethically and in good faith when using, and accounting for the use of allowances.*

Signed: 

Date: 18/12/2025

APPENDIX 2 - PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL AND STUDY ALLOWANCE: INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL REPORT (FOR THE 42ND PARLIAMENT)

MEMBER: _____Sophie McNeill_____ MLA/MLC (circle one)

ELECTORATE: _____Western Australia_____

In accordance with Part 6 of this Determination, within 90 days of expending moneys for international expenses using the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance, Members must submit to the Tribunal:

- *a report including details of:*
  - *how moneys were expended; and*
  - *the expected benefit to the State from the expenditure.*
- *certification that:*
  - *use of moneys has complied with principles set out in section 1.6; and*
  - *expenses related to the Member's Parliamentary business.*

Members must submit the certification and report to submissions@sat.wa.gov.au

Reports provided by Members will be published on the Tribunal's website.

PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL AND STUDY ALLOWANCE (PART 6 OF DETERMINATION)	
INTERNATIONAL EXPENSES ONLY	
TRAVEL DATES: 27 January – 6 Feb	
DESTINATIONS VISITED: Indonesia (Aceh & Jakarta), Japan (Tokyo), South Korea (Seoul)	
ALLOWANCE CLAIMED:	**$10,889**
REPORTED EXPENDITURE:	
• Airfares	$3653.80
• Fees for conferences or short courses	-
• Accommodation	$1,761
○ Number of nights	9
• Incidentals	$3025
• Other (please identify) ○ Public Transport ○ Car and driver (Indonesia) ○ Translators (Japan, Indonesia & Korea) ○ Travel Insurance ○ Overseas phone e-sim	$2449.77
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**$10,889**
TOTAL SURPLUS/DEFICIT	$10,159

EXPECTED BENEFIT TO THE STATE FROM THE EXPENDITURE

Please outline the following:

1. What was the rationale for the travel/why is the travel warranted?

To meet with stakeholders in Japan and South Korea that receive significant fossil fuel exports originating from Western Australia. I also travelled to meet with stakeholders in Indonesia who are experience the direct impacts of climate change caused by Western Australia's LNG exports. This travel allowed me to gain a better understanding of the direct and indirect impacts of our state's exports and inform decisions related to policy and legislation in this area. Engaging with experts, organisations and community groups in person allowed me to build relationships and learn about the best way to achieve progress in areas of mutual interest.

2. Why was travel required to achieve this?

By travelling to these countries I was able to visit sites that have suffered impacts of the climate crisis. It also allowed me to meet with many important stakeholders in person to build relationships and gain a deeper understanding of the impact that our state's exports are having.

3. In what way will the travel benefit the electorate and/or State?

The relationships and information that has resulted from these will directly impact my work and has significantly improved my understanding of the international context of our state's trade. In turn, this has informed my work to ensure that Western Australia is making resource, trade and industry decisions that benefit the state over the long term. This has already assisted with my work by gaining access to research, analysis and expertise.

4. What was the community driver to undertake this travel?

Representatives of the Government have travelled to most of these countries over the last year to promote our LNG exports. Following this travel the government has been promoting and sharing a narrative regarding this trade. Constituents and stakeholders have questioned this and raised concerns. By travelling to these countries and fact checking firsthand by discussing with experts and those directly impacted I was able to gain valuable insight that directly challenges the government's claims.

Further, the cost of living and energy crises Western Australians are now facing are impacted by decisions that our state government makes when it comes to these industries regarding government expenditure and revenue raising. If done with the long-term interests of our communities. By having a better understanding of the best way to promote and advance our state's interest I am better equipped to genuinely set up our communities so that they have

what they need over the long term and ensure that our state's beautiful and culturally significant sites are protected.

5. Who was the host organisation for any conference(s) attended? What other organisations and/or individuals did you meet with and in which locations?

I did not attend a conference. I met with the following organisations and individuals:

- Indonesian forum for the Environment (Sumatra)
- Visited a site 3.5 hours north of Medan to Aceh Tamiang that was one of the worst impacted areas from the floods.
- Trend Asia - Organisation that acts as an accelerator of energy transformation.
- Human Rights Watch Indonesia
- Greenpeace Indonesia
- Institute for Essential Services Reform - Transformation think tank
- Indonesian forum for the Environment (WALHI) National office Jakarta
- Kepala Simpul dan Jaringan JATAM (Mining Advocacy Network) - Org concerned with energy transition and mining
- Think Policy - Activist organisation in Jakarta
- Yayasan Indonesia Cerah - NGO for the advancement of energy transition policy in Indonesia
- Gema Bangsa
- Jakarta Post
- Greens Party Indonesia
- Influence Map
- JACSES
- Oil change international
- Kiko Network
- Japan centre for sustainable environment and society
- E3G
- Japan commodities and energy security
- Institute for Sustainable Energy Policies
- Japan Climate Alliance
- Greenpeace
- Friends of the Earth
- 350.org
- Representative from Tomin First party
- Toyo Keizai journalist
- Kira Yoshiko MP
- Akiko Kando and Aska Blanchard from Greens Japan
- Fridays for Future Japan
- Plan 1.5 Seoul
- Solutions for Our Climate - South Korea
- Greens Korea
- Climate Change Centre
- MP Park - National Assembly Members' office Building
- NEXT group - Seoul based think tank working closely with government

6. What will be the outcome of this travel?

By meeting with the above experts, stakeholders, and community groups and establishing ongoing working relationships with them I have learned a significant amount about the environmental, social and economic impact of WA's exports. Meeting with these groups and building these relationships will directly influence my work in the portfolios of Resources, Climate Change and Fossil fuels.

CERTIFICATION

To be signed by Member of Parliament before submission

This report reflects all expenditure for international expenses using the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance.

Expenditure detailed in this report conforms to the:

- *conditions of use of the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance; and*
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  - *(e) act ethically and in good faith when using, and accounting for the use of allowances.*

Signed: _____

Date: _____

CERTIFICATION

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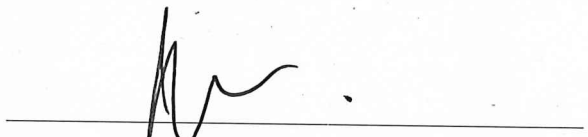
Signed: 

Date: 29 April '26

APPENDIX 2 - PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL AND STUDY ALLOWANCE: INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL REPORT (FOR THE 42ND PARLIAMENT)

MEMBER: Hon Michelle Hofmann MLA/**MLC** (circle one)

ELECTORATE: Western Australia

In accordance with Part 6 of this Determination, within 90 days of expending moneys for international expenses using the Parliamentary Travel and Study Allowance, Members must submit to the Tribunal:

- *a report including details of:*
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- *certification that:*
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Members must submit the certification and report to submissions@sat.wa.gov.au

Reports provided by Members will be published on the Tribunal's website.

PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL AND STUDY ALLOWANCE (PART 6 OF DETERMINATION)	
INTERNATIONAL EXPENSES ONLY	
TRAVEL DATES: 23-25 June 2026	
DESTINATIONS VISITED: London, United Kingdom	
ALLOWANCE CLAIMED:	**$7,045.14**
REPORTED EXPENDITURE:	
• Airfares	$4,572.66
• Fees for conferences or short courses	$2,472.48
• Accommodation ○ Number of nights	
• Incidentals	
• Other (please identify)	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**$7,045.14**
TOTAL SURPLUS/DEFICIT	N/A

EXPECTED BENEFIT TO THE STATE FROM THE EXPENDITURE

1. What was the rationale for the travel/why is the travel warranted?

I was invited to attend the Alliance for Responsible Citizenship (ARC) conference in London from 23–25 June 2026. The conference brought together several thousand people, including legislators, policymakers and experts from around the world. The central theme was how to repair what has been lost and raise a resilient generation able to step into responsibility and purpose. The programme brought together leaders with experience governing nations and shaping policy at the highest level.

2. Why was travel required to achieve this?

Travel to London was required to participate in the conference in person. The programme comprised scheduled sessions, panels and interviews across three conference days, as well as networking events in the mornings and evenings. There were many booths set-up with opportunities available for in-person discussions with various global organisations. All of these forms of engagement together provided opportunities to hear directly from international speakers and engage with organisations and other attendees.

The morning and evening events provided greater opportunities to have in-depth conversations about policy matters with subject-matter experts.

The programme covered topics including civilisational history, social cohesion, economic governance, energy and resources, the environment, technology and human flourishing. There was a mix of educational sessions and cultural experiences. The in-person events provided opportunities for me to connect personally with people representing charities, think tanks and community organisations.

3. In what way will the travel benefit the electorate and/or State?

The conference addressed issues relevant to Western Australia and its communities, including strengthening the social fabric, free enterprise and good governance, energy and resources, environmental stewardship, technology, prosperity and leadership development. Exposure to international perspectives on these subjects will support informed parliamentary consideration of policy choices, particularly where decisions affect the State's economy, resources, communities and future generations. The conference focus on resilience and young leaders also provides perspectives relevant to building capable, engaged communities.

4. What was the community driver to undertake this travel?

The community driver was the public interest in resilient communities, strong social connections and institutions, responsible leadership, and opportunities for the next generation. These concerns connect with practical policy questions about economic opportunity, governance, energy, resources, education, the environment and technology. ARC 2026's stated focus on repairing what has been lost and raising a generation ready to take responsibility and purpose provided a forum to consider these issues.

5. Who was the host organisation for any conference(s) attended? What other organisations and/or individuals did you meet with and in which locations?

The conference was hosted by the Alliance for Responsible Citizenship (ARC).

The programme featured international speakers, policy-makers and public figures, including former national leaders, and covered the themes outlined above.

During the conference I also met with current and former Members of Parliament from Western Australia, other Australian States, Federal Australian Parliament, and from other countries including the United Kingdom and New Zealand.

I met with people involved in a variety of organisations, some of whom I had engaged with online during research for WA Parliamentary legislative debates, particularly on the subject of surrogacy. Some of the representatives that I met with were from organisations including Stop Surrogacy Now UK, Them Before Us and Sex Matters.

6. What will be the outcome of this travel?

The expected outcome is a broader understanding of international perspectives on social cohesion, governance, economic opportunity, energy and resources, environmental stewardship, improving educational outcomes, technology and leadership. This knowledge will inform parliamentary work, policy discussions and engagement with the electorate on issues affecting Western Australia. In addition, the personal connections made provide unique opportunities for ongoing conversations with experts on a variety of policy issues.

CERTIFICATION

To be signed by Member of Parliament before submission

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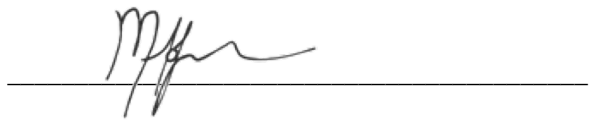
Signed: 

Date: 12/10/2026