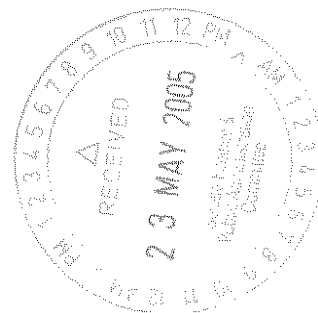




The Secretary
The Senate Finance and Public Administration
Legislation Committee



PEO Program & CVP Figures 2004-05

This morning I was asked about the Citizenship Visits Program (CVP) in relation to the Budget Estimates process for the Department of the Senate. Please find attached more complete figures as concerns the Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) program and the CVP component within it for 2004-05. I also note:

1. Background

The CVP is a long running, over 15 years, per capita subsidy payment (on a sliding scale depending on distance), administered by the House Departments to provide assistance to students travelling long distances (more than 1000 km) to visit the Parliament (see attachment 2). A central element of the program is participation in a PEO program. The PEO delivers parliamentary education services, via a professionally developed one hour role play, to students visiting Parliament House whether or not they are eligible to access the CVP subsidy. For those who cannot attend Parliament House, the PEO continues to develop its national outreach program.

This year, the CVP represents approximately 22% of the total number of school students taking the PEO program at Parliament House.

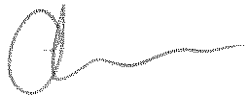
The payment is a subsidy, it is not meant to meet all travel costs. Successive Presiding Officers have closely monitored this over the years and the size of the subsidy, its distribution, eligibility conditions and overall funding have been regularly adjusted as required, the latest being an increase sought and obtained in December 2004 to 30 June 2005, to \$1.36million – approximately 50% funded by each House. The Parliamentary departments continue to monitor the distribution and conditions of the CVP.

2. Limits to CVP and general PEO programs

- Number of rooms available – including uncertain bookings in committee rooms;
- Number of PEO educators – 16 classes per day during school year peak periods;
- and

- CVP Funding exhausted prior to end of financial year, despite 2004-05 funding increase

This material is submitted for the information of the Committee.



Chris Reid
Director
Parliamentary Education Office

23 May 2005

Total no. of students in PEO Program in 2004/2005

State/Territory	CLASSES	%	STUDENTS	%
NSW	1386	57.0	49776	60.5
QLD	355	14.6	11084	13.5
VIC	390	16.1	13558	16.5
SA	87	3.6	2246	2.7
WA	86	3.6	2023	2.5
TAS	29	1.2	781	0.9
NT	16	0.7	303	0.4
ACT	71	2.9	2394	2.9
OTHER	4	0.2	93	0.1
TOTAL	2424	100%	82258	100%

CVP students as part of PEO Program in 2004/2005

State/Territory	CLASSES	%	STUDENTS	%
NSW	62	10	2054	11.3
QLD	339	54.7	10622	58.5
VIC	12	1.9	391	2.2
SA	81	13	2105	11.6
WA	85	13.7	2017	11.1
TAS	27	4.4	714	4
NT	14	2.3	243	1.3
ACT	0	0	0	0
OTHER	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	620	100%	18146	100%
	(or 25.5% of total PEO program)		(or 22% of total PEO program)	

Note: figures @ 23 May 2005 include advanced bookings to 30 June 2005

Ref: School Bookings database - administered by Sergeant-At-Arms

To be eligible for the subsidy prior approval must be obtained. **Applications will NOT be accepted if received less than five clear working days before the visit is to take place.**

Applications will be dealt with in order of receipt until funds are exhausted. A limited waiting list will be kept in case of cancellations. Unsuccessful applications will be given priority for the following year.

Payment Procedures

Payment of the subsidy will be on a reimbursement basis after travel has been undertaken. Payment will be approved by the Office of the Serjeant-at-Arms and made through the Department of the House of Representatives' Finance section. The Office of the Serjeant-at-Arms has to be satisfied that a school has participated in the required activities set out above before payment can be approved. A school may expect the funds to be deposited into their nominated bank account within ten working days of the receipt of its' completed claim form.

Groups will be asked to complete a claim form indicating school(s) involved, point of departure, costs incurred for the trip to Canberra, and the names of eligible students. Claimants will be required to retain their receipts for a period of two years but should not submit them unless requested to do so for audit purposes.

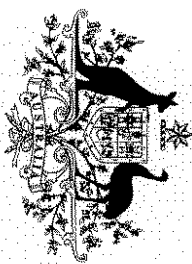
Funds should be used to reduce the costs for individual students. The full amount of the subsidy received (\$40, \$110 or \$230 as appropriate) is to be reimbursed to each student.

Bookings will only be accepted for the school which students visiting Parliament attend. In cases where

school excursion groups comprise students from various schools, payment will be made to the school each student attends. Payment will not be made to one school for distribution to other schools.

For CVP bookings and further information please contact:

Office of the Serjeant-at-Arms
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Telephone: 1800 646 337
Facsimile: 02 6277 8416



Parliament of Australia

Citizenship Visits Program

Guidelines

Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

1 January 2004

Introduction

The Citizenship Visits Program (CVP) provides for a per capita subsidy to final year's primary school and secondary school students traveling long distances to visit the Parliament and other national institutions in Canberra.

The Program is funded jointly by the Departments of the Senate and the House of Representatives and is administered by the Sergeant-at-Arms' Office.

Objective

The objective of the Program is to provide financial assistance to final year's primary school and secondary students from areas distant from Canberra to enable them to visit the national Parliament and take part in a program designed to enhance their understanding of the roles of the Houses and the parliamentary system of government.

Funding available

Funds are allocated on a per student basis at rates varying according to distance travelled. The distance criteria for eligibility are as follows:

- schools located more than 1000 kilometres from Canberra – \$40 per student;
- schools located more than 2000 kilometres from Canberra – \$110 per student;
- schools located more than 3000 kilometres from Canberra – \$230 per student;
- all students from Tasmania regardless of distance from Canberra – \$110 per student. This amount has regard to the additional expense of the seafair crossing.

Distances are to be calculated by road from Canberra using the most favourable travelling routes (not necessarily the shortest). For this purpose distances as given in the latest edition of Gregory's Road Atlas (currently 2001 edition) of Australia are to be used.

Eligibility for Funding

To be eligible to receive the subsidy, students must be part of an organised school or school excursion group whose principal purpose for travelling to Canberra, or the Canberra district, is to visit the national Parliament and other national institutions. School groups whose principal purpose for visiting Canberra or the Canberra district is to engage in sporting or other cultural activities are not eligible for funding.

A student is only eligible to receive the subsidy once and the onus is on the school to ensure that each student for whom the subsidy is claimed has not, to the best of the school's knowledge, received the subsidy previously.

All final year primary school and secondary school students visiting Parliament House and meeting the criteria set out above are eligible for a subsidy. In addition, students in their second last year of primary school may be eligible for a subsidy if they are part of a composite group which also includes final year primary school students, where, for logistical reasons, the school involved does not visit Canberra every year. Eligibility for the subsidy does not extend to overseas students attending Australian schools or to teachers or other adults accompanying the students.

To qualify for funding school groups must undertake to:

- visit at a time when the full range of programs is available (the program will not operate on weekends and public holidays in the ACT);
- take part in organised activities provided by the Parliament, spending a minimum of 2 hours in Parliament House. This should include:
 - 1) a guided tour of the Parliament including the galleries of both Houses of Parliament;
 - 2) an education program as arranged by the Parliament Education Office(both these programs can be booked through the Sergeant-at-Arms' office on 1800 646 337); and
- undertake at least one further approved activity in Canberra from a range including:
 - 1 participate in the hospitality program and, meet their local Member or State/Territory Senator where possible;
 - 2 complete a special program as organised by their local Member or State/Territory Senator; or
 - 3 participate in an education program at the Electoral Education Centre at Old Parliament House, ACT.

Application Requirements

Schools wishing to take advantage of the CVP are required to apply to the Office of the Sergeant-at-Arms, House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600 on telephone 1800 646 337.