



SHADOW MINISTER FOR TREASURY & FINANCE

PO Parliament House

Waigani.NCD

m: +675 71111777

e: chairman@kdda.gov.pg

Paying Politicians – Ethics and Accountability

“In my capacity as a Member of the Papua New Guinea Salaries Remuneration Commission (SRC), I met with key organisations in Canberra, Australia involved in making payments to their Parliamentarians. I was quite impressed with the level of support provided to Australian Parliamentarians in helping ensure that their parliamentary expenses are ethical and fully accountable. The rigour and transparency in determining parliamentary pay was also impressive. With such systems in place in PNG, I do wonder if we may be able to provide better, more ethical, and more accountable government” stated the Shadow Minister for Treasury and Finance, Ian Ling-Stuckey.

“The visit to Australia included discussions with the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority which was established in response to public outcry about some inappropriate expenses incurred by Australian politicians. This is a new body which provides Australian parliamentarians with a quick response service to advise on whether particular expenses are appropriate. The guiding principles for parliamentary payments are: value for money; ensuring the dominant purpose is related to parliament and not family or other expenses; taking personal responsibility for the final decision; full accountability with all expenses reported on-line; and an agreement to work in good faith (see picture). Parliamentarians can receive clear advice, often within 10 minutes, on whether a proposed expense is ethical, complies with the law, and fits with the guiding principles of parliamentary expenses. This is a very real training ground for ethical use of public funds. Lessons from such guidance could be taken to larger grant programs. I consider such practical support could provide our own png parliamentarians with good training on how best to use other funds such as DSIP and PSIP” stated the Shadow Treasurer.

“I also held discussions with the Australian Remuneration Tribunal-Members of Parliament, which was responsible for setting Parliamentary wages as well as judges and senior public servants. Australia has an interesting structure for this Tribunal with three independent advisors. They have used the services of independent consultants to work through in detail the estimated work value for Australian parliamentarians, making comparisons with other workers in the private and public sectors. The rigour and transparency of these reviews were considered important for building confidence in parliamentary pay levels.

“I also had meetings with two areas in the Australian Department of Finance. These covered more detailed elements of parliamentary pay, including superannuation schemes and funding arrangements. I thank the relevant public service staff who set aside time for these meetings, along with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for organising the appointments. As always, we must ensure that any policies are ones that work in the PNG context. However, it is useful to review and learn from the experiences of others. This gives us ideas on what may work in PNG to make for a more effective, ethical and accountable parliament” said Mr Ling-Stuckey.

Hon.Ian Ling-Stuckey,CMG.MP
Shadow Minister for Treasury & Finance

27 December 2018



PNG's Shadow Minister for Treasury and Finance, Ian Ling-Stuckey, meeting with officials from the new established Independent Parliamentary Expense Authority (IPEA) at the Australian Department of Finance in Canberra on 19 December 2018.