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**NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA  
REMUNERATION TRIBUNAL**

**REPORT ON ENTITLEMENTS  
OF ASSEMBLY MEMBERS**

**AND**

**DETERMINATION No. 1 of 2016  
ON ENTITLEMENTS OF  
ASSEMBLY MEMBERS**

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**REMUNERATION TRIBUNAL REPORT  
ON ENTITLEMENTS OF ASSEMBLY MEMBERS  
AND  
DETERMINATION NO. 1 OF 2016  
ON ENTITLEMENTS OF ASSEMBLY MEMBERS**

**Introduction**

1. On 26 October 2015, the Administrator issued a notice under section 4(1) of the *Assembly Members and Statutory Officers (Remuneration and Other Entitlements) Act* to request the Remuneration Tribunal to inquire into and determine the entitlements (other than basic salary or additional salary of office) of Assembly Members for performing the functions of an Assembly Member. The request required the Tribunal to provide its report and determination by 5 February 2016.
2. Under section 4A of the Act, the resulting report and determination must be provided to the Administrator and the Minister. The Minister is required to table a copy of the report in the Assembly within 6 sitting days after receiving it. The Assembly may disallow all or part of the Determination within 10 sitting days of tabling (section 21 of the Act).

**Powers of the Tribunal**

3. Section 4(1) of the *Assembly Members and Statutory Officers (Remuneration and Other Entitlements) Act* provides as follows:
  4. Tribunal's powers except for basic salary or additional salary of office
    - (1) *The Tribunal must, on the Administrator's request, inquire into, or inquire into and determine, an entitlement (other than the basic salary or additional salary of office) of an Assembly member for:*
      - (a) *performing the functions of an Assembly member; or*
      - (b) *performing a function for the Assembly; or*
      - (c) *holding or occupying any of the following offices:*
        - (i) *the Speaker of the Assembly;*
        - (ii) *the Leader of the Opposition;*
        - (iii) *any other office in the Assembly;*
        - (iv) *a Minister;*
        - (v) *a member of the Executive Council.*
    - (1A) ...
    - (1B) *Without limiting subsection (1), the Tribunal may, under the request, inquire into, or inquire into and determine, other entitlements, including, for example, the following:*
      - (a) *an entitlement for establishing or maintaining offices for an Assembly member, including:*
        - (i) *the provision of staff and equipment for the offices; and*
        - (ii) *the payment or reimbursement of amounts to cover expenses incurred in relation to the offices;*
      - (b) *an entitlement for official travel undertaken by:*
        - (i) *an Assembly member; and*

- (ii) a person who, under a determination, may accompany an Assembly member for the travel;
- (c) the provision of a motor vehicle to an Assembly member;
- (d) an entitlement relating to child care services required because of the performance of official functions by an Assembly member.

### **Conduct of this Inquiry**

4. The Administrator's request to the Tribunal follows the 2015 Report on the Redistribution of Northern Territory Legislative Assembly Electoral Boundaries. The redistribution will take effect at the time of the next Northern Territory general election and will result in changes to the boundaries of some electorates. It will also result in the seat of Greatorex in Alice Springs being abolished and a new seat of Spillett being created in Palmerston. The Tribunal has restricted itself largely to the consideration of the impact of the new boundaries on the electorate allowance for each seat.
5. All members were asked to provide details of their electorate expenses, on the basis that all information would be confidential and destroyed at the completion of the inquiry. More than half of the members responded with this information and most of those who chose not to respond indicated that they considered their electorate allowance was adequate.
6. The Tribunal will request similar information during future inquiries to ensure that electorate allowances are at the appropriate level.

### **Electorate of Spillet**

7. The Tribunal considered the boundaries of the new electorate of Spillett and is of the opinion that it is an urban seat and should receive an electorate allowance commensurate with other urban seats.
8. The Tribunal has added Spillett to Appendix 2 to its Determination of Entitlements for Assembly Members and deleted the seat of Greatorex which was abolished in the 2015 Electoral Boundaries review.

### **Electorate Allowance**

9. On the information available to the Tribunal, the Tribunal found that members generally expended the total amount of their allowance. The Tribunal finds that, with the exception of the Arafura electorate, the amount provided was adequate to enable members to serve their electorate. Accordingly, the Tribunal found no reason to increase the electorate allowances provided by Determination No. 1 of 2015 for any electorate apart from Arafura.
10. The Tribunal found that the member for Arafura has been severely limited in servicing his electorate by reason of an inadequate electorate allowance. The member is based in his electorate office on the Tiwi Islands and has two other significant islands in his electorate, those being Goulburn Island and Croker Island. Other communities within the electorate on the mainland are Jabiru, Gunbalanya and Maningrida.

11. The member provided an estimate of travel costs, including food and accommodation, to visit communities in the electorate six times a year. These costs are between \$65,000 and \$70,000 per annum using mostly regular public transport flights and including car hire. The present Electorate Allowance is \$75,500 and after deducting \$50,500 (being the basic electorate allowance for urban electorates) an amount of only \$25,000 would be available for travel within the electorate. To provide an adequate level of allowance to enable the member to travel around this electorate to the extent the Tribunal considers reasonable, the Tribunal has increased the amount of electorate allowance by \$25,000. The Tribunal would be willing to review this amount in the future based on actual expenditure.

### Rural Electorates

12. The Tribunal is aware that a number of the larger rural electorates were given an increased electorate allowance many years ago to cater for charter flights. The Tribunal did consider whether it would be appropriate to deduct an amount from the electorate allowance for these seats and have a special separate allowance for charter flights. However, the Tribunal recognises that there have been significant changes in the NT air charter industry and such an approach would disadvantage those electorates that cannot access charter flights at a reasonable rate. It was also clear to the Tribunal that members in large rural seats travel extensively by modern vehicle which now provide superior safety and communication facilities. On balance, the travel expenses incurred by members in these electorates appears to be consistent with the level of electorate allowance as currently set and no change is proposed at this time.

### Effect of this Determination

13. The attached Determination amends Determination No. 1 of 2015 and takes effect as from the date of the next Northern Territory general election.

### Acknowledgements

The Tribunal is grateful to those members who responded to the request for information and thanks them for their assistance

Dated 2 February 2016



Mr John Flynn AM  
Member



Mr Michael Martin OAM  
Member



**NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA  
REMUNERATION TRIBUNAL**

*Assembly Members and Statutory Officers  
(Remuneration and Other Entitlements) Act*

**DETERMINATION OF ENTITLEMENTS OF ASSEMBLY MEMBERS**

Under section 4(1) of the *Assembly Members and Statutory Officers (Remuneration and Other Entitlements) Act*, the Tribunal determines as follows:

- (a) This Determination amends Determination No. 1 of 2015 and takes effect as from the date of the next Northern Territory general election.
- (b) Schedule 2 Annual Rate of Electorate Allowance in Determination No. 1 of 2015 is rescinded and Schedule 2 in this Determination replaces that rescinded Schedule.

Dated 2 February 2016

  
Mr John Flynn AM  
Member

  
Mr Michael Martin OAM  
Member

## SCHEDULE 2

### Annual Rate of Electorate Allowance

Electoraltes	Rate
Araluen	\$ 50,500
Blain	
Braitling	
Brennan	
Casuarina	
Drysdale	
Fannie Bay	
Johnston	
Karama	
Fong Lim	
Nightcliff	
Port Darwin	
Sanderson	
Spillett	
Wanguri	
Goyder	\$ 61,350
Katherine	
Nelson	
Daly	\$ 71,700
Arnhem	\$ 72,550
Nhulunbuy	\$ 73,350
Namatjira	\$ 78,900
Barkly	\$ 83,350
Arafura	\$ 100,500
Stuart	\$ 106,000