

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Travel Policy

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Approved by: National Executive

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Relevant Rule: No specific rules apply

Relevant Legislation:

Associated Policies Motor Vehicle Policy

1. Purpose

Travel is an integral part of conducting HSU business. This policy specifies when and how travel may be undertaken and the reimbursement or payment of travel and entertainment expenses incurred during the conduct of HSU business.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all HSU staff, elected officers, National Executive and National Council members and external parties where HSU will be funding the travel.

Where a Branch does not have a policy consistent with this policy, this policy will apply to that Branch substituting the Branch structures, officers and employees with those contained in this policy where appropriate.

3. Definitions

'credit card' also means 'debit card'.

'External Parties' means travellers who are required to undertake official Union business but are not HSU staff or National Executive or National Council members.

'Finance Committee' or 'Committee' means the National Finance Committee of the HSU

'group meals' means Executive or Conference dinners.

'HSU National' or 'National' means National Office of the HSU.

'National Officer' or 'Officer' whether paid or not, has the same meaning as the phrase 'officer of an organisation' in Division 3A of Part 2 of Chapter 5 of the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009*.

'National Secretary' means person elected by National Council as such in accordance with rule 23B to act in accordance with responsibilities under rule 26 of the HSU Rules.

'other approved person' means person/s approved by the National Secretary, National Executive or National Finance Committee.

'travel booker' means the administrative staff member who is responsible for making all airfare and accommodation bookings for National Office staff and where relevant National Executive and National Council members.

4. Travel Related Expenditure

4.1 Any National Officer, employee or other approved person are entitled to have the HSU National pay, or to be compensated, for the reasonable travel

costs (travel, accommodation, meals, taxis, parking, and incidentals) when on HSU National related business.

- 4.2 Travel is to be for official union business and must contribute to the strategic or operational goals of the HSU. Travel should only be undertaken where there is a specific need and all alternatives for interaction (e.g. video conferencing) have first been explored.

5. Approval and Reporting

- 5.1 Except for the National Secretary, all air travel and accommodation must be pre-approved by the National Secretary or the Finance Committee.
- 5.2 All air travel and accommodation made by the National Secretary must be approved by the Finance Committee by way of resolution.
- 5.3 The National Secretary must provide a report to each meeting of the Finance Committee for all air travel and overnight stays paid from HSU National funds. The report must detail the nature of the travel and the reasons the travel was undertaken.

6. Air Travel and Accommodation

- 6.1 In most cases the travel booker will book and pay directly for air travel and accommodation.
- 6.2 Where this is not possible or practical, the booking and payment can be made by using an HSU credit card where one is provided or available.
- 6.3 Unless in exceptional circumstances, only economy class airfares should be purchased for air travel on HSU National business. When purchasing flights, the best value flights fit for the purposes of travel be considered. The booking of airlines will not be influenced by a traveller's airline preference or membership of a loyalty or benefit program.
- 6.4 The most cost-effective airfare should be purchased where possible. Selection of higher cost alternatives should be limited to when travellers are unable to comply with the fare conditions attached to lower cost airfares, e.g. when meeting with Ministers or where timing of meetings or other schedules are likely to change.
- 6.5 Bookings should be made as far in advance as practicable.
- 6.6 Accommodation while travelling should provide a safe comfortable and secure environment, be convenient to the place of work and provide value for money. The expected level of accommodation is 4-star hotels or equivalent.
- 6.7 It is recognised that from time to time the cost of accommodation becomes expensive due to accommodation shortages, a city hosting large events, sitting weeks in Canberra, seasonal variations etc. Taking account of the above matters, the travel booker should source the best rate available for suitable accommodation. Where the accommodation rate is unavoidably higher than what would be considered a reasonable rate, an explanation

should be recorded.

7. Meal Expenditure

7.1 Meal expenses can be paid using a Union credit card where travel occurs under the following circumstances and a suitable meal is not provided by the host of the meeting or as part of a fare:

Breakfast	where travel begins before 7:00 am
Lunch	where travel begins before 12:00 pm
Dinner	where the travel concludes after 8:00 pm

7.2 Meal expenses are to align with the “Reasonable rates” as defined in the current Australian Taxation Office (ATO) Taxation Determination using table ‘1’.

7.3 The Union will pay reasonable alcohol costs incurred as part of the evening meal (as a guideline up to AUD\$15 per calendar day).

7.4 The Management Accountant will ensure that all travel expenses receipts/tax invoices contain sufficient information to establish the exact nature and purpose of the expense or claim.

8. Not payable during leave

8.1 An employee who takes leave while travelling on official duty is not entitled to the payment of travelling expenses or allowances during the period of leave except in the case of illness.

9. All other travel related expenditure

9.1 Where an employee has been issued with a credit card they should, in accordance with sub-clause 7.1, charge expenditure to the card. The employee must ensure they provide a tax receipt/invoice, in addition to the credit card merchant receipt, in accordance with clause 12.

9.2 Where a credit card is not available, the employee can claim a reimbursement of expenditure by completing an Expense Claim form. Supporting documentation must be provided in accordance with clause 12 as proof of payment.

9.3 Prior to the reimbursement of the expense being made to the employee, the National Secretary must approve such payments by signing the Expense Claim form.

9.4 Where an expense claim has been made by the National Secretary, the expenditure must be approved by the Finance Committee by way of resolution prior to the payment being made.

9.5 A copy of all expense claim forms will be provided to each meeting of the Finance Committee.

10. Expenses that the Union will not pay

- 10.1 The Union will not pay or reimburse purchases of a personal or private nature. The expenses that the Union will not incur are:
- a) Minibar, bar, and alcoholic beverage costs, other than as part of the evening meal (clause 7.3) or where specifically approved as official entertainment expenditure;
 - b) Health spas, saunas, massages and similar expenditures;
 - c) Costs of in-room / external movies;
 - d) Costs of laundry (including dry-cleaning) where trips are less than 4 business days;
 - e) Other items determined to be personal or private;
 - f) Tips or gratuities.

11. National Officers and other approved persons

- 11.1 Where National Officers and other approved persons are attending a national meeting of the Union, including Executive meetings, Finance Committee meetings or other like meetings, HSU National will pay the travel costs to the extent of an economy class airfare, accommodation, taxis, airport parking, incidental allowance, meals and group meals. The meals and incidental allowance payable are those details in clause 7 and 13.
- 11.2 Where the costs are incurred by the individual; the individual may make a claim for reimbursement. Where a Branch pays for the costs, the Branch may make a claim for reimbursement.
- 11.3 Where HSU National organises group meals, an approved officer or employee will pay for the meal using an HSU credit card. The cost of group meals, including alcohol will not exceed an average of \$150 per person. In exceptional circumstances (e.g. Where meal options are limited) the National Finance Committee may approve expenditure above the average limit provided for in this policy
- 11.4 All other travel costs will be the responsibility of the individual or the relevant Branch.
- 11.5 Supporting documentation must be provided in accordance with clause 12 as proof of payment for any claims for reimbursement.
- 11.6 Where the attendee at a National Council meeting is a member of the Executive, HSU National will pay the travel costs.
- 11.7 Where the attendee is a Branch Delegate to National Council, HSU National will pay for group meals and costs directly associated with the meeting costs (excluding air travel, accommodation, and meals other than group meals).
- 11.8 An incidentals allowance may be claimed for reimbursement for overnight travel in accordance with clause 13.

- 11.9 The Finance Committee may approve other costs associated with the holding of a National Council meeting as required.

12. Supporting Documentation

- 12.1 All expenditure must have the appropriate supporting documentation, in accordance with the ATO requirements which include provision of an itemised tax receipt / invoice. Details should include the issuer, date, expenditure, GST value and amount as proof of payment.
- 12.2 If the expense includes payment for more than one individual, the receipt / tax invoice must be annotated to indicate:
- a) Total number of attendees
 - b) Names of employees and officers (traveller or non-traveller)
 - c) number of other attendees
 - d) reason e.g. conference or meeting

13. Incidentals Allowance

- 13.1 Where any National Officer, employee or other approved person is required to undertake work related travel requiring overnight accommodation an incidental allowance may be claimed. The incidental allowance payable is that defined by the current ATO Taxation Determination using table '1'.
- 13.2 The National Secretary and employees must complete an Incidentals Allowance form to claim the allowance.
- 13.3 Prior to the allowance being processed for employees through payroll, the National Secretary must approve such payments by approving the Incidentals Allowance form.
- 13.4 Incidental allowance claims made by the National Secretary must be approved by the Finance Committee by way of resolution prior to the allowance being processed through payroll.

14. Airport Parking, Taxis and Hire Car Rental

- 14.1 All airport parking and taxi travel may only be utilised by travellers on official HSU National business.
- 14.2 Travellers should use reasonable professional judgment and discretion in determining the need for airport parking and taxi use.
- 14.3 Except as provided for in 14.4, taxi travel paid for by the HSU National must not be used for personal travel.
- 14.4 The use of taxi travel from home to work and work to home is prohibited except for:
- a) travel from work to home after hours where personal safety is a consideration.

- b) travel to and from work when unexpected work-related events or emergencies occur that require taxi travel outside of normal working hours.
- c) for special circumstances e.g. transporting heavy items or mobility issues.
- d) travel between the airport and home when travelling on HSU National business.

14.5 Hire car rental may be used where economical and practical. All vehicle rentals must be for economy class vehicles unless three or more people are travelling together and/or when travellers must carry excess baggage and/or equipment for HSU National purposes. Hire car rental must be preapproved by the National Secretary.

14.6 Any driving and parking offences are the responsibility of the individual in accordance with the Motor Vehicle policy.

15. Public Transport

15.1 Where convenient and economical to do so, train, tram, bus or other forms of public transport may be utilised when travelling on HSU National business. Costs incurred will be reimbursed using the Expense Claims Form. Where appropriate, HSU National will provide employees with a MYKI, Opal or similar card to enable use of public transport HSU National business.

16. Toll Usage

16.1 In accordance with the Motor Vehicle Policy

17. Frequent Flyers Program Benefits

17.1 It is recognised that frequent travel often involves travel outside of standard hours and National Officers and employees being away from home for extended periods of time. In recognition of the personal impact of business travel, National Officers and employees may retain frequent flyer points earned because of HSU National travel.

18. Accompanying Spouse, Partner and Dependent Travel

18.1 Costs associated with spouse, partner or dependent travel will not be paid for by the HSU National except on prior approval and by resolution of the National Executive. In approving expenditure associated with spouse, partner or dependent travel, the National Executive will detail in the minutes the reasons for approving the travel. Spouse, partner or dependent travel will only be approved where it is directly related to the conduct of the National Officer's or employee's duties (e.g. attendance at an official function or ceremony where the spouse or partner has been invited).

18.2 HSU National acknowledge that from time to time a spouse, partner or dependent will accompany the traveller when travelling. Where this occurs,

it must not result in an additional cost to the Union. The HSU National will not fund any cost incurred for an accompany spouse, partner or dependent except as provided in sub-clause (18.1).

19. Compliance and Review of this Policy

- 19.1 A substantial or repeated breach of this policy by a National Officer or employee covered by the scope of this policy will be deemed to be a disciplinary offence in the case of an employee or misconduct under the HSU Rules in the case of a National Officer.
- 19.2 At least three yearly, the National Executive will undertake a review of the operation of this Policy to ensure that the policy is adequately regulating the travel expenditure of the HSU National and that the policy is being fully complied with and report the findings of the review to the Executive.
- 19.3 The Finance Committee and the Executive will each have a standing 'Governance Issues' agenda item for each meeting to provide a regular forum for the discussion of HSU National governance issues.
- 19.4 The National Secretary will ensure that all relevant policies and procedures are made available to Officers and employees and that appropriate training (including an induction process) is provided to ensure they understand the Union's financial policies and procedures and their own responsibilities.