



# *Burwood Council*

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## INTERSTATE AND OVERSEAS TRAVEL POLICY

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Public Document  
Adopted by Council: 9 September 2013 (Min. No. 135/13)  
Trim No: 13/38334  
Team Responsible: Office of the General Manager

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## Objectives

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To establish guidelines for interstate and overseas travel for Councillors and staff.

## Scope

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This policy applies to the Mayor, General Manager, Councillors and staff of Burwood Council.

## Definitions

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- Interstate – Travel to another State of Australia (does not include travel to the ACT)
- ICAC – Independent Commission Against Corruption
- ATO – Australian Tax Office

## Policy Statement

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Councillors and/or staff may be required from time to time to undertake travel either interstate or overseas in association with their Council duties.

## Interstate Travel

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Where Councillors propose to travel interstate, the proposal shall be considered at an open Council Meeting through a report from the Mayor or General Manager.

Where the cost of the travel is not expected to exceed \$2000 for transport, accommodation and out of pocket reimbursement of expenses per person, no detail is required to be supplied other than a recommendation for approval that the visit is to take place.

Where the cost of the travel is expected to exceed \$2000 for transport, accommodation and out of pocket reimbursement of expenses per person, a detailed report should be provided outlining:

- Who is to take part in the travel
- Proposed itinerary and expected duration
- Objectives to be achieved in undertaking it, including an explanation of what benefits will accrue to undertaking the visit
- Details of costs, including any amounts expected to be reimbursed by participants

All interstate travel costs by Councillors must be within the allocated budget for the period.

Economy class flights will be provided for all interstate travel.

In instances where Councils are required to visit Canberra for official purposes, such as meetings with Federal parliamentarians and Ministers, travel to the ACT is regarded as being within NSW.

If the travel is to be sponsored by private enterprise, ICAC guidelines and reporting structures should be followed.

## Overseas Travel

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Council is required under Section 428 of *the Local Government Act 1993* and Section 217 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* to report on overseas visits undertaken in any year by Councillors, staff or other persons representing Council. These details are included, after the visit, in Council's Annual Report produced each year.

All proposals for overseas travel should be considered at an open meeting of Council and a resolution made as to whether the travel is to take place.

Economy class travel should be used for flights. However, for trips in excess of six hours, Premium Economy could be used if available for those travel legs.

All proposals should indicate:

- Who is planned to take part in the travel
- Proposed itinerary and expected duration
- Objectives for undertaking the travel, including an explanation of what benefits will accrue from the exercise with an approximate budget
- Detailed costs, including a statement of any amounts expected to be reimbursed by the participants

If the visit is to be sponsored by private enterprise, ICAC guidelines and reporting structures should be followed and this should form part of the Council reporting process.

After returning from the trip, a detailed report should be provided to Council outlining the achievement of objectives and the benefits to the community that have occurred as a result of the travel.

### **Frequent Flyer Points**

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Flights organised by Council and paid for in accordance with policy, cannot accrue Frequent Flyer points.

### **Travel Expenses**

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Council will pay for expenses for authorised interstate and overseas Council business in accordance with the ATO travel allowance expenses as determined by the Commissioner annually (TD2012/17).

A daily meal and incidental expense allowance will be paid to each authorised attendee for the duration of the conference and a day prior to and after for travel purposes.

### **General**

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If the visit is to be sponsored by private enterprise, ICAC guidelines and reporting structures will be followed and this will form part of the community reporting process.

All overseas travel by staff and Councillors in the capacity of an official of the Council (and any associated cost) will be detailed in Council's Annual Report. This detail will include the cost to the Council for the travel, who took part in the travel, the length of the trip and how the objectives were met and what quantifiable benefits will flow to the community.

For overseas travel, travel records and receipts need to be kept where the travel involves more than eight nights away from the Councillor or staff member's ordinary place of residence.

A daily meal and an incidental expenses allowance will be paid to each authorised attendee in accordance with the ATO determination (TD2012/17) in relation to reasonable travel and meal allowance expense amounts, provided that such expenses are subject to a period of stay not exceeding the period for the conference or authorised business, plus one day each way for travelling.

**Note:** The Ruling for the 2013/2014 Financial Year is TD2012/17 and is available on the ATO Legal Database at [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au). The median salary range will be used for Councillors.

Any Councillor who undertakes overseas travel that is funded by the Council (or partly funded by the Council) must report to a Council Meeting within 8 weeks of returning from the travel. The report to Council must include:

- The actual cost to the Council of the travel
- The outcome of the travel
- How the objectives of the travel were met and what quantifiable benefits will flow to the community
- Any other aspects of the travel that may be of interest to the Council and/or the community

### **Related Information/Glossary**

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- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*
- Code of Conduct
- Councillor's Expenses and Facilities Policy
- Travel Booking Procedure
- Australian Tax Office Travel Allowance Expense (TD2012/17)

### **Review**

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To be reviewed every four years.

### **Contact**

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