

Queensland Independent
Remuneration Tribunal

Home security allowance for Members of Parliament

Determination 33/2025
14 February 2025



Determination 33/2025

Background and Reasons

Tribunal roles and responsibilities

The *Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal Act 2013* (the Act) provides for the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal (the Tribunal) to:

- review and determine remuneration (annual and additional salaries, allowances and entitlements) in connection with members and former members of the Queensland Legislative Assembly (Remuneration Determination); and
- review and determine entitlements of cross bench members to additional staff members (Additional Staff Member Determination).

For a Remuneration Determination, the Tribunal may have regard to the value to the community of a Member of the Legislative Assembly (member) carrying out their role, functions and responsibilities and the importance of a member being appropriately remunerated for carrying out their role. The Tribunal may also consider relevant laws and any other matters the Tribunal considers appropriate including, for example, the size of an electorate¹. Before making a Determination, the Tribunal must consult with and consider the views of the Clerk of the Queensland Parliament (the Clerk).

The Tribunal must ensure any allowances paid to a member reflect the reasonable expenses incurred by a member in servicing their electorate and ensure these allowances are not a substitute for other remuneration and that accommodation services or other entitlements mentioned in section 59D of the Act (such as electorate offices, staffing support and major items of office equipment) are not taken into account².

Submission and consultation

The Tribunal received a submission from the Clerk of the Parliament (Clerk) regarding the provision of a monetary allowance for members to install home security systems.

Before making a Determination, the Tribunal must consult with and consider the views of the Clerk.

¹ Section 29 of the Act.

² Section 30 of the Act.

Home security for Members of Parliament

Under current arrangements, there is no allowance for home security systems for members.

There is provision for home security for Ministers under *The Queensland Ministerial Handbook*, for the Leader of the Opposition under *The Queensland Opposition Handbook* and for the Speaker under the *Guidelines for the Financial Management of the Office of the Speaker*.

On 17 October 2023, the Clerk made submissions to the Tribunal on the general premise of expanding the use of the Electorate and Communication Allowance (ECA) to cover home security costs for members as part of the Tribunal's annual review of allowances. However, the Tribunal did not consider home security for members to be appropriate expenditure under the ECA.

On 23 September 2024, the Clerk made a submission to the Tribunal for a new allowance of up to \$6,500 per parliamentary term to reimburse members for home security measures implemented on the basis of Queensland Police Service (QPS) security assessments. The Clerk's submission highlights the potential safety risks that members and their family face as a result of their role in servicing the electorate, including at public engagements, in transit or in their home. The proposed allowance for home security systems is sought to enhance the safety and security of members, in conjunction with other security measures being implemented by Parliamentary Services.

On 17 January 2025, the Clerk made a further submission identifying logistical challenges associated with the QPS conducting a large number of security assessments across the State in a timely manner. To address this issue, the Clerk proposed that in addition to QPS conducting security assessments, there also be scope for the Parliamentary Service and in isolated instances, an appropriate private sector security consultant to conduct security assessments.

Considerations

The Tribunal considered:

- the definition of remuneration (schedule 1 Dictionary), which means salary, allowances or entitlements in connection with the member or former member, other than accommodation, services or other entitlements mentioned in section 59D;
- existing provision for home security for Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition and the Speaker under alternative mechanisms;
- sections 29 to 31 of the Act, which outline general principles, requirements and timing for remuneration determinations;
- section 30, which provides that any allowance to be paid reflect the amount of reasonable expenses incurred by a member in servicing their electorate, and to ensure that allowances are not a substitute for other remuneration;
- the Clerk's submissions, including in relation to logistical challenges of undertaking security assessments of members' homes across the state;

- the potential risks to members and their families due to the nature of their role, public profile and requirement to be absent from home in servicing the electorate.

Conclusion

The Tribunal concluded that its power to make a determination for an allowance for home security measures for members of Parliament is limited to members other than Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition and the Speaker.

The Tribunal concluded home security measures would minimise the potential safety and security risks associated with members carrying out their role, functions and responsibilities in and for their electorate. The Tribunal considers that an allowance to assist with the cost of installing or upgrading home security measures is a reasonable expense incurred by a member in servicing their electorate, and will not be a substitute for other remuneration.

The Tribunal concluded that a new allowance of up to \$6,500 per member, other than Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition and the Speaker (an eligible member) for home security measures is appropriate.

The Tribunal concluded that for each term of Parliament, an eligible member may seek reimbursement of expenses of up to \$6,500 to assist with the cost of installing, repairing or upgrading home security measures, to the extent the home security measures are recommended by a risk assessment undertaken in relation to the member's home by the QPS or another appropriately qualified person approved by the Clerk (a security adviser).

The allowance may be used to purchase, install, repair or upgrade home security systems or for other measures appropriate to the member's personal circumstances, such as, for example, installing security screens and improving line of sight and lighting for CCTV. The allowance may also be used to engage security services by third party providers, if that is recommended as necessary by a security adviser in its assessment.

The allowance may not be used to replace a home security system installed utilising the allowance, unless it is recommended as necessary following a security assessment by a security adviser.

A member is not automatically entitled to a new home security system under the allowance in each term of Parliament they are elected, rather, only if recommended by a security adviser in its assessment.

A member's home is any residential house or unit in which the member usually resides, including with immediate family members (spouse/partner and/or children and/or parents and/or siblings). The allowance for home security measures is not available to reimburse a member for expenses related to installing home security in an investment or commercial property, or the home of a family member the eligible member visits from time to time.

Determination 33/2025

Any inconsistencies between earlier Tribunal Determinations and Determination 33/2025 are resolved in favour of Determination 33/2025. Matters in earlier Determinations not addressed in this Determination are confirmed by the Tribunal and not amended.

Home security allowance for eligible Members of Parliament

1. The Tribunal determines a new allowance, the *Home Security Allowance*, is to be available to reimburse eligible members for expenses incurred in implementing home security measures recommended by a security assessment undertaken in relation to the eligible member's home by the Queensland Police Service or other appropriately qualified person approved by the Clerk.
2. The Tribunal determines the amount of the home security allowance is up to \$6,500 per eligible member per term of Parliament.

Commencement of the home security allowance

3. The Tribunal determines the home security allowance will be available for eligible members of the 58th Parliament, with effect from the date of this Determination.

Eligible members

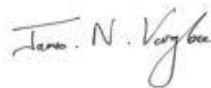
4. The Tribunal determines an eligible member is a Member of the Queensland Legislative Assembly other than a Minister, the Leader of the Opposition or the Speaker.

Date of Determination: 14 February 2025

Effective Date: 14 February 2025



Keitha Dunstan
Chairperson



Jim Varghese
Member



Patrick Weller
Member