

## USE OF THE OFFICIAL RESIDENCES FOR PRIVATE EVENTS

**Chief of Staff, we recommend you note:**

1. This document sets out the general principles that apply to the use of the Official Residences for medium or large private events.
2. Consistent with the *Official establishments – guidelines for use*, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet would invoice Prime Ministers and/or their spouses for any additional costs incurred relating to medium or large private events held at the Official Residences.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

TIM GARTRELL

Noted / please discuss

**Comments:**

26/11/25

**KEY POINTS**

1. The guidelines specify that the Prime Minister receives accommodation and sustenance at Government expense. By convention, the entitlement is extended to the Prime Minister's spouse and dependent children.
2. Under the Guidelines, Prime Ministers and their spouses, as Principals, are permitted to use the Official Residences for private events, including whilst on leave.
  - i. The Guidelines specify that medium and large private events hosted by the Prime Minister and/or their spouse, such as weddings, birthdays or large dinner parties, may be held at the Official Residences at the Principals' expense.
  - ii. In practice this means costs over and above the general operations of the household ("additional costs") will be borne by the Prime Minister.
3. In the case of medium to large events, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) would provide the Principals or their representatives with an itemised breakdown of any additional costs incurred by PM&C and would send an invoice seeking reimbursement.
  - a. PM&C's receipts, records and invoices are subject to the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (the FOI Act).
  - b. The Prime Minister's personal household staff would seek approval from the Principals or their representatives before entering into any arrangement that formed part of a cost recovery arrangement with PM&C. This could include costs for casual staff, staff travel and staff accommodation.
4. There are no costs associated with the use of the Residences (i.e. venue hire) or, subject to the matters set out below, use of permanent house staff.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**Site location and security

5. Prime Ministers are provided with close personal protection (CPP) due to their high-profile status and the need for protection against threats to ensure personal safety and continuity of government. This is standard practice and is provided by specialised security services, such as the Australian Federal Police (AFP) for close protection, and includes measures for both public and private activities.

6. s 47E(d)

Staffing

7. Consistent with previous arrangements, engagement of permanent personal household staff employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (MoP(S) Act) to work at the residences ensures experienced staff, familiar with the facilities and the expected level of service and discretion, are onsite to support private functions.

a. Permanent personal household staff working at the residences are salaried, and, under current arrangements, weekends are considered within their ordinary work days and as such, salaries are inclusive of penalties. No additional costs would be incurred. The Prime Minister's personal household staff should consider the rostering and management of total hours worked of permanent personal household staff.

8. Casual staff are engaged either via the MoP(S) casual pool or via an external labour hire company.

- a. The Prime Minister's personal household staff would engage suitable casual staff for a medium or large private event.
- b. Prime Ministers and their spouses, in conjunction with the Prime Minister's personal household staff, should consider the rostering of casual staff and their total hours worked. Additional costs may be incurred for overtime, casual loading and shift penalties.
- c. Principals would need to cover costs incurred to engage casual staff for medium or large private events. PM&C would raise an invoice addressed to the Prime Minister to recover these costs.

Travel and accommodation

9. Prime Ministers and their spouses should cover costs incurred for any staff travelling to assist with a medium or large private event at the Official Residences. This may include airfares, accommodation and sustenance.

- a. Staff will only travel if prior approval from the Principals is provided.
- b. These arrangements would be managed by PM&C, with costs to be recovered.

10. Where travel is for private purposes, PM&C would not cover these costs. Where travel is for official purposes, PM&C would generally cover these costs. Where staff are already required to travel for official purposes and subsequently or incidentally support a private event, the costs would be apportioned accordingly on the basis of no additional cost being borne by the tax payer for the private event.

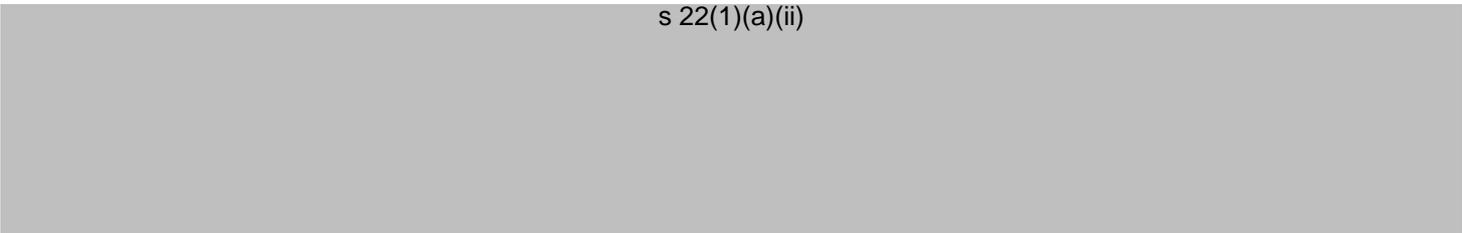
Insurance

11. PM&C holds appropriate insurance to cover both people and property during private events held at the Official Residences.

**Risks and Sensitivities**

The use of an Official Residence for medium to large private functions by a Prime Minister or their spouse is likely to attract public and Senate scrutiny, particularly with respect to ensuring no costs are incurred by the Commonwealth or any perceived advantage obtained as a result of occupying the position of Prime Minister.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



If knowledge of an upcoming event at an Official Residence became public knowledge, there could be an increased presence of media or disruption events such as protests near the site. To manage possible risks that could arise as a result, the AFP would take appropriate action based on a risk assessment.

If PM&C makes a payment – or creates, issues or receives an invoice – in regards to a private event held at the Official Residence, these documents will be considered documents of the agency and will be subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the FOI Act). Consideration of an FOI request will follow standard processes of checking against any relevant exclusions.

**Financial Implications**

Nil financial implications for PM&C. Any costs would be reimbursed by the Principals.

**Consultation**

PM&C DIVISIONS –Government Division, Ministerial Support Division.

**Martin Hehir PSM**

Deputy Secretary Governance and Corporate Group

Phone no: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

26 November 2025

**Policy Officer:**

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Phone no: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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PM&C Secretary; FAS, Government Division, *A Walter*; FAS, Ministerial Support Division, *A Spyrou*

PMO Chief of Staff; Deputy Chief of Staff s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Official: Sensitive

# THE PRIME MINISTERS WEDDING AT THE LODGE

## Key points:

- The Prime Minister and Ms Jodie Haydon wed at The Lodge on Saturday 29 November 2025. The event was considered a private event under the *Official establishments – guidelines for use* (the Guidelines).
- The Guidelines are available on [pmc.gov.au](http://pmc.gov.au).
- Under the Guidelines, the Prime Minister and Ms Haydon (the Principals) are permitted to use the Official Residences for private events, such as weddings, with expenses paid for by the Principals.
- On 26 November 2025, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) provided advice to the Prime Minister's Office on the use of the Official Residences for private events.
- Administrative arrangements have been managed by the Prime Minister, his office and his personal household staff consistently with the Guidelines, and the advice provided by PM&C.
- *Questions relating to the event including the guest list, menu, suppliers and organisers should be directed to the Prime Minister.*
- *Questions relating to the protective security provisions for the event should be directed to the Australian Federal Police.*

## The Guidelines

- The *Official Establishments – guidelines for use* specify that the Prime Minister receives accommodation and sustenance at Government expense. By convention, the entitlement is extended to the Prime Minister's spouse and dependent children.
- Under the Guidelines, the Principals, are permitted to use the Official Residences for private events.
  - The Guidelines specify that private events hosted by the Prime Minister and/or their spouse, such as weddings, birthdays or large dinner parties, may be held at the Official Residences with expenses paid for by the Principals.
  - In practice this means expenses over and above the general operations of the household ("additional expenses") will be paid for by the Principals.
- As part of regular business practice, following a private event, PM&C provide an itemised breakdown of expenses to be paid for by the Principals.

OFFICIAL: SENSITIVE

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- There are no costs associated with the use of the Residences (i.e. venue hire) or use of permanent house staff.

## Facts and figures

- On 26 November 2025, PM&C provided advice in the form of a brief to the Prime Minister's Office on the use of the Official Residences for private events. The advice was subsequently noted by the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff on 27 November 2025.
- This advice set out high level detail on protective security for the sites and insurance, as well as advice on administrative arrangements for staffing, and expenses to be paid for by the Principals.
- On 29 November 2025, the Prime Minister and Ms Haydon wed at the Lodge.
- PM&C were not involved in the planning and coordination of the event.

### Justification for using an Official Residence for private events

- Under the Guidelines, the Principals, are permitted to use the Official Residences for private events.
- Media reporting has speculated on a number of reasons why The Lodge was a suitable and preferred venue for the wedding. This includes security infrastructure as well as the Australian Federal Police (AFP) being permanently onsite, familiar with the residence and regularly providing measures for both public and private activities.

### Expenses incurred by PM&C

- The Principals dealt directly with suppliers without any involvement of the Commonwealth.
- Expenses incurred by PM&C, will be paid for by the Principals.
  - Expenses incurred by PM&C will be finalised once invoices are received.
  - PM&C will raise an itemised invoice for the Principals to pay all expenses.

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### Staffing

- Consistent with longstanding convention, permanent personal household staff are employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (MoP(S) Act) to work at the Official Residences.
  - The use of permanent household staff ensured experienced staff, familiar with the facilities and the expected level of service and discretion, were onsite for the event, at no additional cost to the Commonwealth.

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## BACKGROUND

### Permanent household staff

- It is a longstanding convention to provide the Prime Minister with permanent personal household staff.
  - Currently the Prime Minister has five permanent personal staff working from The Lodge (3) and Kirribilli House (2).
  - These staff are remunerated on a salaried basis and operate on a Monday to Sunday working week to meet operational requirements.

### Travel and accommodation

- The Principals will cover accommodation expenses for any staff who travelled to assist with the private event held on 29 November 2025. These expenses included accommodation.
  - Where arrangements were managed by PM&C, an invoice will be raised for the Principals to pay all expenses.

### Security

- The Lodge provided a safe, secure and private location for the event.
- The Prime Minister is provided with close personal protection whilst in office, which includes putting in place measures for both public and private activities.
- Requests for further details on security should be directed to the AFP.

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