



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body
Thursday 30 October 2025 (Session 6)

Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme – Travel Application

Executive summary

1. The SPCB is invited to consider an application submitted by Oliver Mundell MSP to have the travel and overnight costs associated with a proposed visit to Washington, United States of America from 19 to 22 December 2025 in relation to the annual Pan Am Flight 103 Memorial Service to be met under the provisions made at paragraphs 2.2.3 and 6.1.5 of the Reimbursement of the Members' Expenses Scheme.

Issues and options

2. The Reimbursement of the Members' Expenses Scheme makes provision to meet travel and overnight costs associated with a Member undertaking their parliamentary duties. However, in relation to travel outwith the UK, Members are required to make an application to the SPCB to have such costs met from the Scheme.
3. The criteria previously applied when determining such applications included where the reason for the journey was:
 - a. Directly related to a specific constituency matter, where the visit is necessary in order to address the issue
 - b. Directly related to Parliamentary business
 - c. Something the SPCB considered the Parliament should be paying for
 - d. Provides value for money.
4. The purpose of Mr Mundell's visit is to attend and participate in the annual Pan Am Flight 103 Memorial Service as per invitation, alongside David Mundell MP by laying a wreath on behalf of his constituents for the Victims of Pan Am Flight 103 (the organisation representing the families) as part of this years' service. The service will take place at the Lockerbie Memorial Cairn within Arlington National Cemetery, marking the time and date of the Lockerbie bombing. Mr Mundell has

a long-standing relationship through his work as an MSP with many of these individuals and with the victims' family group who play an ongoing role in supporting local remembrance projects in Lockerbie. US families are integral to the local community relationship with the Syracuse University which supports an annual exchange with young people from Lockerbie Academy. The opportunity to engage directly is particularly purposeful this year, in light of some recent changes to the Syracuse-Lockerbie Scholarship and with the ongoing focus there has been on the local community as a result of ongoing legal proceedings. The trip would also facilitate a valuable opportunity to meet with the victims' family group and other relevant organisations and individuals around formal proceedings. The event will be attended by senior representatives of the Crown Office, Police Scotland and the British Embassy. US political representatives, officials and a large number of victims' families and connected organisations will also be in attendance.

5. Mr Mundell proposes to travel between 19 and 22 December 2025. He plans to fly from Edinburgh to Washington (via London Heathrow) and return. For his flights from London Heathrow to Washington and return, Mr Mundell intends to save costs by utilising a personal credit card companion voucher in his father, David Mundell's name. This offer allows him to be added at significantly reduced costs, totalling £237.50 on the same transatlantic flights. This offer, while particular to the circumstances, offers best value for money (saving close to £700) and involves no personal financial benefit to either party. In addition, Mr Mundell would also be claiming for return flights from Edinburgh to London Heathrow costing £232.60. It should also be noted that these flights have already been booked as cancellation charges out-weighed the costs of paying for another flight. Mr Mundell recognises that these costs may not be met if the SPCB declines this application. The total costs for flights are estimated at £470.10. It should be noted that without the discount from the voucher as detailed above, flight costs would be estimated at approximately £1100.
6. Mr Mundell would require overnight accommodation for three nights which is estimated around £287, excluding meals. This estimation is based on accommodation close to Arlington Cemetery (venue of the service). The SPCB should note, the exact amount for this is subject to the exchange rate at the time of payment so may slightly differ. This cost falls within the Allowances overnight rates for outside the UK.
7. Additional costs for Mr Mundell's visa are £30. Airport transfers and his travel in the United States would be approximately £60 (using a combination of taxis and public transport). Airport travel (mileage) from his home to Edinburgh Airport and return would cost approximately £35 and car parking £50.
8. A contingency of around £170 is requested to account for any variations in cost, and if and when appropriate, hotel breakfast and modest evening meals.
9. The total cost for travel, accommodation and associated costs (including the stated contingency) outlined above would be approximately £1,100 for the visit to and from Washington, United States of America. Mr Mundell intends to meet any additional costs outwith this amount personally.

Governance

10. There are no governance issues as the Scheme provides for Members travelling abroad and applying to the SPCB for the costs to be met from the Scheme prior to travelling.

Resource implications

11. Should the SPCB determine that the costs should be met, it is confirmed that there are sufficient funds available within the overall Members budget for 2025-2026.

Publication Scheme

12. This paper can be published in accordance with the SPCB's publication scheme.

Next steps

13. Advise the Member of the SPCB's decision and if the SPCB agree the travel and overnight costs can be met from the Scheme, then the Member will be advised to move forward with the proposed visit.

Decision

14. The SPCB is invited to consider an application from Mr Mundell for the costs of travel and overnight accommodation to be met from the Members' Expenses Scheme for a proposed visit to Washington, United States of America as detailed above.

**Allowances Office
October 2025**