

Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body Thursday 25 June 2026 (Session 7)

International Relations: Parliamentary travel – Commonwealth Parliamentary Association British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference

Executive summary

1. The International Relations Office's budget is approved, as part of the overall budget proposal, by the SPCB on an annual basis. This budget is then allocated to individual visits and development opportunities by the International Relations Office, in line with the Scottish Parliament's International Strategy.
2. The Code of Conduct for MSPs requires Members to register and "provide details of visits outside the United Kingdom in certain circumstances." Some overseas visits are excluded from this requirement to register – that is when the travel and other costs of a visit are wholly met by the SPCB, or are approved by the SPCB prior to the visit, as the visit is deemed to be "parliamentary in nature".
3. This paper provides a brief summary of the upcoming visit to the 55th [Commonwealth Parliamentary Association](#) (CPA) [British Islands and Mediterranean Regional](#) (BIMR) Conference and invites the SPCB to confirm that it is parliamentary in nature, therefore exempting it from registration on Members' register of interests.
4. The SPCB is not asked to approve the travel – only the question of whether it is parliamentary in nature.

Issues and options

The Code of Conduct

5. Members are required under the Code of Conduct for MSPs to register certain overseas visits – including certain visits for political purposes and a visit which meets the 'prejudice test' ("an interest meets the prejudice test if, after taking into account all of the circumstances, that interest is reasonably considered to prejudice, or give the appearance of prejudicing the ability of the member to participate in a disinterested manner in any proceedings of the Parliament").
6. In accordance with paragraphs 62 and 64 of Section 2 of the Code of Conduct, the travel and other costs of a visit which are wholly met by the SPCB, or are approved by the SPCB prior to the visit, is exempt from

REFERENCE: SPCB (2026) - Paper 45 – by correspondence

registration as an overseas visit in the Register of Interests of Members of the Scottish Parliament.

7. The purpose of this paper is therefore to invite the SPCB to agree that the visit outlined below is “parliamentary in nature” and that it is therefore exempt from needing to be registered by the Members taking part.

55th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) British Islands and Mediterranean Regional (BIMR) Conference

8. The annual BIMR conference will take place in Gibraltar 17-19 June 2026. The event will bring together approximately 50 parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from across the region for this unique knowledge sharing and networking opportunity.
9. The theme of this year’s conference is “Modern Legislatures for Modern Challenges”. The conference will include three plenary sessions, a workshop and two townhall events. It will also include the BIMR Annual General Meeting.
10. The Scottish Parliament is allowed to send three MSP delegates to attend the conference. Following an application process, Stuart McMillan MSP was selected by the Presiding Officer as the delegate. No other applications were received.
11. Steven Bell, International Relations Officer, will support the delegation.
12. The Scottish Parliament is a very active member of the CPA and the BIMR conference offers an opportunity for delegates to engage with counterparts from 13 legislatures across the region and to promote the work of the Scottish Parliament. The conference is not offered virtually, with the exception of the AGM, and as such Members need to be there in person to take part.
13. The only viable travel option between Scotland and Gibraltar is by air. Due to the length of the flights, economy class was offered to the delegates. Business class travel was not considered. The individual CO₂e footprint for flying economy class (return) to Gibraltar from Edinburgh is 688.71CO₂e KG.

Publication Scheme

14. This paper will be published in line with the SPCB’s Publication Scheme.

Decision

15. The SPCB is invited to agree that the travel outlined in this paper is parliamentary in nature, therefore exempting it from registration.

International Relations Office

June 2026