

<b>Member</b>	Matt Fregon	<b>Electorate</b>	Ashwood/Mount Waverley
<b>Period</b>	1 April 2024 to 30 June 2024		

<b>Regulation 6 - Expense allowance and electorate allowance</b>	
Total amount paid to member for electorate allowance	\$12,079.83
Total amount paid to member for expense allowance	\$954.66

<b>Regulation 7 - Motor vehicle allowance</b>	
Total amount paid to member for motor vehicle allowance	\$0.00
Member did not receive the motor vehicle allowance in the previous quarter and member has elected to receive the motor vehicle allowance for this quarter	No

<b>Regulation 9 - Parliamentary accommodation sitting allowance</b>	
Total amount paid to member for parliamentary accommodation sitting allowance	\$0.00
Suburb in which the member's parliamentary accommodation is located	n/a

<b>Regulation 10 - Travel allowance claims</b>					
Date from	Date until	Reason for travel	Total amount paid	Town or city in which accommodation was located	Value of the accommodation

Total number of nights for travel allowance claims 0  
Total amount paid to member for travel allowance \$0.00

<b>Regulation 11 - Commercial transport allowance claims</b>					
Date from	Date until	Reason for travel	Total amount paid	Mode of transport	Value of transport

Total number of nights for commercial transport allowance claims 0  
Total amount paid to member for commercial transport allowance \$0.00

<b>Regulation 12 - International travel allowance claims</b>			
Date from	Date until	Reason for travel	Total amount paid
17-Apr-24	28-Apr-24	Representing the people of the Ashwood District electorate in joining the 2024 Parliamentary ANZAC Delegation led by Natalie Suleyman MP at the invitation of Mr Dogan Isik, COUNSUL-GENERAL of Turkiye.	\$7,874.30

Total number of nights for international travel allowance claims 9  
Total amount paid to member for international travel allowance \$7,874.30  
See attached travel report for further details

## Anzac Delegation 2024

Matt Fregon MP, Member for Ashwood District  
Travel Report

18 April 2024 – 28 April 2024



### **Attendees:**

Natalie Suleyman MP, State Member for St Albans  
Tim Bull MP, State Member for Gippsland East  
Ella George MP, State Member for Lara  
Belinda Wilson MP, State Member for Narre Warren North  
Juliana Addison MP, State Member for Wendouree  
Emma Kealy MP, State Member for Lowan  
Luba Grigorovitch MP, State Member for Kororoit  
Pauline Richards MP, State Member for Cranbourne  
Matt Fregon MP, State Member for Ashwood  
Anthony Cianflone MP, State Member for Pascoe Vale  
Cindy McLeish MP, State Member for Eildon  
Martin Cameron MP, State Member for Morwell  
John Berger MP, State Member for Southern Metropolitan Region  
Tim McCurdy MP, State Member for Ovens Valley

## **Statement of Objectives:**

In April 2024, I was privileged to join a cross-party Delegation of Victorian Members of Parliament to Türkiye to attend the Anzac Memorial Services, visit places of cultural significance and engage with the Turkish Government and Parliament.

This Victorian MP's Anzac Delegation has been an annual tradition for State Members of Parliament. After a pause on travel due to the pandemic, this tradition has returned in 2024. It was my great honour to represent my community of the Ashwood District on this important delegation.

Türkiye and Australia share a unique bond – through the shared experience that began on the battlefields of Çanakkale (Gallipoli). This year marks the 109<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the Gallipoli campaign that forged the spirit of the Anzacs of mateship, camaraderie and mutual respect. Values that now form part of the national identity of Australia, New Zealand and Türkiye.

Since that time, Australia and Türkiye have become close friends and share in commemorations on Anzac Day and throughout the year as thousands of Australians make the pilgrimage to Gallipoli to pay their respects and honour the fallen. My great uncle Samuel Gamble was one of the first ANZAC's and also lucky enough to return home. It was heartwarming to see the respect given by Türkiye to our fallen soldiers and the memory of the sacrifices made.

The arrival of Turkish Airlines' inaugural flight to Melbourne in March 2024 and the announcement that they would base their operations out of Melbourne Airport illustrates the growing importance of these cultural ties, and also growing economic opportunities. This introduction of Turkish Airlines into our local economy represents a major opportunity for increased international trade and tourism. Providing more competition and cheaper flights for Victorians while also creating hundreds of jobs for Victorians. Melbourne Airport in the North-West of metro Melbourne is a growing centre of economic activity which supports over 20,000 jobs.

By fostering these economic and cultural ties between Victoria and Türkiye, we can develop further economic opportunities for both communities.



## **Summary of meetings and visits:**

### **18 April 2024**

Melbourne to Istanbul

Stayed in Istanbul (18-22nd). Total cost: \$900.00AUD

### **19 April 2024**

Briefing for trip agenda.

Scheduled meeting with the Consulate General of Australia in Istanbul was unfortunately cancelled.

### **20 April 2024 – 21 April 2024**

The Delegation visited the major cultural and historical sites of Istanbul which included the Dolmabahçe Palace, Sultan Ahmet Mosque, Ayasofya Mosque, Basilica Cistern, Topkapı Palace, the Bosphorus and the Grand Bazaar. These are places of immense historical and cultural significance for Türkiye.

We met with the chair of the Council of Foreign Economic Relations of the Türkiye-Australia Business Council. Mr Steven Young is an Australian of Turkish heritage based in Istanbul, we spoke about growing business ties between Australia and Türkiye. He noted the opportunities that direct flights between Melbourne and Istanbul presented for business, trade and tourism.





**22 April 2024**

Depart Istanbul, travel to Ankara (flight)

Stayed in Ankara (22nd-23rd). Total cost: \$123.00

The Delegation had the honour of visiting the Mausoleum of Atatürk (Anıtkabir) to pay our respects, lay a wreath, and sign the Book of Honour. It serves as the resting place of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.





Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was the founder of the Republic of Türkiye and served as its first President from 1923 until his death in 1938.

During the ANZAC campaign, Atatürk was the commander in charge of Turkish forces.

After the Gallipoli campaign, Atatürk famously said:

*Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives...*

*You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country.*

*Therefore rest in peace.*

*There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us where they lie side by side now here in this country of ours...*

*You, the mothers, who sent their sons from faraway countries wipe away your tears;*

*Your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace.*

*After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.*

The Delegation paused to view the words inscribed into the stone of the Mausoleum and reflect on the significance of this statement which has become an enduring symbol of the relationship between Türkiye and Australia.

We joined with the Australian Ambassador Mr Miles Armitage from the Embassy of Australia in Ankara, and Parliamentarians of the Türkiye Australia friends group from the Turkish Grand Assembly, including the Deputy Minister for Family and Social Services (Veterans), Mr Yavuz Selim Kiran.

### **23 April 2024**

Delegation members visited the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA).

The TGNA has 600 members and is located in Ankara, the capital city of Türkiye.

The Delegation joined a reception hosted by HE Halil Eldemir, the President of the Türkiye-Australia Interparliamentary Friendship Group, Member of Parliament for Bilecik. Other Parliamentarians also joined this reception.

We had the opportunity to discuss the relationship between Türkiye and Victoria. We also spoke about Global Victoria and how Turkish migrants living in Victoria have benefited from the support of Global Victoria to import and export goods. There are many examples of successful Turkish migrants in business within the north-east metro Melbourne region. We discussed the economic and cultural opportunities between Türkiye for businesses of all sizes. We also discussed the history of the Victorian MP's Anzac Delegation and how this shared historical event has strengthened ties between Australia and Türkiye. We thanked the Turkish Government for their continued support in maintaining war memorials, allowing Australians to honour our country's veterans each year, reflecting on the significant cooperation between the Australian and Turkish Governments to enable travel and commemoration on Anzac Day and throughout the year.

We also attended the TGNA General Assembly Special Session for the Anniversary of Foundation of the TGNA and a guided tour of the TGNA. This coincides with National Sovereignty and Children's Day in Türkiye – a very significant day in Türkiye that celebrates democracy and the importance of young people.

Finally, we met with HE Bekir Bozdağ, the Deputy Speaker of TGNA.

We then departed Ankara to Çanakkale (domestic flight).

### **Stayed in Çanakkale (23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>).**

Total cost: \$450.00







Pictures above: Meeting with Members of Parliament of the Grand Assembly, including Halil Eldemir, Sureyya Ones Derici, Ismail Faruk Aksu, Dr. Muzeyyen Sevkin, Onder Aksakal.

**24 April 2024**

The Delegation attended the Ceremony for the 109th Anniversary of the Land Wars of Çanakkale, where the President of the Gallipoli Historic Site, Ismail Kasdemir, delivered a moving speech. Mr Kasdemir particularly spoke about the common ground that Gallipoli now represents as a sacred meeting place to reflect and commemorate.

The Delegation also attended the services of the armed forces of France and United Kingdom.





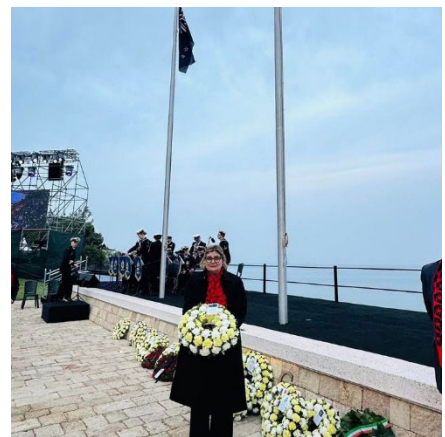
**25 April 2024**

**Dawn Service**

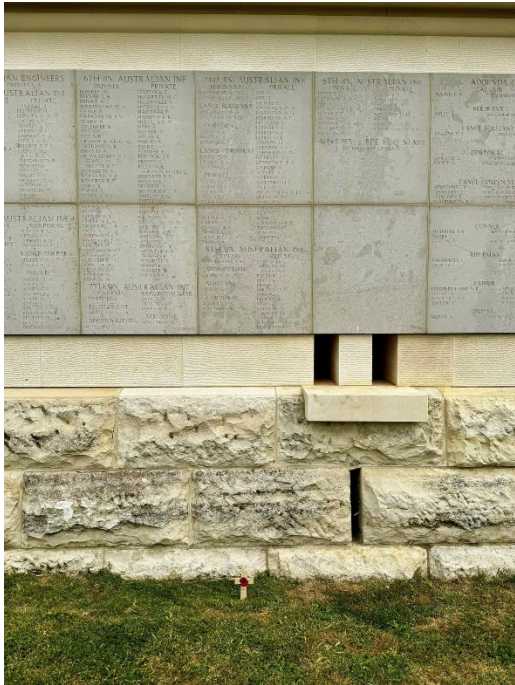
The Delegation attended the Anzac Day Dawn Service at Anzac Cove.

The Dawn Service is an important time for reflection on the service and sacrifice of our state's veterans. The Minister for Veterans, Natalie Suleyman laid a wreath on behalf of the Delegation and the Victorian Government.

The Delegation joined over 1500 travellers from Australia and New Zealand joined Turkish and other dignitaries at the former World War I battlefields at Gallipoli for a solemn service at dawn. As the sun rose, participants held a minute of silence to reflect on the sacrifices of tens of thousands of soldiers from the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps, who landed at the beaches at Gallipoli, in north-west Türkiye.



It is so important that Australians continue to make the journey to Gallipoli, to pay their respects to our ANZACs, and remember our significant wartime history and we should continue to support Australians join this service in the future.





Following the Dawn Service, we paid our respects at the Lone Pine Monument, commemorating the 3,268 Australians and 456 New Zealanders who died in the campaign and have no known grave, and the 960 Australians and 252 New Zealanders who were buried at sea. This was a significant service with many Delegation members visiting the graves of soldiers from their electorates honoured at Lone Pine. I was privileged to lay a wreath at Lone Pine on behalf of our Ashwood District.

The Australian Dawn service was followed by service for New Zealand.

We also visited the Conkbayırı Monument.

Together with Minister Suleyman and my colleagues John Berger, Pauline Richards, Anthony Cianflone we travelled to Urfa. Urfa has rich historical and cultural significance, including Göbekli Tepe - the world's oldest known temple, dated back 11,500 years ago. It is also a place of religious significance to many people of multiple faiths as it is reputed to be the birthplace of Abraham.

**26 April 2024**

Şanlıurfa/ Şanlıurfa to Istanbul

In the morning the delegation visited Göbekli Tepe which is a Neolithic archaeological site in the Southeastern Anatolia Region of Türkiye. The settlement was inhabited from 9500 to at least 8000 BCE famous for its large circular structures that contain massive stone pillars – the world's oldest known megaliths.

The delegation then went onto the Pool of Abraham in Şanlıurfa and the Mevlid-I Halil Mosque. Balıklıgöl and neighbouring Aynzeliha pools are among the most visited places in Şanlıurfa and have significance in Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Balıklıgöl, is a pool in the southwest of the city center of Şanlıurfa, Turkey



**26-28 April 2024**

Stayed in Istanbul (26th-28th). Total cost: \$450.00AUD

28th: Istanbul to Melbourne (flight)

**Concluding remarks:**

Victoria and Türkiye have long had strong cultural, historical, social and economic ties which can be strengthened even further between our communities and governments. In February 2023, in response to the earthquakes in south-eastern Türkiye, the Victorian Government donated \$1 million towards the recovery efforts.

On 5 October 1967, the Australia-Turkey Migration Agreement was signed between the Australian and Turkish governments - a bilateral agreement to provide assisted passage to Turkish migrants, to help build Australia's population and expand the workforce.

It was an honour to represent my community of Ashwood and take part in the commemorative services in Gallopolli Turkiye and remember our brave Victorians who served and those who sacrificed their lives on the peninsula.

It is important that we continue to remember and honour the Anzacs and reflect on our wartime history. There are many occasions across the year for Victorians to honour and respect veterans both at home and overseas, and I would encourage all Victorians to take part in these important services.

Lest We Forget.