KEZIA PURICK
DEPUTY OPPOSITION LEADER
MEDIA RELEASE

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1.3 MILLION REASONS TO LOSE YOUR MEMORY

The Chief Minister’s convenient memory fade in Parliament today stretched his – and his Government’s – credibility to breaking point.

Under pressure from the Country Liberals over more than $230,000 worth of travel expenses he’d racked up during 2008, Paul Henderson was fumbling for a response to a question about why there was a $2204.87 family travel component associated with a scheduled trip to China.

Deputy Opposition Leader Kezia Purick said the Chief Minister’s answer told only half the story:

I can give the House an assurance that no family member has travelled with me to China, or to France, or to Japan.

“What Paul Henderson failed to mention – and that only came to light once the cameras had been packed away and Question Time was over – was that a member of his family was scheduled to join him on the China trip,” Ms Purick said.

“The trip to China was cancelled because it came at the height of the disastrous power black-outs late last year. The $2200-plus bill was the cost to cancel the family member’s travel arrangements.”

Ms Purick said the Chief Minister should have owned up during Question Time rather than letting his team of spin doctors tell the media later in the day.
“It beggars belief that the Chief Minister simply forgot a family member was
due to travel with him to China,” Ms Purick said.

“Last week his Deputy Chief Minister said Paul Henderson had lied to
Indigenous Territorians about Outstation policy. Today was further proof of the
Chief Minister’s slipperiness.

Ms Purick said today’s Question Time reinforced the need for Government to
introduce a website providing up-to-date details of members travel.

“The Country Liberals had to use Freedom of Information legislation to obtain
the travel documents of Government ministers,” Ms Purick said.

“No wonder the Government wants to keep their travel records quiet.

"In the last calendar year, taxpayers forked out more than $1.3million to pay
for Labor ministers’ travel.

“Territorians should be able to check for themselves where members are
travelling at taxpayers’ expense."

Further comment: Kezia Purick 0407 035 976