

**THE SENATE**

**STANDING ORDERS**

**AND OTHER ORDERS OF THE SENATE**

June 2009

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**THE SENATE**  
**STANDING AND OTHER ORDERS**  
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**Note:** The revised standing orders of the Senate were adopted on 21 November 1989 and came into effect on the first day of sitting in 1990. This reprint incorporates amendments made up to 14 May 2009, including amendments relating to a restructure of the committee system effective on 14 May 2009.



## TIME LIMITS ON DEBATE

Time limits on speeches and for the consideration of particular items of business are provided for in a number of standing orders.

The following list consolidates these time limits and indicates where they can be located in this volume (SO – standing order).

### 1 Debate

General – 20 mins	SO 189(1)
Extension of time – 10 mins	SO 189(1)
In committee – 15 mins	SO 189(3)
In reply – 20 mins	SO 189(2)

### 2 Bills

First reading of non-amendable bill – 15 mins	SO 112(2)
Second reading – 20 mins	SO 189(1)
In committee – 15 mins	SO 189(3)
Third reading – 20 mins	SO 189(1)

Selection of Bills Committee – adoption of report – 5 mins  
(limit for debate 30 mins) SO 24A(7)

Reference of a bill to committee – 5 mins  
(limit for debate 30 mins) SO 115(6)

### 3 Matters of public importance/urgency – 10 mins SO 75

(limit for debate 60 mins, or if no motions are moved after  
question time to take note of answers, 90 mins) SO 75(7)

### 4 Matters of public interest – 15 mins SO 57(2)

### 5 Questions

Without notice: question – 1 min.; answer – 4 mins;  
supplementary questions and answers – 1 min. each SO 72(3)

Motions relating to answers – 5 mins  
(limit for debate 30 mins) SO 72(4)

- 6 Committee reports and government responses and Auditor-General's reports**
- Motions relating to committee report on Wednesday or Thursday – 10 mins (limit for debate 60 mins) SO 62(4)
- Resumption of debate on motions for consideration or adoption – 10 mins (limit for debate 60 mins) SO 62(1)
- 7 Government documents**
- Motion to take note, Tuesday and Wednesday – 5 mins (limit for debate 30 mins) SO 61(3)
- Resumption Thursday – 5 mins (limit for debate 60 mins) SO 61(3)
- 8 General – documents**
- Motions moved by leave – 10 mins (limit for debate 30 mins per motion, 60 mins for all motions) SO 169(2)
- 9 Suspension of standing orders – 5 mins**  
(limit for debate 30 mins) SO 209(4)
- 10 Adjournment – 10 mins**  
(limit for debate 40 mins, except Tuesdays) SO 54(5)

**Note:** Time taken to make or determine points of order and form a quorum is not deducted from the time for the senator to speak or ask a question or the time for a debate except the adjournment debate (standing orders 52(7), 197(6)).

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**SENATE NUMBERS**

Quorum	19 (one-quarter)
Absolute majority	39