



Senate Routine of Business

as set out in standing order 57 and related orders

2/2015

GENERAL TIMES, DEBATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TIME LIMITS

Monday

10 am

- Prayers and acknowledgement of country
- Documents (presented pursuant to SO 61)
- Clerk's documents
- Committees—proposals to meet SO 33(5)
- Government business only

2 pm

- Questions
- Motions to take note of answers
Time limit: 30 mins
- Petitions
- Notices of motion
- Placing of business
- Discovery of formal business
- MPI or urgency motion
SO 75—Time limit: 1 hr, or if no motions to take note, 1 hr 30 mins
- Consideration of documents tabled earlier in the day
SO 61—Time limit: 30 mins
- Ministerial statements
- Committee memberships
- Messages from the House of Representatives
- Order of business

6.30 to 7.30 pm

- Sitting suspended (dinner break)

7.30 pm

- Order of business continued

9.50 pm

- Adjournment proposed
Time limit: 40 mins

10.30 pm

- Adjournment

Tuesday

12.30 pm

- Prayers and acknowledgement of country
- Documents (presented pursuant to SO 61)
- Clerk's documents
- Committees—proposals to meet SO 33(5)
- Government business only

2 pm

- Questions
- Motions to take note of answers
Time limit: 30 mins
- Petitions
- Notices of motion
- Placing of business
- Discovery of formal business
- MPI or urgency motion
SO 75—Time limit: 1 hr, or if no motions to take note, 1 hr 30 mins
- Consideration of documents tabled earlier in the day
SO 61—Time limit: 30 mins
- Tabling and consideration of committee reports
SO 62(4)—Time limit: 1 hr
- Ministerial statements
- Committee memberships
- Messages from the House of Representatives
- Order of business

7.20 pm

- Adjournment proposed
No time limit
- Adjournment

Wednesday

9.30 am

- Prayers and acknowledgement of country
- Documents (presented pursuant to SO 61)
- Clerk's documents
- Committees—proposals to meet SO 33(5)
- Government business only

12.45 pm

- Senators' statements
SO 57(2)

2 pm

- Questions
- Motions to take note of answers
Time limit: 30 mins
- Petitions
- Notices of motion
- Placing of business
- Discovery of formal business
- MPI or urgency motion
SO 75—Time limit: 1 hr, or if no motions to take note, 1 hr 30 mins
- Consideration of documents tabled earlier in the day
SO 61—Time limit: 30 mins
- Tabling and consideration of committee reports
SO 62(4)—Time limit: 1 hr
- Ministerial statements
- Committee memberships
- Messages from the House of Representatives
- Order of business

7.20 pm

- Adjournment proposed
Time limit: 40 mins

8 pm

- Adjournment

Thursday

9.30 am

- Prayers and acknowledgement of country
- Clerk's documents
- Committees—proposals to meet SO 33(5)
- General business orders of the day for the consideration of bills only
SO 57(1) and SO 59(a)
—Time limit: 2 hrs 20 mins
- Petitions
- Notices of motion
- Placing of business
- Discovery of formal business
- Committee memberships
- Messages from the House of Representatives
- Order of business

12.45 pm

- Non-controversial government business only

2 pm

- Questions
- Motions to take note of answers
Time limit: 30 mins
- Tabling and consideration of committee reports
SO 62(4)—Time limit: 1 hr
- Ministerial statements

Not later than 4.30 pm

- General business (notices of motion and orders of the day)
- SO 59(b)

Not later than 6 pm

- General business continued, consideration of documents
SO 61(3)—Time limit: 1 hr

Not later than 7 pm

- Consideration of committee reports and government responses, and Auditor-General's reports
SO 62(1)—Time limit: 1 hr

8 pm

- Adjournment proposed
Time limit: 40 mins

8.40 pm

- Adjournment

General times

Times of meetings of the Senate

Monday	10 am to 6.30 pm, 7.30 pm to 10.30 pm
Tuesday	12.30 pm to adjournment
Wednesday	9.30 am to 8 pm
Thursday	9.30 am to 8.40 pm

Closing times

Documents

To be received by the sub Table Office no later than 5 pm of the working day before the document is to be tabled.

Extensions of time for a committee to report (routine)

The form, signed by the chair of the committee, is to be lodged by hand with the sub Table Office by 5 pm on a sitting day.

Notifications authorising committees to meet during the sitting of the Senate

The form, signed by the chair of the committee, is to be lodged by hand with the sub Table Office by 5 pm on a sitting day.

Petitions

(see: Brief Guide No. 7 – Petitions →)

Must be lodged with the Table Office by:

- 9.30 am on a day on which the Senate sits at 12.30 pm; and
- 5 pm of the working day prior to the Senate sitting at 9.30 am and 10 am.

Questions on notice

(see: Brief Guide No. 6 – Questions →)

Must be lodged with the Table Office no later than 5 pm on sitting days, and in non-sitting weeks by 2 pm on the Wednesday before the next day of sitting, to be registered in the next Notice Paper.

Debating opportunities and time limits

(see: Brief Guide No. 2 – Rules of debate →)

Bills

(see: Brief Guide No. 16 – Consideration of legislation →)

- ⇒ 1^o of non-amendable bill 15 mins SO 112(2)
- ⇒ 2^o 20 mins SO 189(1)
- ⇒ In committee 15 mins SO 189(3)
Extension of time (possible) 15 mins SO 189(3)
- ⇒ 3^o 20 mins SO 189(1)
- ⇒ Selection of Bills Committee
—adoption of report 5 mins SO 24A(7)
Limit for debate: 30 mins
- ⇒ Reference of a bill to a committee 5 mins SO 115(6)
Limit for debate: 30 mins

Committee reports and government responses

(see: Brief Guide No. 11 – Opportunities for debating documents and reports →)

- ⇒ Motion to take note (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) 10 mins SO 62(4)
Limit for debate: 1 hr
- ⇒ Resumption, including Auditor-General's reports (Thursday) 10 mins SO 62(1) & (2)
Limit for debate: 1 hr
- ⇒ Motion moved by leave 10 mins SO 169(2)
Limits for debate: 30 mins per motion, 1 hr for all motions

Debate

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

Documents

(see: Brief Guide No. 11 – Opportunities for debating documents and reports →)

- ⇒ Motion to take note (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday) 5 mins SO 61(3)
Limit for debate: 30 mins
- ⇒ Resumption (Thursday) 5 mins SO 61(3)
Limit for debate: 1 hr
- ⇒ Motion moved by leave 5 mins SO 169(2)
Limits for debate: 15 mins per motion, 30 mins for all motions

Ministerial statements[#]

- ⇒ Motion without leave 10 mins SO 169
Limits for debate: 30 mins per motion, 1 hr for all motions

Matters of Public Importance/Urgency

(see: Brief Guide No. 9 – Matters of public importance and urgency →)

- ⇒ All speakers 10 mins SO 75(7)
Limit for debate: 1 hr, or 1 hr 30 mins if no motions are moved after question time to take note of answers

Questions

(see: Brief Guide No. 6 – Questions →)

Without notice

- ⇒ Primary question 1 min SO 72(3)
- ⇒ Answering question 2 mins SO 72(3)
- ⇒ Supplementary questions (2) 30 sec SO 72(3)
- ⇒ Answering supplementary 1 min SO 72(3)
- ⇒ Debate on motions relating to answers 5 mins SO 72(4)
Limit for debate: 30 mins

Senators' statements

- ⇒ 10 mins SO 57(2)

Suspension of standing orders

(see: Brief Guide No. 5 – Suspension of standing orders →)

- ⇒ 5 mins SO 209(4)
Limit for debate: 30 mins

Debate for the election of the President of the Senate

- ⇒ 15 mins SO 6(2)

Adjournment of the Senate

- ⇒ Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 10 mins SO 54(5)
Limit for debate: 40 mins
- ⇒ Tuesday 5 mins | 10 mins | 20 mins SO 54(5) & (6)
Limits for debate: 40 mins (Monday, Wednesday and Thursday), no limit on debate (Tuesday)

Senate numbers

Quorum: 19 (one-quarter)



Absolute majority: 39



SO Standing orders

#Temporary order agreed to 11 November 2015

→ Brief Guides to Senate Procedure: www.aph.gov.au/Senate/guides

Incorporates changes to SO as at 24 June 2015 and a temporary order agreed to 11 November 2015