

# Procedural Digest

No. 13

46<sup>th</sup> Parliament

6–8 October 2020

October 2020				
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Selected entries contain links to video footage via *Parlview*. Please note that the first time you click a [\[Watch\]](#) link, you may need to refresh the page (ctrl+F5) for the correct starting point.

## Bills

### 13.01 Presentation of 2020-21 Budget

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the presentation of the 2020-21 Budget was postponed from May to October. Supply bills were passed in March to fund expenditure on an interim basis.

On Tuesday, 6 October, following a suspension of sitting from 6.04pm to 7.31pm, the Speaker reported a message from the Governor-General recommending an appropriation for the purposes of Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2020-2021. The Treasurer then presented the bill, moved the second reading and delivered the budget speech. Debate was adjourned and the Assistant Treasurer presented budget-related documents and a ministerial statement relating to regional Australia. [\[Watch\]](#)

The Assistant Treasurer then presented Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2020-2021 and Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill (No. 1) 2020-2021. Before each bill was introduced, the Speaker announced receipt of a Governor-General's message recommending appropriation. The House then adjourned, at 8.22pm.

*Hansard: 6 October 2020, 6760-74*  
*Votes and Proceedings: 2020/P1230-2*

**SOs 32, 141, 142, 147, 178, 180, 182, 199**

### 13.02 Budget reply speech

As usual, the Leader of the Opposition gave his budget reply speech on the Thursday evening of budget week.

The second reading debate on Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2020-2021 was called on just prior to the suspension of the sitting at 6pm. On resumption of the sitting at 7.31pm, the Leader of the Opposition made his budget reply speech. The House was then adjourned at 8.06pm, in accordance with a resolution carried earlier in the week (see entry **13.03**). [\[Watch\]](#)

*Hansard: 8 October 2020, 7146-52*  
*Votes and Proceedings: 2020/P1260-1*

**SOs 31, 142**

## Business

### 13.03 Suspension of standing orders for presentation of Budget and budget reply speech; opposition amendment carried

On Tuesday, 6 October the Leader of the House moved to suspend standing orders 31 (automatic adjournment of the House) and 33 (limit on business after normal time of adjournment) to allow for the presentation of the Budget that evening. The motion also provided that standing order 31 be suspended on Thursday to allow for the Leader of the Opposition's budget reply speech and for the House to adjourn immediately following the reply.

The Manager of Opposition Business moved, as an amendment, that in addition to the provisions for the budget and budget reply, standing order 47(c) be suspended for the week in relation to the passage of the private Senator's bill, the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Ensuring Fair Representation of the Northern Territory) Bill 2020. He explained that the amendment would allow for a motion to suspend standing orders to facilitate the passage of the bill to be carried by a simple rather than an absolute majority.

In speaking to the amendment, a government member (Mr Joyce, The Nationals) voiced his support. The amendment was carried on the voices and the motion, as amended, was carried on the voices. The bill was still before the Senate at the conclusion of the sittings.

*Standing order 47(c) provides that a motion to suspend standing orders moved without notice can only be carried by an absolute majority (a majority of the total membership of the House, currently 76 members) except where the Leader of the House and Manager of Opposition Business agree that the motion may be passed by a simple majority (a majority of members voting).*

*Hansard: 6 October 2020, 6666-70  
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1224*

**SOs 31, 33, 47**

### 13.04 Ministerial statement regarding rural budget outcomes

On Thursday, 8 October the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development, by leave, made a ministerial statement relating to rural and regional budget outcomes. The shadow minister made a statement in reply. [\[Watch\]](#)

*Hansard: 8 October 2020, 7030-42  
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/P1254*

**SOs 63, 63A**

## Committees

### 13.05 Statement by Deputy Chair of Public Accounts and Audit Committee on draft budget estimates for the ANAO and PBO

Prior to the presentation of the Budget, the Deputy Chair of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit made a statement regarding the draft estimates for the Australian National Audit Office and the Parliamentary Budget Office for 2020-2021 and, by leave, presented a copy of his statement.

*As the committee responsible for parliamentary oversight of the ANAO and PBO, the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit is required by legislation to consider the draft budget estimates for each office. On budget day each year the committee makes a statement on whether, in its opinion, these offices have been given sufficient funding to carry out their respective mandates. See the Parliamentary Service Act 1999 and the Public Accounts and Audit Committee Act 1951.*

*Hansard: 6 October 2020, 6739-41  
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1229*

**SOs 63, 199**

### 13.06 Appropriations and Administration Committee report

On 8 October the Speaker, as Chair of the Standing Committee on Appropriations and Administration, presented the Committee's report on the 2020-2021 budget estimates for the Department of the House of Representatives.

*Hansard: 6 October 2020, 7010  
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1253*

**SOs 222A, 247**

## Members

### 13.07 Resignation of the Member for Groom

On Tuesday morning, the Speaker announced that on 18 September he had received a letter from Dr John Joseph McVeigh, resigning his seat as the Member for Groom.

Later in the week, the Speaker informed the House that he intended to issue a writ for the by-election on 26 October, with the polling day to be Saturday, 28 November 2020.

*Hansard: 6 October 2020, 6665  
8 October 2020, 7075  
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1223; 1255*

## Motions

### 13.08 Condolence motions

The Prime Minister moved two condolence motions on Tuesday in relation to the deaths of former distinguished parliamentarians. First, he moved that the House record its regret at the death, on 12 September, of the Honourable John Joseph Fahey AC, a former Minister for Finance and former New South Wales Premier. [\[Watch\]](#)

The Prime Minister also moved a condolence motion on the death, on 27 September, of the Honourable Susan Maree Ryan AO, a former minister and Senator for the Australian Capital Territory. [\[Watch\]](#)

In each case, the Leader of the Opposition seconded the motion and all members present rose in silence as a mark of respect before the motion was referred to the Federation

Chamber. Both condolence motions were debated in the Federation Chamber on Wednesday and were carried by the House on Thursday.

*Hansard: 6 October 2020, 6701-5  
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1226-7*

**SOs 49, 183**

## Parliamentary administration

### 13.09 Attendance in chamber reduced due to COVID-19

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, there continued to be reduced attendance in the House of Representatives. Just over one hundred members attended the chamber at some time each sitting day. Special seating arrangements allowed for distancing between members, and 70 to 72 members were paired for each division.

On 8 October the Speaker presented a document listing the voting positions of independent and minor party members who had been unable to attend the sittings.

*Hansard: 8 October 2020, 7145  
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1260*

**SO 199**

### 13.10 Remote participation in parliamentary proceedings

On Tuesday, as in the previous sitting fortnight, the Leader of the House presented an [Agreement for members to contribute remotely to parliamentary proceedings](#), signed by himself and the Manager of Opposition Business. The Agreement provided that members unable to attend the sittings due to COVID-19 could speak in debates through the official video link but could not, among other things, move a motion or vote.

During the week, 11 members participated in proceedings by video link.

*Hansard: 6 October 2020, 6666  
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/P1224-5*

**SO 199**

## Speaker

### 13.11 Statement by Speaker regarding media rules

On Thursday morning, the Speaker made a statement regarding the [Rules for media related activity in Parliament House and its precincts](#). The Speaker reminded members that the rules applied to all building occupants, not just the media. He noted concern that members from both sides of the House had used excerpts of the official broadcast for 'attack advertisements', particularly on their social media pages. He reminded members that, according to the rules, the official broadcast may be used only for fair and accurate reports of proceedings and may not be digitally manipulated or used for political party advertising.

*Hansard: 8 October 2020, 7009  
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1253*