

Procedural Digest

No. 15

46th Parliament

9–12 November 2020

November 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

15.01 Budget bills pass the House

Consideration in detail of Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2020-2021 commenced in the Federation Chamber on Monday. The Chair first explained that, while members could use the debate as an opportunity to question the relevant minister about proposed expenditure for his or her portfolio, the normal rules for consideration in detail would apply. In particular, she advised that the call would alternate between government and non-government members and ministers would not be required to respond to questions asked.

Also on Monday, the House agreed to suspend standing orders to alter the Federation Chamber's order of business for the remainder of the week, to allow sufficient time for the debate.

Consideration in detail continued in the Federation Chamber throughout the week, with proposed expenditure for each portfolio agreed to. The debate concluded on Thursday and the bill was returned to the House without amendment. Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2020-2021 and Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill (No. 1) 2020-2021 were also returned to the House, after being read a second time.

Later that day, each of the bills was passed by the House.

Hansard: 9 November 2020, 9014-5
 12 November 2020, 9685
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1378; 1415
SOs 47, 142, 148, 152, 155, 192

Business

15.02 Statements on United States presidential election

Prior to question time on 9 November the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition both made statements, by indulgence of the Chair, congratulating Joe Biden and Kamala Harris on their election. [\[Watch\]](#)

Hansard: 9 November 2020, 9043-6

15.03 Ministerial statement on veterans

On 10 November, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs made the fourth annual statement on veterans and their families and presented a copy of the statement. The shadow minister addressed the House in reply. [\[Watch\]](#)

The minister then moved that the House take note of the statement and the matter was referred to the Federation Chamber for debate.

Hansard: 10 November 2020, 9303-15
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1394

SOs 63, 63A

Committees

15.04 Report by Joint Select Committee on Road Safety

On 9 November, the Chair of the Joint Select Committee on Road Safety presented the committee's final report entitled *Improving road safety in Australia*. The report had been sent to the Speaker on 30 October and published in accordance with SO 247.

The Chair and another member made statements in connection with the report before it was referred to the Federation Chamber for debate.

Hansard: 9 November 2020, 9043-6
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1379

SOs 39, 223, 247

Documents

15.05 E-petition on Australia's news media

During members' statements on Monday, the Member for Fenner (Dr Andrew Leigh) presented an e-petition calling for a royal commission into Australia's news media, signed by 501,876 petitioners. This was the largest e-petition presented in the House since e-petitioning was introduced in 2016. The principal petitioner was former Prime Minister the Hon Kevin Rudd. [\[Watch\]](#)

Hansard: 9 November 2020, 9035
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1379

SOs 205A, 207

15.06 Revised ministry and shadow ministry

On Monday, the Prime Minister presented a revised ministry list, dated 30 October 2020. The following day, the Leader of the Opposition presented a revised shadow ministry list. He informed the House that, following the resignation of the member for Hunter (Mr Joel Fitzgibbon) as shadow minister, the member for Chifley (Mr Ed Husic) had been appointed Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Resources.

Hansard: 9 November 2020, 9046-9
10 November 2020, 9266-9
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1379; 1393

SO 199

Federation Chamber

15.07 Remote participation in Federation Chamber

On Monday morning, the Deputy Speaker informed members that the opportunity to participate in debates remotely through the official video link had been extended to the Federation Chamber for 90-second statements, constituency statements, private members' business and the adjournment debate, for members unable to attend parliament due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hansard: 9 November 2020, 9136
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1387

Members

15.08 Parental leave for members

The Leader of the Opposition moved that leave of absence be granted to both Ms Kate Thwaites and Mr Matt Keogh for parental leave purposes. The Leader of the Opposition, the Minister for Government Services and the Speaker wished the members well and the question was carried.

Hansard: 12 November 2020, 9715
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1416

SO 26

Parliamentary administration

15.09 Attendance in chamber—COVID-19

While social distancing measures were maintained in the chamber, attendance was high during the sitting week. More than 130 members attended the chamber at some time each day, and no contributions were made remotely through the official video link.

Members continued to be paired for divisions to avoid large numbers moving about the Chamber at the one time. More than 40 members were paired for each division.

15.10 Appointment of Parliamentary Budget Officer

The Speaker informed the House that Dr Stein Helgeby had been appointed the Parliamentary Budget Officer from 18 November. The Chair of the Public Accounts and Audit Committee also made a statement in connection with the appointment.

In accordance with the Parliamentary Service Act 1999, the Presiding Officers appoint the Parliamentary Budget Officer, subject to the approval of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit.

*Hansard: 10 November 2020, 9288
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1394*

15.11 Suspension of sitting for Remembrance Day

On 11 November, the House agreed to suspend the sitting from 10am until 12.15pm to allow members to attend Remembrance Day services. The resolution also provided for any division called for between 12.15pm and 2pm to be deferred until after the matter of public importance discussion.

*Hansard: 11 November 2020, 9436; 9444
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1401; 1403*

SOs 34, 47, 133

Private members' business

15.12 Disallowance motion

During government business time on 10 November, standing orders were suspended to bring on the private members' business notice for the disallowance of the Australian Postal Corporation (Performance Standards) Amendment (2020 Measures No. 1) Regulations 2020.

An opposition member, Mr Husic, then moved that the regulations be disallowed. After the mover and seconder spoke, the disallowance was negated on division.

*Hansard: 10 November 2020, 9315-20
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1347; 1394-5*

SO 41, 47

Speaker

15.13 Speaker's remarks on ministerial statements

In response to a point of order raised on 29 October (see **14.04**), the Speaker made some remarks on the content of ministerial statements. He explained that ministerial statements existed to provide ministers with the opportunity to make announcements on government policy and other actions or decisions of the government and he expected them to be used specifically for that purpose. He added that there were other opportunities during the sitting day for ministers to engage in political debate about the opposition.

The Manager of Opposition Business, on indulgence, informed the House that, if the opposition received an advance copy of a ministerial statement containing ‘political abuse’, it would not grant leave for the statement to be made in the House.

Hansard: 9 November 2020, 9065-6
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1379

Offensive words[#]

	Hansard	
	<i>Date</i>	<i>Page</i>
‘What are the implications for Australia because of their criminal negligence in climate policy?’	9 November 2020	9226
‘He’s an absolute mess!’	10 November 2020	9297
‘...the member for Hunter, aka General Custer...’	11 November 2020	9482
‘hack’	12 November 2020	9726

SOs 89, 90, 92

[#] List of unparliamentary expressions recorded in *Hansard*.