

Procedural Digest

No. 16

46th Parliament

30 November–10 December 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

16.01 Bill introduced and passes all stages in one sitting

The Minister for Industrial Relations presented the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Amendment (Withdrawal from Amalgamations) Bill 2020 on 9 December. After his second reading speech the minister sought, and was denied, leave for the debate to continue. He then, pursuant to contingent notice, moved that standing orders be suspended to allow resumption of debate on the second reading to be made an order of the day for a later hour. The question was carried, with only four minor party and independent members voting 'No'.

The bill was immediately called on and the second reading debate ensued. The Australian Greens member moved an amendment which called for further consideration of the bill to be deferred until the first sitting of 2021. The amendment was negated and the bill was read a second time, with only two members voting against.

The minister then moved, pursuant to contingent notice, that standing orders be suspended to allow the motion for the third reading to be moved without delay. The question was carried and the bill was read a third time.

Under the standing orders, debate on a bill is usually adjourned to a future sitting following the minister's second reading speech.

*Hansard: 9 December 2020, 11006-13
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1515-6*

SOs 47, 63, 141, 142, 145, 148, 155

16.02 Passage of bill relating to territory representation

On 7 December, the Electoral Amendment (Territory Representation) Bill 2020 was received from the Senate and read a first time. The bill amends the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 to change the method for determining the number of House of Representatives members for the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, one effect of which is to restore the Northern Territory to a two-member entitlement for the next general election. The Electoral Commissioner had in July issued a determination that provided for only one seat for the Northern Territory at the next election. On 9 December, a minister moved that

the bill be read a second time. After this was debated and agreed, by leave the third reading was also moved and agreed.

*Hansard: 7 December 2020, 10628-9
9 December 2020, 11159-68
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1481, 1532
SOs 141, 142, 148, 155*

Business

16.03 Ministerial statement on the Natural Disaster Risk Reduction Framework

The Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management, by leave, made a ministerial statement relating to the Natural Disaster Risk Reduction Framework on 10 December. A shadow minister addressed the House in reply. [\[Watch\]](#)

*Hansard: 10 December 2020, 11298-305
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1545
SOs 63, 63A*

Committees

16.04 Procedure Committee report

On 7 December, the chair of the House Standing Committee on Procedure presented the committee's report on its inquiry into the practices and procedures put in place by the House in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The chair and deputy chair both made statements in connection with the report.

*Hansard: 7 December 2020, 10601-2
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1479
SOs 39, 221, 247*

16.05 Status of government responses to committee reports

On the last sitting of the year, the Speaker presented the *Speaker's schedule of the status of government responses to committee reports*. The schedule was incorporated into Hansard.

*Hansard: 10 December 2020, 11252-62
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1541
SO 199*

16.06 Select committee on mental health and suicide prevention

On 10 December the House agreed to establish a select committee on mental health and suicide prevention to inquire into recent strategic reviews of the mental health system in light of events such as the 2019 bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic. The resolution

provided that the committee present an interim report by 15 April 2021 and its final report by 1 November 2021.

*Hansard: 10 December 2020, 11379-83
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1547-9*

SO 223

Members

16.07 New member sworn in

On 3 December the Speaker announced that he had received a return to the writ which he had issued for the election of a member for Groom following the resignation of John McVeigh and informed the House that Garth Russell Hamilton had been elected. Mr Hamilton was admitted to the Chamber, and he made and subscribed the oath of allegiance.

*Hansard: 3 December 2020, 11356
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1471*

16.08 Leave of absence to all members

As is customary on the last sitting of the year, the Leader of the House moved that leave of absence be given to all members from the determination of the sitting until the date of the next sitting of the House. The question was carried.

A member's place becomes vacant if, without permission of the House, he or she does not attend the House for two consecutive months of any session of the parliament (s. 38, The Constitution).

*Hansard: 10 December 2020, 11356
Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1416*

SO 26

16.09 Valedictory remarks

On the last sitting of the year, long-serving opposition member Mr Warren Snowdon announced that he would not be contesting the next election. By indulgence of the chair, he made a statement reflecting on his parliamentary career. The Leader of the Opposition, the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Speaker each made statements thanking Mr Snowdon for his service. [\[Watch\]](#)

Later, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition made end-of-year valedictory remarks, thanking colleagues and wishing Australians a happy Christmas. [\[Watch\]](#)

Hansard: 10 December 2020, 11349-56; 11356-64

Motions

16.10 Condolence motion for the Honourable Dame Margaret Georgina Constance Guilfoyle AC DBE

On the first sitting of the fortnight, the Treasurer moved a condolence motion in relation to the death of the Honourable Margaret Georgina Constance Guilfoyle, a former minister and senator for Victoria from 1971 to 1987. The Leader of the Opposition seconded the motion and all members present rose in silence as a mark of respect. The motion was then referred to the Federation Chamber. [\[Watch\]](#)

The condolence motion was debated in the Federation Chamber and was returned to the House and carried on 2 December.

Hansard: 30 November 2020, 9878-81

1 December 2020, 10205-12

2 December 2020, 10307

Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1426; 1455; 1460

SOs 49, 183

Parliamentary administration

16.11 Agreement for members to contribute remotely

At the commencement of the sitting week, the Leader of the House presented a revised *Agreement for members to contribute remotely to parliamentary proceedings*. The revised agreement included a new provision to allow the Prime Minister to participate in proceedings via video link from the Lodge. For the first three sitting days, the Prime Minister participated in question time remotely, as he was in quarantine following overseas travel.

Hansard: 30 November 2020, 9787

Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1421-2

SO 199

16.12 Program of sittings for 2021

On 1 December, the Leader of the House presented a proposed program of sittings for 2021 and moved that the program be agreed to. The question was carried.

Hansard: 1 December 2020, 10115

Votes and Proceedings: 2020/1446

SOs 29, 199

Offensive words[#]

	Hansard	
	<i>Date</i>	<i>Page</i>
'They're not going out on the piss.'	2 December 2020	10260
'Corruption'	2 December 2020	10339-40
'He has the Rudd force field around him in the protections that were put in place to keep this Leader of the Opposition in his job. Lucky Albo!'	8 December 2020	10866
'Look at that smug, little whippet over there. What did you do to the previous member? We know about your loyalty and what happened.'	8 December 2020	10563-4

SOs 89, 90, 92

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