



MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
MINISTER ASSISTING THE PRIME MINISTER FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE
LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Mrs Kathy Sullivan MP

Chair

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure

Parliament House

CANBERRA ACT 2600

- 4 DEC 1996

Dear Mrs Sullivan

I write to provide the Government's response to the Procedure Committee's report, *Bills - Consideration in Detail: Review of the operation of standing order 226*, which was presented to the House on 28 October 1996.

The Government supports the Committee's position that the House should be able to examine amending legislation in the manner which it has traditionally enjoyed. As noted in the Committee's report, standing order 226, which prescribes the order in considering a bill in detail, needs to be updated to take account of recent developments in legislative drafting practice whereby amendments of legislation are now set out in schedules to the amending bills, rather than in clauses of such bills as was formerly the case.

The Committee recommends that standing order 226 be changed so that members are able to consider items of amendments in each schedule of an amending bill separately. In accepting the Committee's recommendation the Government is of the view that provision should be made at the same time for consecutive items in a schedule dealing with amendments to the same section of an Act to be considered together as a matter of course. This modification reflects the fact that such amendments would have been included in the one clause (and considered together) previously, and does not detract from the spirit of the Committee's recommendation. It is noted that the proposed changes will not affect consideration in detail of the generality of bills for new Acts, during which schedules will continue to be taken as a whole.

I will provide a copy of this response to the Manager of Opposition Business, and in due course I will also provide him with an advance copy of the draft revised standing order.

Yours sincerely

PETER REITH