

24 March 2004

Ms Margaret May  
Chair  
House Standing Committee on Procedure  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA

Dear Ms May

Thank you for your letter of 11 March in which you invited submissions in respect of four inquiries instigated recently by the Committee.

I am pleased to provide comments on each matter. The attached document is something of an overview, however I will be happy to elaborate on any point during the discussions planned for 25 March or to provide any additional information required.

I have taken the liberty of providing a copy of my comments to the Speaker.

Yours sincerely

I C HARRIS  
Clerk of the House

## **SUBMISSION TO THE PROCEDURE COMMITTEE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE, MARCH 2004.**

### **1. Opportunities for private Members in the Main Committee**

#### 1. Protecting 3 minute statements from interruptions

Under the provisions of standing order 275A when the Main Committee meets before 10.00am (in practice on Wednesdays and Thursdays), 3 minute statements may be made for 18 minutes, or until 10.00am, whichever occurs first. Because of the requirement for sittings of the Main Committee to be suspended to enable Members to attend divisions in the House, if divisions occur before 10.00am the period of Members' statements can be interrupted. I am not aware of any other circumstances which cause these statements to be interrupted.

In its July 2000 report *The Second Chamber: Enhancing the Main Committee* the Procedure Committee recommended the amendment of standing order 275A in a way which would have allowed statements to continue past 10.00am (and for longer than 18 minutes), thus effectively removing the possibility of the period being lost or curtailed by divisions in the House. This recommendation was linked with other recommendations that were intended to 'free up' arrangements for the operation of the Main Committee.

While the Government supported the related changes, it did not agree to the recommended changes to so 275A. This may reflect a view that the possibility of members' statements being lost or curtailed could act as a disincentive to motions in the House to suspend standing orders or to take other unscheduled initiatives early on Wednesdays and Thursdays

#### 2. Ensuring all adjournment debates which are permitted actually take place

As noted, in its report *The Second Chamber: Enhancing the Main Committee* the Procedure Committee recommended that the former detailed rules governing arrangements such as the adjournment debates be replaced by more general rules which would allow flexibility. This course was supported by the Government, and the standing orders were amended accordingly.

When the new arrangements commenced, the Deputy Speaker made a statement to the Main Committee on the matter. In relation to the adjournment debate he said that unless otherwise advised, he would assume that adjournment debates would take place only on Thursdays, and for 30 minutes. He went on to say that it would be necessary for the Whips to advise if arrangements were to be different.

The standing orders now allow considerable flexibility in relation to adjournment debates in the Main Committee. It is possible for them to be held on days other than Thursdays, and for them to run for longer than 30 minutes. These aspects, and whether scheduled debates proceed, are for Members to determine.

### 3. Providing additional time for private members' business

Members will know better than staff just whether the opportunities for the initiation and debate on private members motions and bills are adequate. Arrangements could be devised to extend opportunities in the Main Committee, and additional sitting time could be scheduled – the Department stands ready to assist in any way required.

If, for present purposes, the concept of private members' business is thought of as encompassing debate on committee and delegation reports, some further comments can be made. It is notable that in recent times there has been a growing number of cases where debate on important committee reports has been referred to the Main Committee.

In the closing sitting days of 2003 there was the usual rush of report presentations as committees tabled reports before the summer break. The pressure on House time meant that time for debate in the House was extremely limited. Accordingly, the ability afforded by the Main Committee to accommodate members wishing to speak, perhaps within a day of a report's release, was welcomed: at the last four meetings of the Committee for 2003 some 30 members debated a series of committee reports there. Recommendations dealing with disastrous bushfires in January 2003, the governance of Norfolk Island, regional aviation and the provision of local government services were all dealt with - this just would not have been possible in the House at that time of the year. Similar opportunities have been provided this year, for example for debate on the reports on child custody and intelligence concerning Iraq.

In its July 2000 report the Procedure Committee recommended that the Selection Committee be allowed to select orders of the day, for committee and delegation reports and for private Members' business, for debate in the Main Committee. The Procedure Committee envisaged that these debates would have priority after 4.30pm on Wednesdays, after which the matters would be deemed to be returned to the House.

The Government did not support this recommendation, its response noting that when the Main Committee needs to sit additional hours this is agreed between the Whips.

The practice which has developed recently is consistent with the Government's observation. It is an example of flexibility in action, although it does not give the Selection Committee any role, nor does it provide a fixed time for such debates: whether a debate will be scheduled, when it might be held and its duration is left for negotiation.

If the Procedure Committee feels that the present arrangements are inadequate, a mid point between its July 2000 recommendation and the present situation would be to have further debate on reports, or selected reports, referred to the Main Committee automatically. This would mean that the scheduling of debate would be left for negotiation, but it would not be necessary for referral motions to be sought on a case by case basis.

## 2. **Alternative name for the Main Committee**

The Procedure Committee has recommended that the name of the Main Committee be changed to ‘Second Chamber’ - (July 2000 report *The Second Chamber: Enhancing the Main Committee*, p.33-4). In that report the Procedure Committee noted that members responding to its survey about the Main Committee were evenly divided on whether they liked the current title. It concluded that the title was ‘unsatisfactory, inadequate or misleading’, and referred to the problem caused by the naming of the large committee room, shared with the Senate, the Main Committee Room.

The Government response of June 2002 did not support the recommendation, referring to the possibility of confusion given the use of the term ‘second chamber’ to refer to the Senate. The response stated, however, that the Government was prepared to consider other alternatives.

There is little to be added to what has already been said. The Procedure Committee may feel that the longer the term Main Committee is used the greater the understanding and recognition of the name and the lower the risk of confusion in practice. The Procedure Committee may also think it worthwhile to consider whether the name of the body should in part reflect its relationship with the House – in other words, is anything gained, or lost, by a name which does not include the term “committee” , is it the “committee” or the “second chamber” aspect which is more important.

If a new meeting room is built for the Main Committee a suitable opportunity would be created to give the body a new name if some level of consensus could be reached on a new name. Alternatively, consideration could be given to finding a new and suitable name for the (large central) Main Committee Room – this would, of course, be a matter for discussion with the Senate.

In the design brief for the Main Committee Room, provision was made for it to be a legislative Chamber, set out in the UK House of Commons style. When a more permanent location for the Main Committee was first considered, the Main Committee Room was an obvious location, as it had televising facilities, was on the perimeter of public circulation and has a public gallery. No agreed position emerged from officer-level discussions on that matter and I believe that it would be preferable for any discussion on the renaming of the Main Committee Room to occur between the Presiding Officers.

### 3. **Media coverage of the House**

#### *Media access issues*

In recent years the House has taken steps to increase the access of media representatives to its proceedings. Conditions and guidelines have been developed to cover the following matters:

- filming for private purposes
- filming intended for broadcast or publication
- filming of parliamentary proceedings
- still photography in the chambers during proceedings.

Attachment A is a document containing the relevant guidelines. In each case the guidelines have been issued by the Speaker, or by the Speaker and the President where the matter concerns both Houses. The terms of the House's 1991 and 1996 resolutions concerning the televising of proceedings and the principles concerning radio broadcasting are set out towards the end of the standing orders booklet.

The objective of the conditions/guidelines in each case is assumed to be to strike a reasonable balance between the goal of facilitating access to proceedings, on the one hand, and, on the other, the House's (or the House and the Senate's) interest in ensuring that access is not misused.

In these matters responsibilities are set out quite clearly:

in relation to filming, whether for private purposes or publication, the Presiding Officers are responsible;

in relation to the DPRS camera operators (who provide the feed for networks), the directions of the relevant Presiding Officer must be obeyed;

in relation to still photography in the House the Speaker is responsible.

A variation exists in relation to the use of the television feed. The Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings is established under the *Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act 1946*. Its primary role is to regulate the radio broadcast and re-broadcast of proceedings. In addition, however, under the resolution of 16 October 1991 which authorised the live television broadcast and re-broadcast of proceedings, the House members of the joint committee are able to consider breaches of the guidelines and any penalties that would apply.

Another objective in the Parliament's approach to media access may be to achieve a reasonable balance between the various media (electronic and print) so that they can cover proceedings on a relatively equal basis.

Some publicity has been given recently to the issue of access by still photographers. The guidelines on this matter in respect of the House are at Appendix 3 of Attachment A. It is notable that these guidelines include detailed penalty provisions – this may reflect a desire to give the Speaker a helpful and reasonably precise framework within which to consider problems in the area, rather than leave the Speaker with greater discretion, and responsibility, to determine any penalty. I understand that while many parliaments (and probably

virtually all comparable parliaments) permit televising of their proceedings, many (including the UK House of Commons and the Canadian House of Commons) do not permit still photography. I also understand that the House's rules in this matter are more liberal than those applying in the Senate.

In fact, still photographers in the House enjoy access not only greater than that applying in the Senate; they also enjoy greater access than the television broadcasters quoted by the hard-copy media in their attempt to gain direct access. The original request came from the print media who indicated that they were compelled to take their photographs from the video feed. They were admitted on the grounds of equality. There have been marked instances where they have abused the privilege.

I opposed the widening of the guidelines in 1996 to enable photographs to be taken of Members who did not have the call of the Chair. There was some justification in the then Speaker's belief that the photographers would only be capturing what a visitor to the galleries could see. However, I thought then, and I continue to think today, that a visitor to the gallery does not have the ability to "freeze frame" a situation, and reproduce it possibly totally out of context. Over the years since the relaxing of the guidelines, I have seen many instances where a sub-editor has placed an interpretation on a photograph that is not borne out by the events as I observed them unfolding. The photograph has been used to actually make the news rather than report it.

This also happens with demonstrations in the public gallery. There was one occasion when a group of indigenous protestors entered the public gallery, made a protest, and despite warnings to the contrary, were photographed and published. The protestors on that occasion told the Serjeant, who requested them not to carry out the action that they were reported in the media as proposing to do, that they had told the press of their intentions, and they felt that they would lose face if they did not do so. The press photographers at the time indicated that they realised that they were jeopardising their access rights if they did pass on the photographs, but they believed that they were placing their jobs in jeopardy if they did not do so. In this situation, I believe that the press had crossed the line, and were creating the news rather than reporting it.

I firmly believe that protestors should not be facilitated to reach a wider audience by using the Chamber as a forum. There is no doubt that there would be a copy-cat effect. I do not think that the fact that it might have happened to be sufficient cause for permitting the photographic and televised coverage of a disturbance of this kind. There have been instances where a man has committed suicide with a revolver on television, and the fact that it happened was not sufficient cause for it to be delivered into Australian lounge rooms.

Of course, it would be open for a media outlet to retain a sketch artist, drawing from memory, and there could be no objection to this. My experience has been that Members of the House remain to be very suspicious of the presence of cameras or sketch artists in the gallery.

I understand that this week Foxtel is scheduled to launch a Sky News Active service and that this will include coverage of the Houses, and some committee proceedings.

Committee proceedings have become a very important feature of the work of the House, and provision has also been made to facilitate and regularise access by the electronic media to such proceedings. Conditions were set by the House in a resolution of 16 October 1991. Important features of the conditions are that it is always a matter for the particular committee whether to allow filming, that only public hearings may be filmed, that fairness and accuracy and general overall balance must be observed, that excerpts must be placed in context and that excerpts may not be used for political party advertising etc or for satire or ridicule.

*Dissemination of information by the House*

Another side of this subject is the issue of dissemination of objective and impartial information about the Parliament, a matter on which the Procedure Committee has commented at least twice already. A short paper outlining initiatives the Department has taken in recent years to disseminate information about, and engender interest in, the work of the House and its committees is at Attachment B. It outlines the role of the professional media adviser engaged by the department, our special publications, especially *About the House*, the seminar program, the changing approach to advertising, the introduction of the House News website and the university lecture program. The Department also supports the Parliamentary Education Office, providing half of the administrative funding for the office and helping with advice and input into its activities.

#### **4. Arrangements for joint meetings with the Senate**

The need for guidelines for the conduct of any future joint meetings of the House of Representatives and the Senate and, if necessary, the content of such guidelines.

The House and the Senate have held concurrent meetings on five occasions (apart from the special arrangements in 1901). In 2001, the House met with the Senate at the Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne to mark the centenary of the Parliament. At the end of the common proceedings, the two Houses were adjourned separately by their respective Presiding Officers. The other four meetings (in 1992, 1996 and 2003) have been held in the House of Representatives Chamber to hear addresses by foreign heads of state. The Senate met in the House Chamber at the House's invitation, and, by resolutions of the two Houses, the Speaker presided and the procedures of the House applied as far as they were applicable.

Meetings of this kind (as distinct from joint sittings under section 57 of the Constitution and under s.44(2A) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (see House of Representatives Practice, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., p 239)) are not provided for in the standing orders of either House or in the Constitution but are not prevented should both Houses agree and determine the procedures to be followed.

The question of the need for guidelines for any future joint meetings has arisen because of the situation that arose at the most recent meetings in 2003.

During the address by President George W. Bush on 23 October 2003, two Senators were each ordered by the Speaker, under the provisions of standing order 304A, to withdraw from the Chamber. When each senator refused to withdraw, the Speaker ordered the Serjeant-at-Arms to direct each of them to leave the Chamber. Neither senator withdrew from the Chamber. After President Bush had left the Chamber, the Speaker named both of the senators for continuing to defy the Chair. A motion was then moved by the Leader of the House, and endorsed by Members and Senators present, to suspend the two senators. Standing Order 307 provides that a member suspended is excluded from the Chamber, all its galleries and any room where the Main Committee is meeting. Under standing order 305, the period of suspension is 24 hours. This had the effect of excluding the senators from the meeting on 24 October 2003 to hear the address by President Hu of the People's Republic of China.

The Procedure Committee of the Senate has addressed the issue of rules for future joint meetings of the Parliament, if any. It has concluded that it 'would not be productive to attempt to draw up such rules ...(as) ... any such rules would need to be extremely elaborate to cover all possible issues which might arise and avoid all the potential difficulties, and would only make it more difficult for procedural questions or disorder to be dealt with in a satisfactory manner.'<sup>1</sup>

Instead, the Committee has suggested that the procedure for occasions involving addresses by foreign heads of state be changed so that they would be meetings of the House of Representatives in the House of Representatives chamber, which

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<sup>1</sup> Senate Procedure Committee, December 2003, p 3.



senators would be invited to attend as guests, and not formal meetings of the Senate. The Committee has recommended that the Senate resolve accordingly, and that the resolution be forwarded to the House of Representatives so that the government can consider the proposal whenever any future occasions arise. The Senate has not yet considered this recommendation but is scheduled to do so on 11 May 2004.

I support the approach recommended by the Senate Committee and suggest that the House Procedure Committee consider making a similar recommendation. The approach overcomes the inherent difficulty in a presiding officer of one House in effect presiding over a meeting of the other House. It would also give due primacy to the House in relation to such occasions.

Perhaps some modification of the standing orders would be necessary. The Procedure Committee's report of October 1992 on *The Standing Orders Governing Disorder and Strangers* raised the question of disorder in the Senators' gallery during debate on the crisis in the Gulf in 1991. Up until that time, the standing orders reflected the situation in the provisional Parliament House, and the Speaker's authority was uncertain in relation to disorder created by Senators. The Committee believed that the rights and obligations of Senators should be specifically mentioned, and recommended a new standing order. This is now reflected in that part of standing order 312 which states that "...Senators shall have the privilege of admission into the Senators' gallery without orders. While in the Senators' gallery Senators shall observe instructions concerning order issued by the Chair.

Standing order 310 provides the Serjeant-at-Arms with authority to remove any stranger who causes a disturbance in any gallery. This would extend to the downstairs gallery. However, standing order 198 distinguishes between Senators and strangers. Perhaps some tidying up would be necessary to ensure that Senators must comply with the Speaker's instructions concerning order, not only when they are in the [upstairs] Senators gallery. Subsequent to these changes, Senators, as guests of the House, would be subject to the rules applying to all guests. They could be seated in the distinguished visitors gallery, which would need to be extended by temporary seating. It would be appropriate for a seat to be provided for the President of the Senate on the floor of the Chamber. Given the differentiation between strangers and Senators, it may be necessary to amend that part of standing order 312 which empowers the Speaker to provide distinguished **strangers** [*emphasis added*] with a seat on the floor of the House. This would enable the President of the Senate to take a seat on the Chamber floor.

Finally in relation to this matter, the Procedure Committee has previously considered the procedures connected with the opening of a Parliament. In 1988 the House amended and then agreed to a motion by former Speaker Scholes that the Opening be carried out in the Members' Hall or its equivalent in the new House. The meeting at which the Queen opened the new building occurred in the Great Hall, without the necessity for special rules.

**Filming and photography  
in  
Parliament House**

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## **1. Introduction**

1.1 These guidelines are issued by the Presiding Officers. They apply to all filming and photography in Parliament House with the exception of the guidelines for still photography of proceedings in the chambers; separate guidelines apply to each chamber. *Where the terms “film” or “filming” appear in the guidelines, they encompass video recording, other filming technologies and still photography, and include the use of digital technology.* Where access is limited to members of the federal parliamentary Press Gallery, Auspic and/or parliamentary officers, it is noted in the guidelines.

1.2 This document also includes general guidelines relevant to members of the Press Gallery in Parliament House.

## **2. Filming for private purposes**

2.1 Visitors to the building are welcome to film in public areas provided the film is for private purposes and is not to be published. No filming is permitted in the chambers during proceedings.

## **3. Filming intended for broadcasting or publication**

### **3.1 *Press Gallery members***

#### *Public areas of the building*

3.1.1 Filming is permitted in public areas (except in the vicinity of the chamber galleries). This guideline is intended to facilitate the work of members of the Press Gallery covering public events in the public areas of the building. It is expected that every effort will be made by members of the Press Gallery to protect the privacy of individuals.

#### *Private areas of the building*

3.1.2 Filming is permitted in television studios, private rooms with the explicit permission of the occupants and rooms/areas in which press conferences are permitted. Apart from these circumstances, all filming in private areas of the building requires permission. Detailed guidelines are attached at Appendix 1.

### **3.2 *Filmmakers who are not members of the Press Gallery***

3.2.1 Commercial filmmakers, other than members of the Press Gallery, wishing to use public or private areas of Parliament House may do so only with the explicit authority of the Presiding Officers. They should apply in the first instance to the Visitors Services Section of the Joint House Department. The guidelines at Appendix 1 cover filming by non Press Gallery members in both private and public areas of the building.

## **4. Filming of parliamentary proceedings**

### ***4.1 Television and radio recording of proceedings***

4.1.1 Television filming in the chambers is the responsibility exclusively of the Department of the Parliamentary Reporting Staff (DPRS). Guidelines for DPRS camera operators in the chambers are at Appendix 2.

4.1.2 The live television "feed" of proceedings in both chambers is broadcast directly to offices in Parliament House, including Press Gallery offices, to various other agencies and institutions, and to the "Transact" cable network.

4.1.3 DPRS maintains video and audio records of proceedings. They will generally be made available for rebroadcasting when they are required for fair and factual reporting of proceedings.

4.1.4 Rules regarding rebroadcasting of proceedings are to be found in the volume of Standing Orders of each House. Copies are available from the Serjeant-at-Arms (for the House of Representatives) and the Usher of the Black Rod (for the Senate).

### ***4.2 Still photography in the chambers during proceedings***

4.2.1 Visitors and members of the public are not permitted to take cameras into the chamber galleries during proceedings. Generally, only accredited members of the Press Gallery and Auspic photographers are permitted to take still photographs of proceedings. If other journalists have a particular need to take still photographs of proceedings they will require the specific approval of the relevant Presiding Officer. The rules for still photography in the chambers are at Appendices 3 and 4.

## **5. General guidelines for Press Gallery members**

### ***5.1 Areas "off limits" to the Press***

5.1.1 Members of the Press Gallery may not linger in the corridors in the vicinity of the Cabinet Room or party rooms. In these areas, members of the Press Gallery may not seek to engage Senators or Members in conversation. As a general rule, members of the Press Gallery wishing to speak with a Senator or Member should make an appointment by telephone.

5.1.2 Members of the Press Gallery are not permitted to enter the Members' and Guests' Dining Room on sitting days (unless invited to do so by a Senator or Member, and not for filming/photography purposes).

5.1.3 Journalists, photographers and camera crews must not stand at the entrances to Parliament House so as to impede the access of Senators, Members or others to the building. They must comply with the directions of security staff at the entrances.

## **6. Visitors and dress standards**

6.1 Members of the Press Gallery sponsoring admission of visitors into Parliament House are responsible for those visitors until they leave the building. If those visitors are representatives of media organisations, the sponsor is responsible for advising the visitors of these conditions.

6.2 Visiting media representatives may be given permission to sit in either of the chamber press galleries. The permission is given by the Serjeant-at-Arms or Usher of the Black Rod for the respective chamber, on the recommendation of the President of the Press Gallery. If permission is given, an entry card must be collected from the Serjeant's or Black Rod's office as relevant, and this card must be produced for inspection by security or messengerial attendants in the galleries if requested. The visitor must also wear the visitor's pass issued at the entrance to the building.

6.3 Members of the press when in the press gallery of the House of Representatives chamber should maintain the standards of dress adopted by the majority of Members when attending in the chamber. In the Senate press gallery, members of the Press Gallery are not required to wear coats.

## APPENDIX 1

### **Guidelines for filming in Parliament House (where the film or photograph is intended for broadcast or publication)**

*These guidelines apply to members of the Press Gallery when filming in private areas of the building and to other photographers/camera operators in all parts of the building. They must be read in conjunction with section 3 of these guidelines.*

- In these guidelines “film” or “filming” includes video recording, filming and still photography.
- These guidelines apply to members of the federal parliamentary Press Gallery and to others wanting to film for the purpose of broadcasting or publishing their work.
- Members of the Press Gallery do not need specific permission to film public events in public areas of the building.
- Persons who are not members of the Press Gallery and who intend broadcasting or publishing their work need specific permission to film anywhere in the building.
- Filming of public hearings of parliamentary committees requires the consent of the committee.
- Filming is permitted at press conferences held in committee rooms and other areas used for press conferences including the courtyards.
- Filming in private offices requires the permission of the Member or Senator who occupies the office. Filming access to other areas is at the discretion of the responsible person (e.g. a proposal to film in the Cabinet Room should be arranged with the Prime Minister's office, and in party rooms, with the relevant Whip's office).
- Filming in all other private areas of the building under joint control requires the permission of both Presiding Officers. The Speaker's permission is required for filming on the House of Representatives side of the building and the President's permission for filming on the Senate side. Requests for permission to film should be made in the first instance to the Serjeant-at-Arms and/or the Usher of the Black Rod.
- The Presiding Officers will consider filming proposals on a case by case basis, taking into account the following:
  - the privacy of Members of Parliament, staff and visitors to the building should be protected and the specific permission of any person being filmed should be sought;
  - filming should not interfere with the operations of the Parliament and/or the people who work in the building;
  - filming of security facilities will not be permitted;

- filming will not be approved for political party advertising or election campaigns; satire or ridicule; or commercial sponsorship or commercial advertising;
- the Department of the Parliamentary Reporting Staff is solely responsible for the television filming of proceedings in the two chambers.
- Decisions on whether to approve a filming proposal will take account of the public importance and value of the project. In assessing the value of a particular project, the following will be considered:
  - whether the project has a genuine educational purpose from the perspective of students and scholars;
  - whether the project serves a news and/or information purpose; and
  - whether the project serves a cultural purpose (including films or television series that may be produced for commercial purposes).
- Filming which would be likely to offend broadly accepted community norms will not be approved.
- Broad approval of a project is unlikely to be given. Specific approval should be sought for each individual segment of filming and a responsible parliamentary officer should be in attendance to ensure compliance with the terms of the approval.



## APPENDIX 2

### **Guidelines for DPRS camera operators in the chambers**

1. As a general principle, the on-air camera should be directed toward the Member/Senator having the call.
3. Panning shots are permitted for the purpose of showing Members/Senators listening to debate.
4. Reaction shots of Senators/Members are permitted:
  - (a) when the Senator/Member has sought information which is being supplied by a Senator/Member having the call; or
  - (b) when the Member/Senator is referred to in debate.
5. If exchanges between Members/Senators are too rapid to permit normal camera switching, a wide shot of the Members/Senators involved is permitted.
6. Disturbances in the galleries are not to be covered.
7. Directions of the relevant Presiding Officer and his or her delegate in relation to the operations of the sound and vision equipment in the Senate or House of Representatives are to be observed.



## **Guidelines for still photography in the House of Representatives chamber by members of the Press Gallery**

Access to the proceedings of the House of Representatives for still photography is subject to an undertaking to comply with the following arrangements and conditions:

- (a) Still photographic access to the proceedings of the House of Representatives is limited to photographers who are members of the federal parliamentary Press Gallery and AUSPIC and whose names are registered prior to a sitting fortnight with the Serjeant-at-Arms.
- (b) The maximum number of still photographers permitted in the public galleries at any time is five.
- (c) Still photography is permitted:
  - (i) during Question Time;
  - (ii) during significant speeches or debates; and
  - (iii) at other times when approved by the Speaker and notified by the Serjeant-at-Arms.
- (d) Photographs and associated captions and editorial comment published under these arrangements should relate directly to the circumstances in the chamber when the photographs were taken. Where photographs are not published in context (for example are used in non-specific reports), captions should identify the original general context in which the photographs were taken).
- (e) Photographs taken under these arrangements should be used only for the purposes of fair, accurate and appropriate reports of proceedings. Photographs shall not be used for:
  - (i) political party advertising or election campaigns;
  - (ii) satire or ridicule; or
  - (iii) commercial sponsorship or commercial advertising.
- (f) Telephoto lens photography must not show any Member closer than at "head and shoulders" distance.
- (g) No close-up photograph of Members' papers is permitted.
- (h) Photographs of persons in the galleries are not permitted, the only exception being photographs of distinguished visitors at the time they are being welcomed on behalf of the House by the Chair.

- (i) Photographs of disturbances by visitors or any other persons or unparliamentary behaviour are not permitted.
- (j) The use of flash or other sources of additional light and motor driven cameras is not permitted.
- (k) As a general principle, photographers should be as unobtrusive as possible and not disturb the view of visitors in the galleries.
- (l) Photographers shall observe the instructions of the Speaker or the Speaker's delegate. The Speaker reserves the right to determine whether a photograph taken in accordance with these guidelines is in keeping with the dignity of the House. In regard to this condition, if a photographer is in doubt about a photograph taken in the chamber, the onus is on him/her to consult the Speaker's office, through the Serjeant-at-Arms, before either publishing the photograph or giving a copy of the photograph (developed or undeveloped) to any person.
- (m) Access to the gallery by the photographer and/or the newspaper concerned may be withdrawn for non-compliance with these arrangements.
  - For the first breach—seven sitting days.
  - For any further breach—at the discretion of the Speaker up to the life of the Parliament.

**Note:** Draft amended guidelines for still photography of proceedings in the House of Representatives chamber were circulated to the press gallery in April and September 2001. The amendments would have provided uniform guidelines for the House of Representatives and the Senate. In February 2002, the Speaker announced that the revised guidelines would not be implemented pending further consultation and consideration. For the foreseeable future, therefore, the guidelines outlined on pp. 9—10 of this document will apply in the House of Representatives chamber.

### **Guidelines for still photography in the Senate chamber**

Access to the proceedings of the Senate by still photographers is subject to an undertaking to comply with the following conditions.

1. Photographers must be current members of the Federal Parliamentary Press Gallery or employees of Auspic whose names and the organisations they represent are registered with the Usher of the Black Rod. Access by other members of the media may be arranged on a case by case basis.
2. Not more than five photographers may be in the galleries at one time.
3. Photography is permitted:
  - 3.1 during Question Time; and
  - 3.2 at other times when explicitly approved by the President.
4. Photographs may be used only for the purposes of fair and accurate reports of proceedings and shall not be used for:
  - 4.1 political party advertising or election campaigns;
  - 4.2 satire or ridicule;
  - 4.3 commercial sponsorship or advertising.
5. The Senator with the call must be the focus of photographs, with the exception of general photographs of the whole chamber.
6. Photographs taken with telephoto lenses must only show the Senator with the call, and must be no closer than "head and shoulders".
7. Telephoto lenses must not be used to inspect Senators' documents or computer screens. Close up photographs may not be taken of a Senator's documents or computer screen.
8. Photographs may not be taken of persons in the galleries, with the exception of distinguished visitors at the time that they are welcomed to the Senate by the Chair.
9. Photographs of unparliamentary behaviour or disturbances in the galleries are not permitted.
10. Additional lighting may not be used.
11. Directions of the President and his or her delegate in relation to these conditions shall be observed.

## ATTACHMENT B

### **Promoting the Work of the House of Representatives**

The media has reported on the proceedings of the Australian Parliament from the commencement of the Federal Parliament in 1901. The nature and content of that reporting has varied significantly over the course of the past century. Today's coverage tends increasingly to be image rather than text based, to involve brief snapshots rather than detailed presentation of facts and analysis, and to be focused on the day to day political contest rather than the issues or the parliament as an institution. It is probably fair to say that many view the media's reporting as reflecting negatively on the Parliament as an institution.

In the report: *It's your House: community involvement in the procedures and practices of the House of Representatives and its committees* (November 1999), the Procedure Committee made a number of recommendations aimed at improving public participation in the work of the House and its committees. The Committee aimed to ensure that the Australian public was well informed about the work of the House and its committees and was given the opportunity to engage fully with the Parliament. An important aspect was in encouraging media coverage of committees.

In response to the report the department has sought to work in partnership with the Speaker and members of the House to more effectively market the work of the House and its committees to the media and the community. In 1998, the Department of the House of Representatives established a small office, Liaison and Projects, to develop an overall marketing and communication strategy for the House and its committees. The success of the department's work has been recognised by the Australian Institute of Marketing – the department won public sector marketing awards in 2000 and in 2001.

Some of the strategies adopted by the department to promote the work of the House are set out in the following paragraphs.

#### *Media Adviser*

The department employed a media adviser to improve links between the media and parliamentary committees. The media adviser works with committees and their staff to support committees in their media and communications activities. As a result of the work of the media adviser, the department now has in place a framework for dealing with the media that is resulting in increased and more accurate media coverage of committee work. The framework includes:

- Regular provision of information across all stages of committee inquiries, framed in a news style that is familiar to and easily picked up by journalists

- A reliable and single point of contact through which media queries and requests can be coordinated; and
- Quick and widespread dissemination of information. As one example, there are now hundreds of media organisations linked to a regular email alert service on the work of committees.

Feedback from members of the parliamentary press gallery and from metropolitan and regional media outlets indicates that this coordinated approach is valued by the media and gives committees the best possible opportunity to attract coverage for their work.

#### *Publications for the community*

The department publishes a magazine, *About the House*, to inform the public about the House and its committees. The magazine, which to date has had 20 editions, gives people news and feature stories about legislation before parliament, committee investigations and issues members are raising in the House.

Produced five times a year, the magazine has struck a positive chord within the community because, as one reader recently said, it gives people access to information that is not otherwise available to the public. We estimate that readership is above 50,000. Importantly, it continues to grow.

In a recent survey of the magazine's readership, well over 90 per cent of readers rated the magazine as excellent or good in its range of topics, content, readability, layout and design.

Recently, articles that have appeared in the magazine have been picked up by sections of the media and either been reproduced in the media or featured as discussion topics for talkback radio.

The department has also established a weekly column on the work of the Parliament and its committees in the *Campus Review* newspaper which reaches around 86 000 people, most of them educators in the tertiary sector. It also produces a monthly column on the work of committees for the Canberra Business Council's e-newsletter, *Business Link*.

#### *Advertising*

The department has focused on achieving more effective and cost-effective advertising of committee inquiries over a number of years, through re-design and simplification of advertisements and greater use of combined advertising and other cost-effective avenues for publicising inquiries. The combined advertising involves the placement of a fortnightly advertisement on the work of committees in *The Australian* newspaper. Committees can contribute to each advertisement, so they no longer need to place more expensive individual advertisements in newspapers. Committees also take advantage of alternative publicity avenues—such as the About the House magazine, the House News website, media liaison and direct mailing. This results in cost

savings while achieving the desired outcome of informing the public about the work of committees, more effectively.

#### *House News website*

As part of the House of Representatives website, the department has established a House News page that provides consolidated and easy to access information on happenings in the House, particularly in relation to committees. The news page provides a quick entry point for people seeking the latest news about committees and proceedings in the chamber.

#### *Seminars*

For a number of years now, the department has conducted a public seminar program on a cost recovery basis. It presents a number of types of seminars, including a general overview of the House and detailed explanations of the legislative, committee and budget processes of the House and the Parliament. Members of the House participate in the committee seminar, and provide a Member's perspective on the work of committees. The majority of participants are public servants from Australian Government agencies. Seminars are mainly held in Canberra, but seminars have also been held in State capitals, including Melbourne, Adelaide and Hobart.

Feedback from participants on these seminars is very positive, with more than 95 per cent of evaluations expressing satisfaction with the seminar attended.

#### *University Lecture Program*

The department has sought to broaden links between the House and tertiary institutions and has established a university lecture program whereby members of the House and senior parliamentary officials visit universities free of charge to provide lectures on the realities of working in today's House of Representatives. The program was trialled with a few universities and proved such a success that it has now been extended to tertiary institutions throughout Australia. A small and manageable number of universities is visited annually.

#### *Lessons Learnt*

There are a number of lessons that can be learnt from our experience in this area. Chief among these is that there is a high level of interest in the work of the Parliament among the public, as evidenced by the large number of requests for the About the House magazine, the growing number of people who are joining the email alert service, the increase in registrations for seminars and the growing list of universities participating in the lecture program. What the public appreciates is that they are receiving information about the Parliament and its work in a way that is not regarded as politically biased and is not devoted simply to the political contest within the parliament.

This may be a message for the media too. While there will always be a place for the media to cover the day to day political battles within parliament, they should not just act as 'theatre' critics. The substance of parliament's work and the institution of parliament should not fall victim to the desire to portray the parliament as an arena of political combat.

Another lesson learnt is that it is worth the risk of being innovative in the way parliament communicates with the community. There is always a danger that people will look on efforts to increase the profile of parliament in a cynical way. But our experience shows that improved communication between the parliament and the public can be seen as a breath of fresh air by those seeking genuine discourse about the issues that matter.

A final lesson is that an effective marketing strategy requires a collaborative effort between the members of the House and departmental officials. The House and its committees need to be promoted in a consistent way by all participants.