

# HOUSE REVIEW



## Selected features of House of Representatives business

Sitting period 5 – 8 September 2022 (no. 49)

The death of Her Majesty the Queen occurred at the end of the third sitting week of the 47th Parliament. Out of respect, the sittings scheduled for the following week (12-15 September) will not take place.

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### **Death of Her Majesty The Queen, Elizabeth II**

On Friday, 9 September, the Governor-General advised Australians that Her Majesty The Queen had passed away the previous day. For 70 years, Queen Elizabeth the Second reigned as Australia's Head of State.

The House will not meet as scheduled in the week beginning 12 September, and the Speaker will fix the date of its next meeting. On the death of a reigning monarch, it is traditional for the House on its next sitting to move that a message be conveyed to the new monarch expressing the House's deep sympathy at the loss.

Over coming days, a number of ceremonies will mark the death of Her Majesty The Queen as well as the accession of the new monarch. This includes a 96-gun salute on 9 September to mark The Queen's death, and a ceremony on the Forecourt of Parliament House at 11am on 11 September at which the Governor-General will read the Proclamation regarding His Majesty The King.

### **Proceedings in the House, 5-8 September**

#### ***Changes to standing and sessional orders***

On Monday, the Member for Goldstein successfully moved to suspend standing orders to allow her to move an amendment to sessional order 65A. She then moved as an amendment that, during Question Time, priority be given to a crossbench Member seeking the call on the seventeenth question instead of the twenty-first question, as well as on the fifth and thirteenth questions as currently provided. The amendment was agreed on division.

The Manager of Opposition Business also sought to suspend standing orders to allow him to move an amendment to standing order 97. The motion to suspend standing orders was negated on division.

#### ***Statement on matter of privilege***

Also on Monday, the Speaker made a statement in regard to a matter of privilege that the Member for Melbourne had raised with him while the House was not sitting. The Member had requested the Speaker to urgently refer to the Committee of Privileges and Members' Interests the matter of whether the Member for Cook, while Prime Minister, had deliberately misled the House, by act or omission, by causing himself to be sworn in to multiple portfolios as an additional minister without informing the House.

Under standing order 52, when the House is not sitting and is not expected to meet for at least two weeks, the Speaker must refer a matter of privilege raised with him to the committee immediately if a *prima facie* case of contempt or breach of privilege has been made out and the matter requires urgent action. The Speaker advised the House that he had told the Member for Melbourne that he did not consider that a *prima facie* case had been made out in terms of the detail that Speakers have always required in relation to such allegations and that, in accordance with the practice of the House,

he had not referred the matter to the committee. The Speaker noted that, while precedence to a referral motion could not be given, it is still open to the House itself to determine a course of action.

### ***Remote participation in proceedings of the Federation Chamber***

On Thursday, on motion by the Leader of the House, the House agreed that, for all meetings of the Federation Chamber from 12 September, Members who have been granted leave of absence by the House and are not physically present in Parliament House may participate remotely in proceedings of the Federation Chamber by the official video facility. Members using the video facility must be present at either an electorate office or a Commonwealth Parliament Office and must provide notice to the Chair at least 15 minutes before seeking the call. Members participating in this way are not counted for quorum and may not move or second any motion or amendment to a motion or bill. Both the Leader of the House and the Manager of Opposition Business spoke in support of the change, and the motion passed on the voices.

### ***Statements by indulgence and statements on significant matters***

On Monday, before Question Time, the Prime Minister, by indulgence, made a statement in relation to the death of the former leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, before the Leader of the Opposition spoke, also by indulgence. As a mark of respect, all Members present stood, in silence. The House then agreed that further statements be permitted in the Federation Chamber.

Following Question Time, the Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister made a statement by indulgence in relation to the death of Sir David Iser Smith KCVO AO. The Leader of the Opposition also spoke, before all Members present stood, in silence, as a mark of respect.

On Tuesday, before Question Time, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition both made statements by indulgence congratulating the incoming Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, the Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP.

On Wednesday, the Leader of the House used the provisions of new standing order 50A to make two statements on matters of significance, pursuant to notice: the death of Judith Durham AO and the death of Dame Olivia Newton-John AC DBE. After each statement, the Manager of Opposition Business made a statement in reply. Under the new standing order, there is no limit on the Minister's speaking time for such a statement, and the Leader of the Opposition, or Member representing, is deemed to have been granted leave to speak on the same matter for an equal amount of time.

### ***Legislation***

Thirteen government bills and two private Members' bills were introduced. Six bills were passed by the House.

Two bills were debated in the Federation Chamber. Proceedings on bills up to the completion of the consideration in detail stage may occur in the Federation Chamber, unless there is a question that cannot be decided on the voices (an unresolved question) and proceedings cannot continue without the question being resolved.

### ***Parliamentary committees***

The House agreed to a number of appointments to committees during the week, and also concurred with a Senate resolution extending the reporting date for the Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary Standards to 1 December 2022.

### ***Communication with the Senate***

On Thursday, the discussion on the matter of public importance was curtailed by the Leader of the House moving 'That business of the day be called on', to allow consideration of Senate messages returning the Climate Change Bill and the Climate Change (Consequential Amendments) Bill with amendments. The amendments were considered and agreed to on division.

Other messages from the Senate related to the appointment of senators to joint committees.

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[Bills and legislation](#)—access bills, explanatory memoranda, amendments, speeches, information about key stages of a bill’s consideration, and a tracking option

[Live Minutes](#)—a real time summary of House decisions and proceedings. When used in conjunction with the [Daily Program](#), the Live Minutes are a simple way to track the House’s work each day

[House of Representatives Practice](#) 7 ed., 2018—the most authoritative guide to House procedure

[House of Representatives Standing and Sessional Orders](#), as at 2 August 2022—the House’s rules of procedure

[Procedural Digest](#)—a record of selected procedural events in the House of Representatives Chamber and the Federation Chamber. It includes Speaker's rulings, precedents and unusual situations.