

# Procedural Digest

No. 13

47<sup>th</sup> Parliament

31 July – 10 August 2023

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## Speaker

### 13.01 Statement by Speaker – Changes to division procedures

On Tuesday, 1 August, the Speaker informed the House that procedures for stating a question for decision would revert to standard form as provided in the standing orders: ‘that the [proposal] be agreed to’. Members would still be required to vote ‘aye’ or ‘no’ on the voices to a question before the House, but the reversion would mean that many members might need to cross the floor to the other side of the Chamber when voting in divisions.

The Speaker noted that this reversion to usual practice would not be familiar to members, especially those who had taken their places in the 47<sup>th</sup> Parliament.

*Since 2020, as a COVID-19 precaution to minimise movement in the Chamber, the question had been put as either ‘that the [proposal] be agreed to’ or ‘that the [proposal] be disagreed to’ in order to limit the requirement for members to cross the floor.*

*Hansard: 1 August 2023, 5338*

### 13.02 Consideration of member’s remarks

On Wednesday, 9 August, during the matter of public importance, the Member for Griffith made remarks which offended members present. When asked by the Deputy Speaker to withdraw following multiple points of order by members present, the member refused to do so. He was then told by the Deputy Speaker to resume his seat. The matter was reported to the Speaker for consideration.

Later, after discussing the matter with the Member for Griffith, the Speaker explained the incident to the House and gave the call to the member, who then withdrew his comments.

*Hansard: 9 August 2023, 6017; 6032*

**SOs 89, 90, 92**

## Bills

### 13.03 Amendment to proposed second reading amendment lapses

On Tuesday, 8 August, during the second reading debate on the Treasury Laws Amendment (Making Multinationals Pay Their Fair Share—Integrity and Transparency) Bill 2023, a crossbench member proposed an amendment to an opposition amendment moved in an earlier sitting. There being no seconder, the crossbench member’s amendment to the amendment lapsed and debate returned to the question on the opposition amendment.

*Hansard: 8 August 2023, 5888-9*

**SOs 116, 124, 145**

### 13.04 Parliamentary workplace bills

On Thursday, 10 August, three bills were introduced giving effect to recommendations of the Australian Human Rights Commission's *Set the Standard: Report on the Independent Review into Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces*:

- the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service Bill 2023 and a related bill, seeking to establish a statutory Parliamentary Workplace Support Service providing human resources services for parliamentarians and persons employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* and other services to support positive cultural change across Commonwealth parliamentary workplaces and
- the Members of Parliament (Staff) Amendment Bill 2023, intended to modernise and clarify the employment framework for parliamentarians and their staff.

Debate on each of these bills was adjourned after the Minister's second reading speech and resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

*Hansard*: 10 August 2023, 6083-6  
*Votes and Proceedings*: 2022-23/917-18

**SO 142**

## Committees

### 13.05 Procedure Committee tables report

On Monday, 7 August, the Standing Committee on Procedure tabled its report *Raising the Standard*, concluding its inquiry into recommendations 10 and 27 of *Set the Standard: Report on the Independent Review into Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces*.

The committee recommended amendments to the standing orders in relation to offensive language and sanctions against disorderly conduct, as well as other guidance and supports for members, with the aim of improving safety, respect and inclusiveness in the House of Representatives. The Chair and Deputy Chair each made statements in relation to the report. Debate was then adjourned, and resumption of debate referred to the Federation Chamber.

*Hansard*: 7 August 2023, 5684-6  
*Votes and Proceedings*: 2022-23/889

**SOs 39, 247**

### 13.06 Referral to Economics Committee

Also on 7 August, the Assistant Treasurer moved, pursuant to notice, that the House refer matters relating to insurers' responses to recent natural disasters in Australia to the Standing Committee on Economics for inquiry and report by 30 September 2024. Debate ensued and the question was carried on the voices.

*Standing order 215(b) provides that general purpose standing committees may inquire into and report on matters referred by either the House or a Minister. It is not common for the House to refer inquiries, with most being received from Ministers.*

*Hansard*: 7 August 2023, 5737-41  
*Votes and Proceedings*: 2022-23/892

**SO 215**

## Members

### 13.07 New member sworn

On the first day of sittings, Monday, 31 July, the Speaker announced that, following the return to the writ for a by-election in the division of Fadden, Mr Cameron Caldwell had been elected. Mr Caldwell was admitted to the Chamber where he made and subscribed the affirmation of allegiance required by law.

*Hansard: 31 July 2023, 5185*  
*Votes and Proceedings: 2022-23/844*

### 13.08 Leave of absence

On Monday, 31 July, the Member for Brisbane moved that leave of absence be granted to the Leader of the Australian Greens for the current period of sittings for personal reasons. The question was carried.

On the final sitting day of the fortnight, the Leader of the House moved that leave of absence be given to all members until the date of the next sitting. The question was carried.

*Hansard: 31 July 2023, 5202*  
*10 August 2023, 6140*  
*Votes and Proceedings: 2022-23/845, 923*

**SO 26**

## Motions

### 13.09 Condolence motion

On 31 July, the Prime Minister moved a condolence motion on the death of the Hon Simon Findlay Crean, Member for Hotham from 1990 to 2013 and a former Minister and Leader of the Australian Labor Party. The Leader of the Opposition seconded the motion, and the Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Cybersecurity (the current Member for Hotham) and the Leader of the Nationals also made contributions to the debate.

Members then rose in their places as a mark of respect. Debate was adjourned and the motion referred to the Federation Chamber, where it was debated throughout the sitting fortnight.

*Hansard: 31 July 2023, 5185*  
*Votes and Proceedings: 2022-23/844-5*

**SO 49**

### 13.10 Opposition motion to suspend standing orders

During Question Time on 3 August, the Leader of the Opposition sought leave to move a motion relating to the proposed Voice to Parliament. Leave was not granted, so the Leader of the Opposition then moved to suspend standing orders to enable him to move the motion. The motion to suspend standing orders was debated and defeated on division.

*Hansard: 3 August 2023, 5596-601*  
*Votes and Proceedings: 2022-23/884-885*

**SOs 47, 111**

### 13.11 Private member's motion lapses

During private members' business on Monday, 7 August, a private member's notice relating to COVID-19 vaccinations was called on and, as the member was not present for the call, the notice lapsed and was removed from the notice paper.

*A motion not moved when called on is removed from the notice paper unless the member who gave notice, or another member at their request, has moved its postponement.*

Hansard: 7 August 2023, 5146  
Votes and Proceedings: 2022-23/841

**SOs 41, 113**

### 13.12 Minister's motion on Robodebt Scheme

On 10 August, the Minister for Government Services, pursuant to notice, moved a motion that the House accept the findings of the report of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme. In the ensuing debate, an amendment to the motion was moved by the Manager of Opposition Business and was defeated on division. The original motion was then agreed to on division.

Hansard: 10 August 2023, 6103-13  
Votes and Proceedings: 2022-23/919–20

**SOs 111, 117, 121**

## Questions

### 13.13 Question without notice to Committee Chair

During Question Time on Thursday, 3 August, the Member for Jagajaga asked a question to the Member for Bruce in his capacity as Chair of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, seeking information in relation to the committee's current inquiry into procurement at Services Australia and the National Disability Insurance Agency. The Member for Bruce provided a response informing the House of the inquiry processes to date.

*It is rare for questions without notice to be directed to members other than Ministers. In accordance with standing order 99, other members may be asked questions without notice relating to a bill, motion, or other business of the House or a committee for which the member is responsible. Such questions are ordinarily confined to matters of timing or procedure.*

Hansard: 3 August 2023, 5595

**SO 99**

## Statements

### 13.14 Statements by indulgence of the Chair

On 31 July, during the time for Government Business, the Member for Cook made a statement by indulgence relating to the report on the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme and his role in the scheme.

On 10 August, prior to Question Time, the Prime Minister made a statement by indulgence informing the House that he had accepted an invitation from President Joe Biden to

undertake an official visit of the United States. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, also by indulgence, supported the Prime Minister's remarks.

During the sitting fortnight, indulgence was granted on several occasions for statements relating to women's sport:

- On 1 August, following Question Time, the Prime Minister recognised the recent successes of the Australian women's soccer and netball teams – the Matildas and the Diamonds, respectively. The Leader of the Opposition supported the Prime Minister's remarks, also acknowledging the work of the Australian women's cricket team in the recent Women's Ashes series.
- On 3 August, prior to the Matter of Public Importance, the Prime Minister informed the House that he had written to the Presiding Officers asking that Parliament House be illuminated in green and gold on the following Sunday and Monday nights in honour of the Matildas' next match in the FIFA Women's World Cup. The Speaker thanked the Prime Minister and informed the house that this request had been approved.
- On 7 August, prior to Question Time, the Prime Minister congratulated the Diamonds on winning the Netball World Cup. Later, both the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition rose to associate themselves with the answer to a question to Minister for Sport about the impact of the women's netball and football competitions on sport in Australia.
- On 8 August, prior to Question Time, the Prime Minister rose to congratulate the Matildas on their win the previous night and thanked the Speaker for illuminating Parliament House in green and gold. The Leader of the Opposition joined the Prime Minister in his congratulations.

*Hansard:* 31 July 2023, 5207-9  
1 August 2023, 5337  
3 August 2023, 5604  
7 August 2023, 5722; 5736-7  
8 August 2023; 5863  
10 August 2023, 6127

**SO 65**

### 13.15 Statements on significant matters

During the time for statements on significant matters, Ministers made statements relating to:

- the World Economic Forum gender gap report rankings (3 August)
- family and domestic violence leave (3 August)
- sexual assault and harassment on university campuses (9 August) and
- Homelessness Week (9 August).

*Hansard:* 3 August 2023, 5543-7  
9 August 2023, 5943-8  
*Votes and Proceedings:* 2022-23/879; 907

**SO 50A**

## 13.16 Ministerial statement

On the final day of sittings, the Minister for Resources made a ministerial statement by leave relating to the Commonwealth's proposed national radioactive waste facility. The Shadow Minister for Agriculture addressed the House in reply.

*When the House grants a minister leave to make a ministerial statement, it is deemed that leave is granted to the Leader of the Opposition, or member representing, to speak for an equal amount of time.*

*Hansard: 10 August 2023, 6086-9  
Votes and Proceedings: 2022-23/918*

**SO 63A**

## Offensive words<sup>#</sup>

	<b>Hansard</b>	
	<i>Date</i>	<i>Page</i>
'...in an act of duplicity...'	31 July 2023	5203
'Will this tricky Prime Minister now admit...'	1 August 2023	5335
'He is interjecting and making light of the destruction of a public school—'	7 August 2023	5796
'...you fool.'	9 August 2023	6016
'...your party is so deeply corrupted and broken and utterly incapable of tackling climate change.'	9 August 2023	6017

**SOs 89, 90, 92**

<sup>#</sup> List of unparliamentary expressions recorded in *Hansard*.