

Dear Chair

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the committee's inquiry into Question Time procedures.

1. There should be genuine backbench questions from Government MPs to the Executive when it is the Government benches turn for a question. This could be covered by a parliamentary convention that excludes the Executive from any role in the drafting of questions, or allocation of questioning, from Government MPs. Government backbench MPs can jump for the call or wait-your-turn lists can be developed.
2. There should be a convention that allocates one day per parliamentary sitting week for Opposition backbench questions to the Executive, with the Shadow Executive excluded from any role in the drafting of questions or allocation of questioning. Opposition backbench MPs can jump for the call or wait-your-turn lists can be developed.
3. The rules regarding relevancy of answers to questions should be tightened – there should be a requirement upon the Executive to answer the question that is put, or be sat down. Rambling about the policy topic in the broadest sense should not be sufficient to be deemed relevant to the question.
4. Time for answers should be lessened to 90 seconds.
5. The parliament should consider whether short supplementary questions should be allowed – along with shorter supplementary answers (I'm not convinced, but perhaps worth taking a look at).
6. Practice should not exclude the Prime Minister from being questioned about any matter related to the Government, including Government backbench MPs and statutory government bodies, remembering the Prime Minister has the right to handball any question that is put to them to any Member of the Executive.

Cheers

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