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The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

# Electronic Voting in the House of Representatives

House of Representatives  
Standing Committee on Procedure

June 2013  
Canberra

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## Foreword


On 29 November 2012 the Committee resolved to inquire into electronic voting in the House of Representatives. Although the Committee has conducted two previous inquiries into the conduct of divisions generally, it has never examined electronic voting in detail.

Technological advances and generational change, together with the close numbers in the 43<sup>rd</sup> Parliament, provide compelling reasons to examine the issue more thoroughly. Unfortunately the inquiry has been truncated by the press of other Committee business.

Nevertheless, my Committee colleagues and I decided to prepare this short report to review existing evidence. We hope the paper will provide a basis for an in-depth inquiry if a future Procedure Committee wishes to examine the matter.

Electronic voting could make a significant difference to the efficiency of the House. It may be that many of the previous concerns regarding electronic voting systems have been addressed. However, important procedural and contextual issues remain. These, along with questions concerning available technology, cost and the impact of the implementation of electronic voting in the House, deserve further consideration. It is my hope that the Procedure Committee of the 44<sup>th</sup> Parliament will be able to collect the necessary technical evidence and consult with Members and others with a stake in the operations of the House to bring a considered view to this important topic.

Geoff Lyons MP  
Chair



## Membership of the Committee

Chair            Mr Geoff Lyons MP

Deputy Chair   Mr Russell Broadbent MP

Members        Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP (*to 14.05.13*)    Mr Steve Irons MP  
                     Ms Jill Hall MP                                    Mr Ewen Jones MP  
                     Mr Chris Hayes MP (*from 14.05.13*)       Ms Julie Owens

## Committee Secretariat

Secretary Ms Catherine Cornish

Inquiry Secretary Dr Narelle McGlusky

Research Officers Ms Naomi Swann

Ms Susan Dinon

Ms Penny Branson



## Terms of reference

To inquire into and report on the conduct of divisions, including but not limited to:

- (a) the procedures for counting and reporting the vote using an electronic voting system;
- (b) the possible use of electronic voting in the Chamber of the House of Representatives; and
- (c) the cost of establishing and providing such a service.





## List of abbreviations

DPS	Department of Parliamentary Services
PISO	Parliamentary Information Systems Office

