

21 June 2004

Mrs M May
Chair
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mrs May

I refer to the recent roundtable with representatives from the media as part of the Committee's inquiry into enhancing public knowledge of parliamentary proceedings. I have previously provided a submission to the inquiry addressing the terms of reference.

At the roundtable, Mr Grubel, AAP Bureau Chief and Press Gallery Secretary, referred to some difficulties experienced by AAP in getting access to tabled reports and other documents.

Ms Robyn McClelland, Clerk Assistant (Table) and Ms Joanne Towner, Director, Legislation and Records, met with Mr Grubel on Friday 18 June to discuss press access to documents. Attached for the Committee's information is a paper setting out the provision of documents to the press by the House of Representatives Table Office. Mr Grubel undertook to distribute copies of the document to members of the press gallery.

Yours sincerely

I C HARRIS
Clerk of the House

HOUSE OR REPRESENTATIVES TABLE OFFICE PROVISION OF DOCUMENTS TO THE PRESS

DOCUMENT TYPE	PROVISION?	COMMENT
Bills, EM, second reading speeches	Yes .	As soon as presented. One or two copies only. Also available on http://www.aph.gov.au/bills/index.htm
Government documents (on day of tabling and during tabling sitting week) (ie documents available in press gallery)	No	PM& C arrange for delivery of stock to the press gallery (at the boxes) once tabled. Alternatively the Agency website.
Government documents (from previous sitting week and beyond) (ie documents that are no longer available in the press gallery)	Yes (<i>if we have stock</i>)	Historic documents are stored in Archive basement so there may be a delay in retrieving, depending on other requests. Note: if we don't have stock e.g. only a master copy – if it is a PP, these can be accessed through the Parliamentary Library. If it is not a PPS, and we need to photocopy, build in some time for this.
Parliamentary committee reports	Yes (<i>if we have stock</i>)	Available either through the Committee secretariat or the Table Office. Single copy only.
Delegation reports	Yes	
Deemed papers	Yes	
Miscellaneous papers tabled during QT, Adjournment debate etc	Yes	
Acts	Yes	For the printed copies of individual acts
Consolidations of Acts	No	We do not hold stock – available electronically (http://scaleplus.law.gov.au/quicksrch.htm)