



Australian Government

Australian Government response to the
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure report:

Monitoring and review of procedural changes implemented in the 43rd
Parliament: 4th Report

May 2014

**Response from the Government to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure report
*Monitoring and review of procedural changes implemented in the 43rd Parliament: 4th Report***

Opening Statement

The Government thanks the Committee for its work in monitoring and reporting on procedural changes implemented in the House of Representatives in the 43rd Parliament.

The Government's response to the recommendations is as follows:

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the maximum time allocated for the Matter of Public Importance discussion be reduced to one hour, with speaking times as follows:

- *proposer and Member next speaking: 15 minutes each;*
- *next two Members speaking: 10 minutes each; and*
- *any other Members: 5 minutes each.*

Response

The Government supports the thrust of the recommendation which was implemented in the changes to the Standing Orders adopted on 13 November 2013.

The MPI discussion was reduced to one hour as recommended; the proposer and the seconder speak for 10 minutes each (rather than 15 as recommended) and any other member for 5 minutes each as recommended.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the House consider measures to manage the workload of Members during sitting weeks, having regard to the health and wellbeing of Members, their staff and parliamentary staff, including but not limited to:

- a) commencing at 12.00 noon on Mondays in the House and 12.30pm in the Federation Chamber;*
- b) commencing at 12.00 noon on Tuesdays in the House;*
- c) offsetting the reduction in sitting hours resulting from a) and b) by reducing the time allocated to private Members' business each week by three hours;*
- d) providing that divisions and quorums called for after 6.30pm on Mondays and Tuesdays be deferred until the following day; and*
- e) rising half an hour earlier on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, by reducing the time allocated for adjournment debate.*

Response

The Government supports the thrust of the recommendation and has sought to manage the workload of members through the changes to the Standing Orders adopted on 13 November 2013. Specifically with regard the individual components of the recommendation:

- a) not adopted
- b) adopted
- c) adopted in part (private member's business was reduced by one and a half hours each week)
- d) not adopted
- e) adopted – the House rises earlier by an hour on Monday and Tuesday.