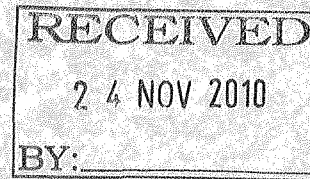


DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE HON PETER SLIPPER MP

Ms Julie Owens MP
Chair – Procedure Committee
Suite R1.80
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Julie,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Main Committee to ask the Procedure Committee to consider some changes to the operation of the Main Committee in the context of your review of the procedural changes arising from the parliamentary reform agreements.

Standing Order 191 permits there to be an adjournment debate in the Main Committee when the motion 'That the Committee do now adjourn' is moved. In practice an adjournment debate only takes place on Thursdays, and this is reflected in the delegation of the routine of business for the Main Committee, published in the standing orders (p. 79).

I would like the Committee to consider having flexibility built into the routine of business for the Main Committee so that an adjournment debate is possible on any day that the Main Committee met. To ensure that there was no encroachment on private members' business time or government business time, this would probably mean that the Main Committee's sittings would need to be extended to accommodate the adjournment debate. Of course, I recognise that the Main Committee can only meet whilst the House continues to sit (SO 190(c)).

This would provide additional speaking opportunities for Members.

I have had preliminary discussions with some of the whips about this matter and there is some interest.

I would appreciate if the Committee could give early consideration to this matter to allow an arrangement to be put in place soon after the resumption of sittings in 2011. I am happy to meet with the Committee to discuss any proposal.

Yours sincerely

PETER SLIPPER

23/11/10