

**Government Response to the Procedure Committee Report:  
Interim Report: Monitoring and review of procedural changes  
Implemented in the 43rd Parliament**

**Opening Statement**

The report covers an overview of the reform agenda, the increase in private members' business and its implications, significant procedural reforms and current and emerging issues. The Government thanks the Committee for its ongoing work into procedural reforms.

This response represents the position of the Government on the matters brought to it by the Committee.

The Government's response to each recommendation is as follows:

**Recommendation No.1**

**The Committee recommends that the Selection Committee be encouraged to implement the 'General principles relating to the selection of private Members' business' and exercise the flexibility that is available to it pursuant to standing order 222 and the principles, particularly in relation to the length of debates and speaking times allocated.**

Response

The Government notes the recommendation.

**Recommendation No.2**

**The Committee recommends that the House take up the Selection Committee's recommendation that it consider adopting the 'General principles relating to the selection of private Members' business' (contained in Report No. 3 of the Selection Committee of 21 October 2010).**

Response

The Government notes the recommendation.

### **Recommendation No.3**

**The Committee recommends that the House considers 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 12.30 pm in the Main Committee;**
- 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 called for after 8.30 pm on Mondays and Tuesdays be deferred until the following day; and**
- e) reducing the time allocated for adjournment debate by half an hour on one evening.**

#### Response

The Government notes the recommendation. The increased time for Private Members' Business reflects the composition of the 43<sup>rd</sup> parliament and the sentiment expressed through the Agreement for a Better Parliament. The Government recognises the importance of achieving a balance in the hours the Parliament meets and the physical ability of Members' and their staff; a balance which maximises Members' time while in Canberra with their health and wellbeing.

### **Recommendation No.4**

**The Committee recommends that draft amendments to standing orders which enhance the operations of the House and correct oversights and inconsistencies be prepared and proposed for consideration by the House.**

#### Response

The Government supports the recommendation.

Amendments to Standing Orders moved by the Government and agreed to by the House on the 8 February 2012 represent the implementation of the recommendation.