



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE**

*Chair: Ms Julie Owens MP
Deputy Chair: The Hon. Alex Somlyay MP*

NEW INQUIRY INTO THE CONDUCT OF THE BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The House Standing Committee on Procedure today announced a new inquiry into the conduct of the business of the House of Representatives.

Committee Chair Julie Owens described the inquiry “as an opportunity for the Committee to step back and assess the way the House operates on a day-to-day basis.”

The inquiry will consider, among other things, the speaking times Members are allowed for legislative and other debates. Following a study tour of several European Parliaments in 2006, the Procedure Committee of the 42nd Parliament noted that speech times in the House of Representatives were lengthy in comparison to other chambers.

Ms Owens said “it is questionable whether members need to 20 minutes to speak on all Bills—that is something this inquiry will consider.”

The terms of reference for the inquiry are as follows:

The House of Representatives Procedure Committee is inquiring into the conduct of the business of the House. The inquiry will focus on, but will not be limited to the:

- *Options for sitting hour reform;*
- *Speaking times for legislation and other debates;*
- *Length of time allocated to items of business; and*
- *Options for managing the competing demands on Members’ time posed by Chamber duties, party meetings and parliamentary committee meetings.*

The Committee would welcome submissions addressing the terms of reference from interested members of the public. Submissions should be sent to the Committee secretariat by **Monday, 4 August 2008**. It is preferred that submissions are sent by email to procedure.committee.reps@aph.gov.au.

For media comment please contact the Committee Chair, Julie Owens, on (02) 6277 4134 (Parliament House); or (02) 9689 1455 (Electorate Office).

For background information please contact the Committee secretariat:

Phone: (02) 6277 4672;
Email: procedure.committee.reps@aph.gov.au; or
Website: <http://www.aph.gov.au/proc>
