



The Parliament of the  
Commonwealth of Australia

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE BROADCASTING  
OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS

Inquiry into Televising and Radio Broadcasting of  
Both Houses of Parliament and their Committees

REPORT

JUNE 1986

**MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

**The Hon. Joan Child, MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives  
Chairman**

**Senator the Hon. Douglas McClelland, President of the Senate  
Vice-Chairman**

**Senator Coleman**

**Senator Watson**

**Mr Brumby, MP**

**Mr Ronald Edwards, MP**

**Mr Hicks, MP**

**Mr Jull, MP**

**Mr Maher, MP**

**Mr Burr, MP, and Mr Charles, MP, assisted the committee in its  
deliberations in the 33rd Parliament but were not members of the  
committee in the 34th Parliament.**

**The Hon. Dr H.A. Jenkins was Chairman of the committee in the  
33rd Parliament and in the 34th Parliament until his resignation  
as Speaker and from the House of Representatives on  
20 December 1985.**

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**APPOINTMENT**

1. The committee is appointed at the commencement of each Parliament pursuant to section 5 of the Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act 1946 and is required to recommend the general principles under which the parliamentary broadcast shall take place and, subsequently, to exercise control over the broadcast according to the principles adopted by the Parliament.

2. Section 6 of the Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act provides that the members of the committee shall hold office as a joint committee until the House of Representatives expires by dissolution or effluxion of time.

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

3. Following a recommendation by the Senate Standing Orders Committee both Houses in the 32nd Parliament agreed, in December 1982, to refer the following matters to the committee for inquiry and report:

(a) the televising of the proceedings of the Houses of the Parliament and their committees in the new Parliament House, and

(b) the continuous and simultaneous radio broadcasting of both Houses of Parliament.

4. No progress was made with this inquiry before the simultaneous dissolution of the Senate and the House of Representatives on 4 February 1983.

5. In the 33rd Parliament the subject was again considered by both Houses. The opportunity was taken to expand the terms of reference to allow for a more extensive inquiry to cover the televising of proceedings in the existing Parliament House and the broadcasting of proceedings of committees.

6. The revised terms of reference, agreed to by the House of Representatives and the Senate on 26 May 1983, required the committee to inquire into and report on:

(a) the televising of the proceedings of the Houses of the Parliament and their committees in the present and the new Parliament House, and

(b) the radio broadcasting of the proceedings of the Houses of the Parliament and their committees including the continuous and simultaneous broadcasting of both Houses.

7. The committee was granted the power to move from place to place and to form a sub-committee by resolutions of the House of Representatives and the Senate of 10 May and 7 June 1984 respectively.

8. On 8 October 1984 Prime Minister Hawke informed the House of the intention to hold a general election for the House of Representatives and half the Senate on 1 December 1984, with the proposed date of dissolution of the House on 11 October 1984. As indicated in paragraph 2, members of the committee hold office as a joint committee until the House of Representatives expires by dissolution or effluxion of time. Consequently, on 10 October 1984 a report was presented to both Houses which stated that the committee could not consider adequately the many major issues revealed during its inquiry before the projected dissolution of the House, and recommended that the matters be referred again to the committee early in the 1st session of the 34th Parliament.

9. The matters were referred again to the committee by the House of Representatives on 27 February 1985 and by the Senate on 28 February 1985. The committee was granted the power for the purposes of the inquiry to call for persons, papers and records, to move from place to place, to form a sub-committee and to consider and make use of records and evidence of the committee in the previous parliament.

10. The committee met on 25 March 1985 and, as in previous parliaments, elected the Speaker of the House (then Dr H.A. Jenkins), Chairman, and the President of the Senate, Vice-Chairman. Following the resignation from office and from membership of the House of Dr Jenkins on 20 December 1985, the committee elected the Speaker, the Hon. Joan Child, MP, Chairman on 19 March 1986.

#### CONDUCT OF INQUIRY

11. In the 33rd Parliament, advertisements inviting submissions appeared in major newspapers in all States and Territories in September 1983. The committee received 41 submissions. A list of individuals or organisations who made submissions authorised for publication is at Appendix 1. The committee or its sub-committee met on 11 occasions including public hearings in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. A visit to the South Australian House of Assembly was undertaken by the committee on 16 August 1984.

12. At its 1st meeting in the 34th Parliament the committee decided not to seek additional submissions by means of re-advertising. It was however decided to invite comment from specific interest groups and individuals before the committee entered its final deliberations:

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Radio Broadcasting of Proceedings

That the continuous broadcast of the proceedings of the Houses of Parliament should continue (paragraph 1.31).

That each House should consider the proposal to amend paragraph 2 of the general principles with a view to enabling proceedings (including adjournment debates) to be broadcast until 11.55 p.m. (paragraph 1.35).

That the broadcast of proceedings continue to be allocated between the 2 Houses in accordance with the determinations of the committee (paragraph 1.35).

That a parliamentary network be established, with delivery of the broadcast of proceedings assisted by the ABC by means of whichever of an identified options, or mix of options, or further technological developments as would make the signal of proceedings available progressively to 100% of Australians (paragraph 1.37).

That the proceedings of parliamentary committees be available for broadcast or delayed broadcast to all radio broadcasters, and that this committee be given the power to determine that specified proceedings of a particular committee should be broadcast (such a determination to be made in respect of periods only when neither House is meeting) (paragraph 1.38).

(v)

That, subject to appropriate statutory protection being provided, audio monitoring facilities be permitted to such government departments in Canberra who are prepared to meet the cost of the facility. That access should be provided to parliamentary party support groups and bodies which upon request, are authorised by the committee, if those bodies are prepared to meet the cost of the facility (paragraph 1.40).

That, if the trial period is satisfactory, access to proceedings for the purpose of broadcasting excerpts be agreed to on a permanent basis (paragraph 1.42).

That the ABC be provided with resources to produce daily programs encapsulating the proceedings of both Houses and their committees. That for the immediate future a weekly program be produced (paragraph 1.46).

That steps be taken to assist in the production of programs summarising the proceedings of the Houses and their committees in various languages, and that assistance be given to ensure the widest possible circulation of these programs (paragraph 1.47).

That the guidelines covering announcements from the control booths during the continuous broadcasts of the proceedings of each House be altered to enable a more meaningful description of proceedings in each Chamber (paragraph 1.51).



Televising of Proceedings

That the proceedings of both Houses be available for television coverage. However, the committee does not believe that the 'gavel to gavel' coverage presented in the USA and Canada is appropriate for Australia at this stage (paragraph 2.52).

That there be no compulsion to broadcast the television signal of the proceedings of the Houses on a continuous basis, as is the audio signal of proceedings (paragraph 2.52).

That televising of proceedings from the provisional Parliament House should not be undertaken with the exception of specific parliamentary events authorised by the House concerned and proceedings of Opening Day (paragraph 2.57).

The endorsement by both Houses of the guidelines most recently adopted by the House for the Budget speech as initial guidelines for television presentation coverage. That the committee be accorded the responsibility of monitoring these guidelines and recommending changes for endorsement by each House (paragraph 2.60).

That where possible the public proceedings of parliamentary committees be available for television coverage in the new Parliament House (paragraph 2.61).

That edited audio-visual presentations of committee proceedings be permitted on television programs provided their use is not for the purpose of satire or ridicule (paragraph 2.62).

That excerpts from the audio presentation of proceedings be authorised for use by television stations over still frames or overlay material (e.g. sound of Senator's or Member's voice and 'still' shot of Member simultaneously telecast, or previously taken footage of Senator or Member simultaneously telecast) (paragraph 2.63).

#### A Parliamentary Audio Visual Unit

That a unit be established and from the time of occupation by the Parliament of the new Parliament House the television signal produced by means of the house monitoring system be made available for transmission live or in recorded segments for use on news, documentary and news commentary programs (paragraph 3.3) and that the unit be termed the "Parliamentary Audio Visual Unit" (PAVU) (paragraph 3.5).

That the officer in charge of the Unit and other key organisational figures be appointed immediately so as to make the transition to the new Parliament House as smooth as possible (paragraph 3.9).

#### Legal Considerations

That absolute protection be conferred by legislation on the Parliamentary Audio Visual Unit with respect to the radio and television signal provided to media organisations with respect to the continuous broadcast of proceedings of both Houses and that

legislation provide protection for radio and television broadcasting of proceedings of the Houses and their committees where the broadcast constitutes a fair and accurate report and where the broadcasting body does not adopt or endorse matter contained in the broadcast which might be considered actionable (paragraph 4.5).

That, should circumstances arise whereby attempts are made to circumvent by use of the electronic media of parliamentary practices or conventions (eg, with respect to the sub-judice rule), the material not be available for later televising or rebroadcast (paragraph 4.7).

That control of access to the sound and visions signals of proceedings be vested in the Presiding Officers, who would, in the normal course of events, advise the committee of important developments and decisions in this regard (paragraph 4.10).

That, if the committee's recommendations lead to a review of the legislative basis on which the broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings occurs, the opportunity be taken to revise completely the Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act 1946 and that it be involved in the pre-Parliamentary consideration process of any proposed amendments to the Act (paragraph 4.11).

## CHAPTER 1

### RADIO BROADCASTING OF PROCEEDINGS

1.1 The Australian Parliament was the 2nd national parliament of the Commonwealth to introduce the broadcasting of its proceedings. (New Zealand was the first, commencing broadcasts in 1936. The Canadian province of Saskatchewan began radio broadcasts of its proceedings at approximately the same time as Australia). The broadcasting of the proceedings commenced on 10 July 1946 in the House of Representatives. Broadcasts are made and controlled under the Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act 1946 (hereinafter referred to as 'the Act'). The Act directs the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) to broadcast the proceedings of the House of Representatives or the Senate, or of a joint sitting, from 7 medium wave national stations (located in the 6 State capital cities and Newcastle) and from such other national stations, including short-wave, as are prescribed. A medium wave station in Canberra and a short wave station have been so prescribed. The Act extends to all Australia's external Territories.

1.2 The Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings is required by the Act to report to each House on general principles concerning the broadcast of proceedings of each House and to determine the allocation of the broadcast in accordance with the general principles adopted by each House. Standing determinations are made by committee resolution and have effect until varied by the committee in the same or a later parliament. Principles and determinations which have the greatest relevance to the day-to-day broadcast of proceedings are as follows:

General Principles

- . Proceedings are to be broadcast on each day on which either House sits (a determination excludes Saturday).
- . The broadcast commences on each sitting day at the time fixed for the meeting of the House whose proceedings are to be broadcast 'live' on that day and ceases when the adjournment of the House whose proceedings are broadcast is moved (or the question is proposed) or at 11.30 pm (AEST), whichever is the earlier.
- . The Broadcasting Committee has the power to determine the allocation between the Senate and the House of Representatives; in practice, more time will be allocated to the House of Representatives.
- . The re-broadcast of Question Time is to take place between 7.15 pm and 8.00 pm, AEST in the following order -

- (1) Senate
- (2) House of Representatives.

This was later modified by a determination to accord priority to the House whose proceedings are not being broadcast 'live'. In practice there is not time for re-broadcast of all of Question Time in both Houses.

- . The general principles in the committee's 1st report shall be observed generally by the committee in making determinations but the principles may be departed from to meet any unusual or special circumstances.

Standing determinations

- Allocation of the broadcast between the Houses for a normal Tuesday to Thursday sitting week (making provision for Monday and Friday sittings) is -

	BROADCAST	RE-BROADCAST
Monday	House of Representatives	(1) Senate (2) House
Tuesday	House of Representatives	(1) Senate (2) House
Wednesday	Senate	(1) House (2) Senate
Thursday	House of Representatives	(1) Senate (2) House
Friday	Senate	(1) House (2) Senate

With the adoption in 1984 by both Houses of a cycle of 2 sitting weeks each of 4 days followed by 2 non-sitting weeks the committee has determined to vary the allocation while the cycle was observed with the following effect:

	BROADCAST	RE-BROADCAST*
Monday	Senate	(1) House (2) Senate
Tuesday	House of Representatives	(1) Senate (2) House
Wednesday	Senate	(1) House (2) Senate
Thursday	House of Representatives	(1) Senate (2) House
Friday	House of Representatives	(1) Senate (2) House

(\*Each House, if time permits, in the order shown).

- . Where the House allotted the broadcast adjourns prior to a meal suspension, the broadcast is transferred to the other House from resumption after the suspension.
- . The ABC may broadcast the Treasurer's Budget speech and the Leader of the Opposition's reply over its regional stations.

1.3 Under the Act, only the ABC may broadcast proceedings 'live'. (The term 're-broadcast' applies to the later broadcast of any material that has already been broadcast. In this sense the later broadcast of the Governor-General's Opening Speech is a re-broadcast, Question Time in the House not being broadcast 'live' is a delayed broadcast). Section 14 of the Act provides:

14. (1) The Committee shall have power to determine the conditions in accordance with which a re-broadcast may be made of any portion of the proceedings of either House of the Parliament or of a joint sitting<sup>+</sup>.

(2) No re-broadcast shall be made of any portion of the proceedings of either House of the Parliament or of a joint sitting<sup>+</sup> otherwise than in accordance with the conditions so determined.

+ Defined by the Act as a joint sitting pursuant to section 57 of the Constitution

There is no provision within the Act prohibiting the recording of proceedings by individuals or organisations (although, depending on where the recording agent obtained access to the signal, there may be considerations of copyright). However, only the ABC is authorised to broadcast proceedings 'live'.

1.4 The Act also provides legal protection against any criminal or civil action or proceeding to those authorised to broadcast or re-broadcast proceedings. Members of Parliament are covered by absolute privilege with respect to broadcast statements in the proceedings of the House.

Radio broadcasting in some overseas parliaments

1.5 In the United Kingdom, the BBC first applied to broadcast parliamentary proceedings in 1923 when permission was sought to broadcast the King's Speech. In 1926, permission was sought to broadcast Winston Churchill's Budget Speech. The possibility of broadcasting Commons' proceedings, either by sound or television, was raised intermittently in the House or outside from the time of the first approach in 1926, but pressure in favour of broadcasting grew during the 1960's. In 1965 and 1966, a Select Committee on Publications and Debates Reports identified 3 main conclusions:

- Continuous live broadcasting in sound and vision was impractical and undesirable.
- The 'feed' could be supplied to broadcasting organisations, for recording and editing, by a unit under the control of the House.
- A closed circuit experiment should be made. (A motion for the experiment was defeated 131 votes to 130).

1.6 In 1976 the House endorsed public sound broadcasting of its proceedings on a permanent basis. In 1977 the House agreed to the following resolution - That:



(1) the British Broadcasting Corporation and the Independent Broadcasting Authority ('the broadcasting authorities') be authorised to provide and operate singly or jointly sound signal origination equipment for the purpose of recording or broadcasting the proceedings of the House and its committees subject to the directions of the House or a committee empowered to give such directions ('the committee');

(2) the broadcasting authorities may supply signals, whether direct or recorded, made pursuant to this Resolution to other broadcasting organisations, and shall supply them to any other organisation whose request for such a facility shall have been granted by the committee, on such conditions as the committee may determine;

(3) no signal, whether direct or recorded, made pursuant to this Resolution shall be used by the broadcasting authorities, or by any organisation supplied with such signal, in light entertainment programmes or programmes designed as political satire; nor shall any record, cassette or other device making use of such signal be published unless the committee shall have satisfied themselves that it is not designed for such entertainment or satire;

(4) archive tapes of all signals supplied by the broadcasting authorities shall be made, together with a selection for permanent preservation, under the direction of the committee.

1.7 Regular sound broadcasting began on 3 April 1978. The present position is that broadcasting operations are in the hands of the BBC and the Independent Broadcasting Authority who operate

under conditions supervised by the Select Committee on Sound Broadcasting and, under the resolution of the House, subject to such directions as the committee shall make from time to time.

1.8 The vast majority of broadcasting of proceedings is in recorded and edited form. Material is used on 'Today in Parliament' and 'Yesterday in Parliament', 'The Week in Westminster' and on current affairs programs broadcast by the BBC and IBA companies. BBC Television News and Independent Television News (ITN) frequently use extracts, and local radio is a major user of items of local interest. For example, in the first 4 months of broadcasting proceedings, more than 600 parliamentary items were supplied from the BBC at Westminster to BBC local radio stations. Most of the material used on the air is from the Commons. In 'Today in Parliament' and 'Yesterday in Parliament', more Lords proceedings are used; in such programs the proportion tends to be 70/30 Commons/Lords. Until the Argentine invasion of the Falklands, regular live broadcasting had decreased since the beginning of a permanent service. With the abandoning by the BBC of regular live transmission of Prime Minister's questions for oral answer, it had been limited. The IBA companies had tended to use more live broadcasts than the BBC. However, BBC broadcast the whole of the Falklands debate on Saturday 3 April on Radio 4, and continued to give considerable live coverage to further statements and debates on the Falklands.

1.9 From the beginning of regular broadcasting, the committee urged the BBC and IBA to pay greater attention to the breadth of the work done by the House, and in particular to cover the work of select committees. In response to this, the BBC began a 45-minute program entitled 'Inside Parliament', which provides both reporting and analysis of select committee inquiries and of standing committee proceedings. It is generally believed to be held in high regard. In addition, various other organisations

have been authorised to receive a feed to live proceedings, on condition that they are prepared to supply details of how such material is used under the terms of the resolution. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation, ABC News (USA), the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, CBS News (USA), Manx Radio, National Public Radio (USA), NBC (USA), Radio-Telefís Éireann and the South African Broadcasting Corporation have been given access. Certain other organisations have also been given permanent access. ITN has a permanent feed of its own, in addition to that supplied to Independent Radio News (IRN). The Press Association uses a feed to provide a check on its shorthand note in case of doubt. The British Forces Broadcasting System receives a feed, as does the Central Office of Information. Proceedings are also relayed to the Journal Office in the Clerk's Department to assist with the compilation of the Votes and Proceedings.

The broadcasting of standing and select committees does occur. However, there have been reports of a number of recording and broadcasting problems:

- . Format and style may vary greatly from committee to committee.
- . Committees may take evidence in camera or deliberate (with consequent security considerations).
- . Committees frequently meet in areas remote from Parliament House which brings technical problems.
- . There are acoustic problems.

The BBC Audience Research Department's estimate of the average audience during 1981 for its 4 major political programs is as follows:

'Today in Parliament'	100 000
'Yesterday in Parliament'	1 000 000
'The Week in Westminster'	400 000
'Inside Parliament'	100 000

The BBC does not keep a permanent record of every use made of broadcast extracts. However, the Head of Parliamentary Broadcasting monitored the use made during the week from Monday 12 to Sunday 18 January 1981 with the following results:

'Today in Parliament'	88 separate extracts
'Yesterday in Parliament'	68 separate extracts
'The Week in Westminster'	recording of 4 Members
'Inside Parliament'	recordings from committees (82 Members and 2 witnesses)
	extracts from Commons (2 members)
Radio News	11 separate extracts used a total of 16 times (i.e. some in more than one bulletin)
Television News	5 extracts used
Radio Current Affairs	11 extracts used
Local Radio and Regions	53 separate extracts included in material sent to local radio and regions
Radio London	Question Time daily
Radio Scotland	Question Time on 14 January
Radio Ulster	Question Time on 15 January

1.10 The New Zealand House of Representatives has authorised the re-broadcast of excerpts on a media self-regulatory basis. In the guidelines of the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation are:

- . Use of excerpts is confined to news, current affairs and educational/historical programs; they are never to be used as light entertainment or satire.
- . Fairness and accuracy apply as in traditional reporting.
- . Qualified privilege applies but not so as to extend to contempt of court.
- . Excerpts must be placed in proper context (this may involve commentator explanation); 'heated' incidents should not be given undue emphasis.
- . An overall balance should be maintained representing the balance of Members as called by the Chair.
- . Excerpts should be as complete in themselves as possible.
- . The corporation's political editor is responsible for editing; no further editing by local stations is permissible.
- . Master tapes should be kept for 60 days before erasure.

The sound signal is also available to be used on television. A 'still' picture of the Member addressing the House is transmitted with the comments made in the House providing the accompanying

audio presentation. Experience has shown that to sustain viewer interest, short segments (not in excess of 30 seconds) are preferable.

Radio presentation as compared to televising of proceedings

1.11 In 1978 the Inter-Parliamentary Union published a report indicating results of a 1974 survey of Parliaments and the audio-visual media. The report indicated that there were indications that radio had proceeded much farther as an accepted medium for the coverage of parliamentary proceedings. There are characteristics specific to each medium, which have made parliaments less resistant to radio. It is not simply that radio is the older medium, or that the technical and financial problems of television are greater. The immediacy of exposure by television is such that it is felt by legislators to be a far greater intruder. For example, speech readers or absentees have better reason in any parliament for being more apprehensive about television than about radio. Moreover, radio covers the speaker only and not his audience, often not very numerous, because most Members of the House are otherwise engaged at the time. The 'newspaper-reading Member of Parliament' is depicted by television, not by radio. The report stated that greater use of radio than television for the coverage of parliamentary proceedings may be gauged readily in 3 ways: the larger amount of overall time given generally to radio broadcasts of proceedings than to telecasts, the larger amount of 'live' coverage by radio, and the existence of a larger number of regular radio than television programs, which include at least extracts of proceedings.

1.12 In Austria all proceedings of the plenum are broadcast live on radio in a selective form, while they are telecast live only seldom, for a special debate. In the Bundestag of the Federal Republic of Germany 80% of the proceedings in the plenum

are broadcast live on radio, while of the 10% telecast only part is live, the rest appearing in evening summaries. In Japan, where there is considerable television coverage of Parliament, there is a regular daily program on Parliament, including extracts of proceedings, only on radio. Denmark, Finland and Israel have a program on radio only, which is broadcast weekly. In the Congress of the United States of America, where committees may be covered audio-visually, radio receives much more access to hearings than television.

1.13 In Italy and the Netherlands, however, there are special daily programs on Parliament, including excerpts of proceedings, both on radio and television, while on television there is also a special weekly program. The National Assembly of France provides a more remarkable exception to the rule of wider radio than television coverage of proceedings. While radio and television in France are both subject to the same regulatory system, it is primarily by television that the debates of that Assembly are broadcast. The main radio networks record most of the debates, of which significant extracts are often broadcast, though quite briefly, during news bulletins.

1.14 In the Canadian House of Commons radio broadcasting is intermingled with televising from an administrative point of view. (Currently, Canadian Senate proceedings are not broadcast). The House of Commons Broadcast Service provides the visual and/or audio feed which is picked up by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and transmitted via satellite free of charge to the cable companies and thence to subscribers. CBC staff provide commentary and other services, explaining the background of the proceedings expected to be broadcast and outlining parliamentary procedure as appropriate.

Broadcasting the proceedings of the Australian Parliament

1.15 The situation has developed whereby Australia, among the pioneers of successful radio broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings, has not kept pace with other countries in taking advantage of technological developments. The format of parliamentary broadcasts is essentially the same currently as it was almost 40 years ago. The electronic media remains a significantly influential source of public information but its full potential has not been tapped by the Parliament.

1.16 The committee examined the question of continuous broadcasting of the proceedings of each House of Parliament either *simultaneously, or on the basis of an allocation as is currently the case.*

1.17 The annual report of the ABC has on several occasions commented on the continuous broadcast of parliamentary proceedings. While recognising the significance of the broadcasts, the ABC has pointed out the following problems:

- . difficulties in program planning;
- . dual programming in country areas;
- . denial to listeners of an alternative program (which gives the ABC the impossible task of providing a single program to cater for the widely differing tastes of the community);
- . changes in sitting times increase program disruption;
- . listeners sometimes strongly express a preference to hear particular proceedings from the House not being broadcast.



1.18 The hours of transmission of parliamentary proceedings and their percentage of total transmission by the ABC are as follows:

<u>Financial Year</u>	<u>Hours of transmission</u>	<u>Percentage of transmission</u>
1979-80	577	8.3
1980-81	485	6.9
1981-82	538	7.6
1982-83	478.5	6.8
1983-84	724.4	10.2
1984-85	571.0	8.1

Some information on the extent of the listening audience to the parliamentary broadcasts was supplied by Mr Duffy (Minister for Communications) in response to a question on notice by Mr Coleman:

(1) What information is available to indicate how many people listen to broadcasts of Parliament.

(2) Does this information indicate (a) ages, (b) sex, (c) socio-economic groupings, (d) residential regions of the listeners and (e) the different sizes of the audiences at different times of day; if so, what are the details.

Mr Duffy - The answer to the honourable member's question, based on advice received from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, is as follows:

(1) A survey conducted by the ABC's audience research department in the month of August, 1983 in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Hobart is the most recent source of information and shows that on a four-city basis:

49.3 per cent of people aged 10 years and over have listened to a broadcast of Parliament at some time in their life;

In demographic terms, these people who have listened to Parliament, are more likely to be male than female and to be aged either 25-44 years or 45 + years. Information on socio-economic groups and residential groupings of listeners is not available.

47.5 per cent of those who listen to Parliament do so once or twice per year; 29.3 per cent listen several times per year; 15.6 per cent listen once a week; 7.6 per cent listen most days.

Females are slightly more likely to listen to Parliament on an infrequent basis, than males.

57.8 per cent of those who have listened to a broadcast of Parliament at some time did so primarily because 'it just comes on'; 22 per cent listen because they 'follow Parliament'; 11.6 per cent listen specifically to 'Question Time'; and 18.3 per cent listen for a range of reasons;

Females are more likely to listen because 'it just comes on', while males are more likely to have listened because they 'follow Parliament';

For nearly two-thirds of those who listened (63.3 per cent), the time of listening tended to be variable; for 10 per cent it was in the morning; for 25.3 per cent it was in the afternoon; and for 14 per cent it was at night. Age and sex differences in these listening patterns were not in evidence.

(2) It is not really possible to state how many people listen to Parliament. However, it is possible to show how many people listen to radio at times when Parliament and/or the normal Radio 1 program is being broadcast. Thus, the following figures relate to time-slots, which sometimes represent listening to Parliament and sometimes represent listening to the normal Radio 1 program. The two cannot be separated; eg Sydney/Melbourne: April-June 1963 Weeks 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 Parliament was broadcast. Weeks 2, 7, 8 normal 2BL/3LO program was broadcast.

	<u>Sydney</u>	<u>Melbourne</u>
1.15 p.m. . . .	19 000	29 000
2.00 p.m. . . .	14 000	21 000
3.00 p.m. . . .	16 000	19 000
4.00 p.m. . . .	20 000	23 000
5.00 p.m. . . .	22 000	26 000
8.00 p.m. . . .	5 000	8 000
9.00 p.m. . . .	5 000	8 000
10.00 p.m. . . .	11 000	15 000

While information relating to age, sex, residential centres and, as has been explained above, some degree of audience size is available the ABC does not have information about socio-economic groupings.<sup>1</sup>

1.19 The ABC recognises its responsibility in regard to the broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings as fundamental to its task. To overcome identified problems, however, it has suggested -

- . the provision of a 3rd network in the national service;
- . a review be undertaken in the light of experience since 1946.

1.20 The ABC, in its reports, has suggested that broadcasts would be more effective if the repetitive parts of debates, the committee stages and some of the purely formal business were eliminated. (However, the committee feels that this would be in fact an unreal way of restricting the parliamentary broadcasts).

1.21 The ABC's submission to the committee identified 4 deficiencies in the present system from the point of view of public interest and of Parliament itself:

- . Except for the replay of Question Time, the proceedings of only one Chamber are broadcast on any day, though usually both are sitting. The Chamber being broadcast will not necessarily be conducting the more interesting or significant business.
- . Planned listening is very difficult because on the whole most people do not know in advance the business to be dealt with nor how long each item will take. Thus, except for those few with inside knowledge, listening tends to be casual and unfocussed.
- . Few members of the public can spend the time to follow the proceedings throughout. Thus few hear the most significant moments or all sides of an issue.
- . On occasions a considerable amount of broadcast time is occupied by divisions and procedural matters which are of minimum appeal to listeners and, indeed, may tend to deter them. The advantage of removing these is readily observed in the enhanced presentation style of the existing edited broadcasts.

of Question Time, where points of order and some other extraneous matter are discarded from the program before broadcast.

The ABC recommended the repeal of the Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act given a written undertaking by the ABC to transmit a national program of edited and collated material of approximately 1 hour's duration. The submission of the Clerk of the House of Representatives suggested that there should be no compulsion on the ABC to provide a continuous broadcast.<sup>2</sup>

1.22 The committee received submissions from citizens complaining about the disruption to regular radio programs by the parliamentary broadcasts. However the committee received representations from those in the remote areas who felt severely disadvantaged in that they were deprived access to the parliamentary broadcasts. As one witness, who advocated the broadcasting of proceedings of both Houses, either by radio or television, stated, regional areas should gain direct access to proceedings as newspapers and electronic media reports do not contain detailed information because of space and time restrictions, and copies of Hansard are limited and in regional areas can take up to 2 weeks to be available. Where the proceedings of one of the Houses is of local regional interest options available are to have debates recorded in a metropolitan centre or to attempt to contact a local Member by long-distance telephone.<sup>3</sup> Another witness stated that, in the absence of broadcasts, recourse of necessity had to be made to newspapers, television programs which contained secondhand selective reports and gossip. That witness expressed the belief 'as a matter of citizen's right and perhaps almost citizen's duty ... that the proceedings of the House should in principle be available ... (F)irst and foremost the electors ought to be able to know what their elected representatives are doing in the major forums.'<sup>4</sup> Another witness who believed that the programs disrupted by the parliamentary broadcasts are of more benefit to the community

(particularly women) than the parliamentary broadcasts argued for the retention and extension of the broadcasts on an alternative network: 'There is a small percentage of people that do listen to parliamentary broadcasts, but for that small percentage of people it is vitally important, because we know that we cannot believe anything that is written in a newspaper.'<sup>5</sup>

1.23 The committee is aware that the parliamentary broadcasts do result in a deferral of radio programs on the ABC. This is particularly a consideration in a country of the geographic extent of Australia, with its differing time zones. The proceedings of the Houses are linked to Eastern Standard or Summer time zones, and news and news commentary programs such as 'AM' are not affected in the eastern States. However the same is not true of Western Australia when the House whose proceedings are broadcast meets in the morning. On the other hand, suppositions (which are not, according to the committee's inquiries, substantiated by survey data) as to the listening audience on evenings in the eastern States often do not take account of the fact that the audience in Western Australia is receiving the parliamentary transmission at peak listening time.

1.24 Under the current system there are 3 ABC networks, (formerly Radio 1, 2 and 3): a metropolitan network (former radio 1), radio national (former radio 2) the regional network (formerly radio 3) and also ABC FM. The Parliamentary broadcasts were essentially the defining criterion for the metropolitan network. The programs of the 1st and 2nd networks are available in State capital cities, and Canberra and Newcastle. The 3rd network is the regional network which is available to non-metropolitan areas with programs which are a composite of the 1st and 2nd networks and some local input. There is what is informally known as Radio 4, the ABC stereo FM network. The committee received representations both to alter the network for parliamentary broadcasts and not to do so. It is felt that the committee should not enter into debate as to whether the

broadcasts should be run on the Metropolitan or National network. The legislation does not specify any network. It recognises that the national network is essentially a specialised network providing for minority groups and was linked with other activities, e.g. school broadcasts, and to transfer the parliamentary broadcasts to this would cause disruptions. To extend the broadcast to the regional service where there was only one available transmitter could have important consequences for country broadcasts.

1.25 Evidence was given by Mr D.A.T. Jones, then Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal and Mr E.J. Wilkinson, formerly Director of Engineering with the then Australian Broadcasting Control Board and a former member of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal, on technological developments which could assist the radio broadcasting of proceedings. Both spoke of the possibility of channel sharing, of having the parliamentary broadcasts 'piggy-backed' by means of an FM sub-carrier. This method of transmission is known as ACS - Ancillary Communications Services. The committee was informed that Australia was the first country to make obligatory for an FM service to provide within the transmission equipment the facility to carry sub-carrier transmission.<sup>6</sup> This would enable speech quality monophonic transmission without establishing a station. In some overseas countries the facility is used to transmit 'background' music for departmental stores, special interest group programs etc. One disadvantage at the moment is that a converter would be required to enable existing equipment to receive the transmission. Costs at this stage are hypothetical, but it is not expected to be significant. Moreover, it was suggested to the committee that if it were to be made compulsory for new receivers to incorporate the equipment from a specified date, it would not take more than 10 years for every FM set to have the supplementary carrier facility. The estimated cost was not more than \$20 in today's terms for a total AM/FM receiver incorporating a supplementary carrier.<sup>7</sup>

1.26 With the introduction of Aussat and the Homestead and Community Satellite Service, the facility is provided for the delivery to outback Australia of the sound signal of proceedings by means of a sub-carrier within the television signal. The ABC has incorporated several high power transponders available on the satellite and is using zonal beams to direct radiation to remote areas. It should be borne in mind that residents of remote areas are making the outlay for reception dish antennae primarily to receive television transmissions. The parliamentary broadcast could be 'piggy-backed'; a choice could be made by citizens as to which facility they utilised. As the Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal stated '... leaving aside the special introduction of cable television, the ultimate development of the Telecom network will be to an integrated broad band network which will be capable of full services - that is full text, telephony, radio, television services. That is the ultimate development that will occur with the Telecom network and it really is a matter of when. It is the ability to tap into those types of systems that has really led to the expansion of the coverage of parliamentary and committee-type proceedings in the United States and Canada. I anticipate that now the United Kingdom is moving into that area it will follow there, and also probably in Europe, where broad band technology is advancing. It is my judgment that when we ultimately move to that situation, community expectations will be that there ought to be available - because the technology will provide it - full access to what our Parliament and its various committees are doing. The community will almost regard that as a right, the same as the right to attend the Parliament if it wishes to do so. It seems to me that although this may be towards the end of this century or into the 1990s, the Parliament and the Committee have to be looking ahead to this being the ultimate development in planning what it does not.'<sup>8</sup>



1.27 One potential problem with the sub-carrier system is that it does have the potential to cause interference, particularly in relation to the channel on which it is piggy-backed. This is still under examination.

1.28 The acceptance by Australian radio listeners of the FM signal and its availability were explored by the committee. Information was sought as to the market penetration of FM receivers. Members of the committee felt that, while there was ready access to the FM signal in mainland capital cities, their experience indicated that there was not the same availability in Tasmania and in remote areas. While firmly conclusive evidence was not made known to the committee, the results of a 1980 survey conducted for the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal in Bendigo, Vic., indicated that 52% of respondents reported ownership of an FM receiver. McNair Anderson 1983 estimates of FM radio receiver penetration are:

- . 95% of households in capital cities;
- . 85% of households in provincial areas;
- . 50% of cars.<sup>9</sup>

The committee was also advised that currently a large proportion of receivers sold (with the exception of basic, cheap models) contain AM and FM facilities. The ABC's research into FM penetration, last surveyed over 2 years previously, indicated a quick rise to 2/3 of the population. The rise had been so rapid that it was believed to be scarcely necessary to carry out further surveys.<sup>10</sup>

1.29 The committee considered whether it would be preferable to make a firm recommendation as to whether the broadcast of proceedings should be transmitted by either the AM or the FM mode, and was advised that, in terms of quality of program, there

is no advantage that FM gives over AM.<sup>11</sup> The committee was also advised that an AM broadcasting station operates on what is called the medium frequency band, which is a band of frequencies which centre around one megahertz, or 1 000 000 cycles per second. The way in which those signals are propagated is basically along the ground. The signals from an AM broadcasting station make use of the characteristics of the ground over which they are propagating to get to the receiving point, so that the quality of the ground or the conductivity of the soil actually has an impact on the distance a signal can travel. The frequency at which the transmitter is operating also has an impact on the distance which the signal can travel. In very general terms, low frequency stations, in an area with good ground conductivity will send signals over a large distance. On the other hand, FM transmissions are very similar to television transmissions in that the signal is actually transmitted through the air, through the troposphere, and the ground has only one real effect and that is basically to get in the way of the signals. An FM transmitting station would be normally sited at a higher vantage point and the signals travel as would a ray of light. As a general rule of thumb if the transmitting site can be seen, there is a reasonably good chance of being able to pick up the sound, but, again, that does depend on the actual effective radiated power, the transmitting power, of the station. One disadvantage FM has is that buildings or terrain, such as hills and so on, can get in the way, just as they do with television signals. The signals do have a capacity to bend around obstructions to a certain extent and the analogy with light is not exact. Nonetheless, any such obstruction will degrade the level of the signal and as a result degrade the reception quality.<sup>12</sup>

1.30 According to evidence from several witnesses, the AM band was extremely congested. If a frequency did become available, severe constraints would be necessary. For example, directional aeriels may be necessary - an aerial limited so that its transmission does not interfere with existing services. In

addition, the frequency available may not be the most appropriate frequency. For the broadcast to be available Australia-wide on the current (AM) basis, between 50 and 60 channels would be required. Evidence was also submitted that the capital cost of establishing a new FM broadcasting station at an existing site, when the basic infrastructure is already there, would be less than the cost of establishing a new AM broadcasting station, particularly if a directional aerial system were required. Because an AM broadcasting station makes use of the ground to propagate the signal and also because it operates at much lower frequencies, it requires physically a large area of land just to mount the station. When a directional aerial system is installed 2 or more transmission towers must be installed. Each of those towers is something like 650 feet tall and obviously that is a rather expensive piece of hardware. Coupled with that, an earth mat is also required. It is, in effect, a large amount of copper wire buried in the ground around the station. As far as operating costs go there may be some differences but they would not be substantial.<sup>13</sup> An estimate was given to the committee that an amount in the vicinity of \$10M would be required to establish an additional FM broadcasting network, which would be required if the proceedings of Parliament were to be broadcast in toto.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the FM band is proving to be susceptible to congestion. A major problem with the FM frequency is that a television channel accounts for a large amount of spectrum space, in practical terms the amount of space that 8 or 9 FM channels would occupy. In certain areas it is not possible to allocate any more FM frequencies until television services have been shifted to an alternative channel. Given the restriction of FM availability, the competition for space becoming available for 'normal' transmission would probably favour musical presentation rather than predominantly spoken material.

1.31 The committee is convinced that the continuous broadcast of parliamentary proceedings has played a vital role in presenting the participants in our parliamentary process direct

to the citizens they represent, without the selective and interpretative filter of the media. Continuous broadcasting makes available the sound of the Houses of Parliament as it actually occurs. It enables a balanced presentation between back-bench and executive members of all parties represented in Parliament, between the Government, the Opposition and Third Party groups, and between "dramatic" periods of high emotion and conflict and the more normal atmosphere of consensus and agreement. If the presentation of the broadcast were left to the decisions based on a journalistic interpretation of 'news value', there would be a significant risk of a distorted, atypical presentation; the possibility would be very real of the public having access to an electronic newspaper. The committee therefore recommends that the continuous broadcast of the proceedings of the Houses of Parliament should continue.

1.32 As indicated in paragraph 1.2, section 12 of the Act provides that the committee shall report to each House the general principles upon which there should be determined the days upon which and the periods during which proceedings shall be broadcast. The general principles have effect by virtue of adoption of resolutions of each House. Paragraph 2 of the general principles provides for the broadcast to cease when the adjournment is moved or at 11.30 pm, whichever is the earlier. The adjournment debate in each House is therefore not currently broadcast. The reason for excluding the adjournment debate appears to be a combination of cost considerations in the 1940's and a belief that adjournment debates were generally of a local-interest nature. During consideration of this committee's 1st report, specifying the general principles, a committee member indicated that the exclusion was due to the fact that many speeches related to one electorate only, and the debate occurred late at night.<sup>15</sup> When the then Speaker presented the committee's 2nd report he gave the financial reason as the only one behind the conclusion that the broadcast should terminate at 11.30 pm.<sup>16</sup> The 8th report of the committee proposed that paragraph 2 of the

general principles be omitted and a paragraph be substituted to provide for the adjournment debate of the House of Representatives (only) to be broadcast when it occurred before 11.30 pm.<sup>17</sup> The amendment if adopted was to have come into operation on 11 April 1978. However, the report was not considered by the House.

1.33 The committee received several submissions proposing the broadcast of the adjournment debates, including one from the then Member for Petrie, Mr Deane Wells, who argued that electorate issues are of sufficient interest to warrant broadcast, that normally the debates do not occur as late at night as was previously the case and that, in his belief, more people were listening to the radio late at night. The committee believes that adjournment debates are of a nature that would suggest that they be broadcast. Wide ranging subjects are covered, from local electorate issues to matters of national importance and affecting public importance. With short speeches and a variety of speakers and subject matters, the period is lively and varied. Under the current sitting pattern the debate frequently occurs in the afternoon or early evening, local time, and to state that it occurs late at night pays no regard to the time difference in Western Australia. Significantly, it provides an avenue for back-bench participation in the day's proceedings and should be available for broadcast. The committee included the adjournment debates in the portion of proceedings available for excerpting (see paragraphs 1.41 and 1.42). Moreover, the committee believes that with the extension of up until midnight transmission by the ABC in metropolitan areas, on the now rare occasions when the Houses sit beyond 11 pm the broadcast could well be extended until 11.55 p.m.

1.34 The committee has the power to resolve an amendment to the general principles and as was the case with the proposal for House of Representatives adjournment debates in 1978, seek the concurrence of the Houses. However, the committee believes that

this is a matter of great significance to each House, and should be considered and be the subject of a deliberate decision by each House. Accordingly, the committee recommends that each House should consider the proposal to amend paragraph 2 of the general principles with a view to enabling proceedings (including adjournment debates) to be broadcast until 11.55 p.m.

1.35 Having decided to recommend that the continuous broadcast of proceedings of the Houses should continue the committee considered whether simultaneous broadcasts of both Houses should be instituted. Arguments for simultaneous broadcasting are that an item of particular interest may be before the House not broadcasting on a particular day. With simultaneous broadcasting, an interested citizen or group could follow a particular bill through all its stages in both Houses. The general principles recognise that in practice a greater portion of broadcasting time will be allocated to the House of Representatives than to the Senate whereas both Houses are of equal importance and their proceedings command equal interest in the electorate. Moreover, the Senate is composed of a wider divergence of opinion in the Australian political spectrum unlike the government dominated House of Representatives. Simultaneous broadcasts would enable equal presentation of proceedings. While not taking issue with any of these points, the committee feels that the additional expense involved in providing simultaneous broadcasts prohibits its recommendation. The cost factor is heightened in the light of the probability that simultaneous broadcasts would probably be directed to approximately the same audience as would receive the proceedings of the designated House allocated the broadcast under current arrangements. The committee has in past parliaments demonstrated a flexible approach when events of particular interest were scheduled in the House whose proceedings were not allocated the broadcast. On 10 March 1971 the broadcast was transferred from the Senate to the House in the light of Prime Minister Gorton's expected statement announcing his resignation and on 27 March 1973 the broadcast was

transferred to the Senate at the request of the Attorney-General to enable transmission of his statement on Croatian terrorism and ensuing proceedings. It is expected that this flexibility will continue when the situation so demands. In addition, the committee believes that its recommendation in paragraph 1.42 concerning the broadcast of excerpts of proceedings will make the wider diffusion of the proceedings of both Houses. The committee therefore recommends that the broadcast of proceedings continues to be allocated between the 2 Houses in accordance with the determinations of the committee.

1.36 As indicated in the preceding paragraphs, the committee has explored the various options identified for delivery of the signal of proceedings. In summary, these options are:

- . use of FM sub-carriers (Ancillary Communications Service);
- . a new FM network;
- . a new capital city network with sub-carrier regional service;
- . a new AM network using existing ABC standby transmitters;
- . satellite-delivered service for listeners in remote areas;
- . a "2nd generation" satellite direct to home broadcasting;
- . continuation on the ABC AM metropolitan, or shift to the national, network.

1.37 The committee examined the feasibility of establishing a network for the Parliament's use. Such a network would provide "civic" or "public" radio, and perhaps could be available for educational or similar purposes when the Houses were not sitting. If a network of this kind were to be established, the availability of the broadcasts to 70% of the Australian broadcasts currently obtained and its extension to the remaining 30% in more remote areas could be achieved by a mix of the options identified above (of course, total availability would be an ultimate goal, to be progressively implemented). Officers of the ABC have advised the committee that the costs of establishing an additional network would not be significant. This simple process could be handled by the ABC. The committee believes that 100% availability of the broadcasts of proceedings is desirable. It recommends the establishment of a parliamentary network, with delivery of the broadcast of proceedings assisted by the ABC by means of whichever of the identified options, or mix of options, or further technological developments as would make the signal of proceedings available progressively to 100% of Australians.

1.38 The committee received several submissions and representations seeking the broadcast of proceedings of parliamentary committees of inquiry including Senate Estimates Committees. While recognising that there may be technical difficulties, especially when committees meet in remote areas, and procedural considerations such as committees' propensities to deliberate or meet in Canberra at short notice, it is felt that the committees of the Houses are a significant feature of the Australian parliamentary scene. There are occasions when there is intense public interest in the proceedings of committees, and citizens should not be denied access to their proceedings when this is felt appropriate. It is recommended that the proceedings of parliamentary committees be available for broadcast or delayed broadcast to all radio broadcasters, and that this committee be given the power to determine that specified proceedings of a



particular committee should be broadcast (such a determination to be made in respect of periods only when neither House is meeting).

1.39 The then Department of Science and Technology suggested to the committee that the broadcasting facilities of both Houses should be extended to the central offices of Commonwealth Government Departments in Canberra. The business of the House not being broadcast cannot currently be monitored by departments unless an officer is committed to attendance within the parliamentary building. The extended facility would increase the efficiency of the public service.<sup>18</sup> Requests have been made in the past to provide access to the internal relay system, and legal advice sought from the Attorney-General's Department. The main points contained in this advice have been:

- The Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act, which provides for legal immunity to persons for broadcasting or re-broadcasting any portion of the proceedings in accordance with the Act, was not relevant to the installation or operation of monitors outside Parliament House.
- Those who installed and operated such monitors without prior approval of the Houses could be in breach of the privileges of each House.
- If a monitor were installed a litigant could technically have a right of action for defamation against each person responsible for publication through the monitor.
- If relay to parliamentary staff in the discharge of their duties is involved, and approved by the House(s) concerned or the Presiding Officer as delegate, that would be a matter falling within the

area of the internal affairs of the House which that House alone is privileged to manage and with which the Courts have always declined to interfere. However different considerations may apply if parts only of a debate which contained potentially actionable comments were heard by a member of the public who happened to be within an appropriate distance from the monitor.

These observations were equally applicable to the publication of proceedings through monitors in Parliament House. The fact that such publication had not given rise so far to defamation action reinforces the view that it is doubtful whether it would be likely in practice to give rise to legal proceedings. However technically some appropriate statutory protection would be needed to provide complete legal protection to persons concerned in the publication through a monitor of matter that could be defamatory.

The advice has been sought of the Commonwealth's legal authorities as to the appropriate statutory provision to provide complete legal protection, but has not been received at the time of preparation of this report.

1.40 The committee is sympathetic to the extension of the signal of the proceedings of each House and of some committees (for example, Senate estimates committees) as a working tool. Recent extension of the signal to parliamentary staff located in a building a small distance removed from Parliament House, Canberra, gives an indication that the cost involved is minimal - approximately \$240 capital outlay and \$90 p.a. rental for Telecom Australia relay facilities and monitor cost of a little over \$200. The committee therefore recommends that, subject to appropriate statutory protection being provided, audio monitoring

facilities be permitted to such government departments in Canberra who are prepared to meet the cost of the facility. The committee also recommends that access should be provided to parliamentary party support groups and bodies which upon request, are authorised by the committee, if those bodies are prepared to meet the cost of the facility.

1.41 The question of providing access to the proceedings to non-ABC (including commercial) radio The Special Broadcasting Service submitted -

'that Australian radio and television broadcasters should be afforded unimpeded access to the present audio recordings of Parliamentary proceedings, for use in News and Public Affairs programming, subject to existing standards of journalistic practice in Australia'.<sup>19</sup>

The Macquarie Radio Network informed the committee of its view that the proceedings of both Houses and their committees should be open to live broadcasts where circumstances warrant and for later broadcast in news and current affairs programs. Mr A.M. Townsend, Group Co-ordinator, Macquarie News indicated that the types of proceedings likely to be taken 'live' would be the Treasurer's budget speech and major political events. The Federation of Australian Broadcasters proposed 'that the proceedings of the Australian Parliament be available for radio coverage by all sectors of Australian radio broadcasting in as unlimited and unrestricted a manner as humanly possible' as the content of parliamentary debate and statement represented a valuable information resource which at the present was not being fully utilised.<sup>20</sup> Several submissions pointed to the paradoxical situation whereby by arrangement with overseas parliaments, Australian broadcasters had access to segments of proceedings selected by the broadcasters, but did not have access to the proceedings of the Commonwealth Parliament. As the

Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal informed the committee, 'whether we like it or not, most Australians gain information from the commercial sector ... (It is important that the commercial sector has access to the broadcasting and televising, if it is arranged, of the proceedings). It may be, as a starting point, that they do not have a lot of coverage, but if they perceive a public interest in what is happening you can be sure they will gradually increase the amount of material that they cover because they must be attuned to what the public is requiring'.<sup>21</sup>

1.42 On 15 August 1984 the committee resolved that -

provided that the House of Representatives on Tuesday, 21 August 1984 authorises the televising of proceedings relating to the introduction and motion for second reading of the Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 1984-85 and the Budget Speeches by the Treasurer and the Leader of the Opposition, this Committee determines -

- (1) that the direct live broadcast by Australian commercial radio stations be authorised, provided that each station so broadcasting [gives a written undertaking that it will] provides approximately equal transmission time to all or part of both speeches, and
- (2) that the use be authorised of a sound record of the proceedings in subsequent news, current affairs and documentary programs by all Australian radio stations.

The committee also resolved on the same day to ascertain the views of parties and groups represented in the parliament on a proposal to authorise the broadcast or re-broadcast of proceedings for a trial period on news, news commentary and

documentary programs. The leaders of all parties or groups in each House were contacted; those who responded indicated general support (in some instances expressing the need for safeguards) but questioned whether the precise time was then appropriate (the replies were framed in an atmosphere of a speculated but then unannounced general election). The committee in the new Parliament again endorsed the approach to party leaders. The committee reported to both Houses on 22 May 1985, recommending the broadcasting of recorded audio excerpts of proceedings on news, news commentary and documentary programs on television (still-frame or overlay picture only) and on radio for a trial period during the 1985 Budget sittings. Guidelines governing the use of the excerpts were appended to the report. The House agreed to a resolution to give effect to the committee's recommendation on 22 May 1985. The Senate agreed to a similar resolution on 27 May. The committee met on 8 August 1985 to determine formally the conditions governing access to proceedings for the purpose of excerpting. The conditions as determined reflected comment by the media and other interested groups and individuals on the guidelines. On 19 March 1986, following a complaint that 2 broadcasting organisations had used in programs material that was subsequently withdrawn without making reference to the withdrawal, the committee inserted a guideline making material subsequently withdrawn unavailable for excerpting. The committee also appointed a sub-committee to report back on the operations of the newly inserted guideline and the guideline relating to disturbances in the galleries. The sub-committee's inquiries are continuing. A copy of the conditions is at Appendix 2. In November 1985 the trial period was extended until 1986. A return of limited monitoring of the use of excerpts is at Appendix 3. Without wishing to prejudge the results of the trial, the committee believes that at this early stage the experiment has been a success. The committee therefore recommends that if the trial period is satisfactory, that access to proceedings for the purpose of excerpts be agreed to on a permanent basis. The South Australian Legislative Assembly has allowed radio broadcasters access to its proceedings, apparently with satisfactory results.

1.43 Certain special considerations apply to the authorisation of excerpts. There are legal considerations. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Broadcasting in its 1945 report relating to the broadcasting of parliamentary debates stated in paragraph 18:

The Solicitor-General considers that if the whole of the proceedings, not small selected portions, were broadcast, a qualified privilege would apply. This qualified privilege could only be upset by proof of malice, and it would be difficult to establish malice if the whole of the proceedings were broadcast. As Parliament has provided for the absolute protection of Hansard reports, it would be wise to introduce legislation to provide for absolute privilege to broadcasts of proceedings.

The committee recommended the introduction of legislation to provide for absolute privilege for the broadcasts similar to the privilege conferred by legislation in respect of Hansard reports. The result of this recommendation was the provision in the Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act in 1946 which gave protection to the broadcaster in the following terms:

No action or proceeding, civil or criminal, shall lie against any person for broadcasting or rebroadcasting any portion of the proceedings of either House of the Parliament.

Anything said by a Member of Parliament as part of a proceeding in Parliament is privileged in the widest sense of that term; '... freedom of speech, and debates or proceedings in Parliament, ought not to be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of Parliament' (Article 9, Bill of Rights, 1688). However, as May (20th Edn., p.81) points out, the interpretation of the

expression 'proceedings in Parliament' has raised difficulties in the past and has been the subject of decisions both by the courts and in Parliament. Members are covered by absolute privilege in respect of statements made as part of the actual proceedings in the House when the House is being broadcast. Absolute privilege also attaches to those persons authorised to broadcast or rebroadcast the proceedings. The Act provides that no action or proceeding, civil or criminal, shall lie against any person for broadcasting or rebroadcasting any portion of the proceedings of either House of the Parliament or of a joint sitting. Similarly, Hansard and those who publish it are absolutely protected under the Parliamentary Papers Act. Hansard is, however, absolutely privileged only in its entirety; the circulation of a single speech, even complete in itself, is not protected by absolute privilege in the same way, but attracts qualified privilege only. Such qualified privilege only exists where there is absence of malice. The question of privilege relating to this extended use would require consideration. Should the ABC be required to broadcast regularly a part of the day's proceedings (e.g. Question Time), absolute protection should be provided in respect of any action for defamation arising from the broadcasts. However, should a discretion be available to organisations to broadcast or rebroadcast segments of the proceedings, the protection of qualified privilege would be sufficient and may provide a safeguard against irresponsible use of the signal.

1.44 There is also the question of balanced presentation, both between Government, Opposition and other parliamentary representation and between office holders and private Members of Parliament. While recognising that a precise mathematical balance would not be practicable, the committee believes that an overall presentation reflecting proceedings in the chamber or in a committee is achievable.

1.45 In one respect, balance of presentation may be assisted by the authorisation of excerpts. Particularly in non-metropolitan areas, electors may be able to hear their local Member's participation in proceedings on ABC regional news or on commercial radio (possibly by arrangement with the ABC). This would possibly mean exposure of the Member's contribution to an audience in peak time. This would also apply to Senators addressing specific local issues.

1.46 The ABC proposal to produce summaries of the proceedings of the Houses and their committees has merit. While the production of daily summaries in addition to the continuous broadcasts may tax the resources of the ABC at the moment, the committee endorses this as an ultimate aim and recommends that the ABC be provided with resources to produce daily programs encapsulating the proceedings of both Houses and their committees. For the immediate future the committee recommends that a weekly program be produced.

1.47 A submission was received from Dr Spiro Moraitis, Chairman of the Australian Greek Welfare Society, suggesting the production of balanced daily summaries. In oral evidence Dr Moraitis expanded the suggestion to encompass summaries into various community languages.<sup>22</sup> The committee notes that the report on the Special Broadcasting Service <sup>22</sup> recommended that the proposed multicultural Broadcasting Corporation should provide information to migrants, particularly information on rights, obligations and available sources to assist the process of settling into Australian society. The report also proposed that resources be made available for the Service/Corporation to create a program package containing material (particularly news, current affairs features and information) of a kind which the Service/Corporation does not have the resources to produce itself. The resultant package would enable the distribution of a range of programs to public broadcasting stations, the ABC and commercial stations. A parliamentary proceedings program produced



in several languages and containing excerpts from the proceedings of the Houses and their committees would most appropriately come within the program package. The committee therefore recommends that steps be taken to assist in the production of programs summarising the proceedings of the Houses and their committees in various languages, and that assistance be given to ensure the widest possible circulation of these programs.

1.48 The advertising component on commercial broadcasting organisations also requires consideration. Certain forms of advertising would not be appropriate to excerpts or 'live' broadcasts, either from the point of view of the participants in the broadcast or the subject matter. For example, advertisements having a parliamentary or political theme should not be used.

1.49 The committee received several submissions commenting on the antiquated nature of the proceedings of the Houses and the need to make the broadcasts more meaningful. While the procedures of the Houses is beyond the scope of the committee's inquiry, it is noted that the House of Representatives has established a Standing Committee on Procedure, to inquire into and report upon the practices and procedures of the House generally with a view to making recommendations for their improvement or change and for the development of new procedures.<sup>24</sup> It is quite possible that the committee's recommendations, concerning radio broadcasting and televising proceedings will, if adopted, lead to a revision of practices and procedures of the Houses.

1.50 The commentary from the ABC's control booths are very much within the committee's province. Standing determination No.10, made by the committee in accordance with the general principles adopted by both Houses, apply the following rules to announcements made from the control booth in each House:

- (a) announcements to be confined to a straight description of procedure, and business before the House;

- (b) political views or forecasts are not to be included;
- (c) the announcement of each Senator or Member receiving the Call includes the following particulars:
  - (i) Name;
  - (ii) Parliamentary office or portfolio;
  - (iii) Political party;
  - (iv) Electorate or State.

Comment on the presence or absence of Senators and Members (including Ministers) is not to be made except that announcers may refer during divisions to the way in which specific Members vote. It is to be understood this reference may be made only in such cases as when a Member is voting away from his usual Party alignment or to show on which side an independent Member is voting.

Names of Members intending to speak during the day or evening may be announced from the Control Booth provided that the announcement is of a provisional nature.

Steps have been taken in the recent past to make the commentary more meaningful in that broadcasters have joined in briefing sessions with a senior officer of each House to discuss the day's projected program.

1.51 The committee recognises the need for guidelines for announcements from the control booths in the interests of both the broadcasters and the Houses. Nonetheless, the committee believes that the impact of the broadcasts of proceedings is lessened significantly on such occasions, for example, as when the House proceeds to a series of divisions or quorum calls. The committee has the power to vary standing determination No.10 so as to liberalise the rules concerning control booth announcements. However, given the important nature of this link between the elected Member of Parliament and the electorate, the committee would prefer that each House has the opportunity to consider the matter. The committee recommends that the guidelines covering announcements from the control booths during the continuous broadcasts of the proceedings of each House be altered to enable a more meaningful description of proceedings in each Chamber.

CHAPTER 2

TELEVISIONING OF PROCEEDINGS

2.1       Televising of proceedings has previously been considered by the committee. In 1973, the following matter was referred to the committee:

- (a) whether the televising of portion of the Parliamentary debates and proceedings is desirable, and
- (b) if so, to what extent and in what manner the telecasts should be undertaken.

2.2       In its report tabled in 1974 the committee concluded that 'conceptually, it is desirable to televise a portion of the debates and proceedings of the Parliament' and recommended that a closed-circuit trial period of televising be undertaken before the Houses made a final decision. The committee further recommended that the ABC be obliged to telecast, on a regular basis, 2 programs produced by a Parliamentary Television Unit under the Presiding Officers' control. These programs were to involve a telecast of Question Time from one House on each sitting day and a one-hour summary program each weekend. It was also recommended that access to the Parliamentary Television Unit's video tapes be granted to any television network on specified conditions. The major conditions were laid down in guidelines in the committee's report. The guidelines were framed:

'... to provide a means, in conformity with acceptable standards of dignity, propriety and decorum, by which the proceedings of the Parliament should be made available to the people of Australia for their knowledge through accurate and impartial coverage of the debates of the Senate and the House of Representatives and public meetings of their Committees'.

2.3 The report and its recommendations had not been debated by either House when both Houses were dissolved on 11 April 1974 and the matter was not subsequently revived.

2.4 There have been significant developments since the committee last examined the issue, particularly of interest so far as Australia is concerned in Canada. In the Canadian House of Commons this development occurred after much thought and conjecture as to what the public reaction might be - a situation which faced the committee in 1974. In suggesting operational procedures and controls the committee in 1974 had no really comparable system to serve as a guide. The highly successful operation of the Canadian system has served to clear many doubts. Moreover, there have been major technological advancements in lighting and camera equipment. The 1974 report, for example, was framed with consideration of 'manned' cameras, whereas current equipment in overseas parliaments in which televising occurs is almost exclusively remote controlled.

#### Other countries and assemblies

2.5 In 1978 the Inter-Parliamentary Union published a report of the results of a survey conducted in 1974 in respect of Parliament and the audio-visual media. At the time of the survey, Parliaments of 16 countries were shown as permitting some form of televising of their proceedings. It may be assumed that in the

intervening years countries other than Canada and the United States could be added to the list but more recent information is not available.

2.6 The countries listed in the I.P.U. report, and the year of inception of televising arrangements, are as follows:

Austria	1955
Belgium	1974
Denmark	1951
Finland	1964
France	1964
Federal Republic of Germany	1950s
Israel	1969
Italy	1959
Japan	1953
Netherlands	1955
Norway	1963
Poland	years ago
Sweden	1958
Switzerland	1959
Yugoslavia	1956
Zaire	1960

2.7 In November 1983 the then Speaker, as Chairman of the committee, visited the Federal Republic of Germany, the European Parliament, the United States Congress and Canada to observe recent developments in radio and television broadcasting of proceedings of the Houses of Parliament and their committees in those countries. Specific information was obtained on:

- . extent of televising (i.e. including committee proceedings);
- . technical information (including equipment in use, candlepower of lighting, air-conditioning requirements, etc.);

- . capital and recurrent costs;
- . reaction of Members of Parliament to televising;
- . whether a 'live' feed or delayed broadcast is provided;
- . availability to media outlets of feed and conditions imposed on usage;
- . control of transmissions and existence of a parliamentary broadcasting control unit;
- . legal considerations, including whether enabling legislation is in force, and privilege considerations.

2.8 A summary of the major points revealed during the visit to the countries is as follows:

Federal Republic of Germany

2.9 In the Federal Republic of Germany, parliamentary proceedings are extensively broadcast and telecast both by the national parliament and by provincial parliaments. Dr Jenkins visited the Bundestag at Bonn and provincial parliaments in Mainz and Wiesbaden.

National Parliament - Bonn

2.10 In Bonn all plenary debates are transmitted live on radio by one broadcasting company for use by members of the Association of German Broadcasting Associations; 80% of the Bundestag debates are in fact broadcast. Only 10% of proceedings

are telecast live, the rest appearing in evening summaries. Parliament plays an advisory role in the initiation of audio visual coverage but the final decision as to what use will be made of the telecast rests with the media based on the predicted program. The presiding officer has a discretionary power concerning audio visual coverage.

2.11 There are 11 broadcasting corporations, 2 Federal and 9 Land (State or provincial). Costs of covering proceedings is borne by the media. There is an in-house system which provides on a closed circuit basis telecasts throughout 42 buildings in the Bonn region to ministers, government departments, etc. All television coverage is provided by public corporations. Committee sessions are normally closed but can be declared open sessions. The Bundestag has an interesting attitude to protection from defamation in parliamentary proceedings. All events which occur in the parliamentary building are considered to be privileged; this extends to news conferences, etc. given in the corridors of the building. In this instance, as elsewhere in Germany, there is no specific statutory provision. It is a natural carry over of the German constitutional provisions ensuring freedom of expression and of speech. There is provision in the general broadcasting laws to provide stipulations that television be objective and impartial in its survey of events and that it give fair and adequate consideration to different viewpoints. Tapes of television and broadcasting are preserved, the parliamentary archives taking custody of sound records and the TV corporations the visual records.

2.12 Technical information is as follows. The system operates on 4 remote controlled cameras providing a balance of fixed and free range coverage. The luminous intensity lights between 500 and 750 Lux. The light levels within the chamber appear to be comfortable.



Rhineland Parliament - Mainz

2.13 Proceedings of the Houses of Parliament are directly transmitted and recorded. The proceedings begin at 9.30 a.m. and televising begins at 10.15 a.m. The equipment is telecaster owned. All plenary sessions are public, 95% of committees meet in private. Televising occurs from 2 cameras from fixed installations. There is no parliamentary control on material broadcast. However, action can be taken against a commentator for wrong facts and accusations of bias. A community committee operates composed of various elements in society (church groups, trade unions, etc.) to ensure the concept of fair and reasonable coverage and to provide sanctions where this is not observed.

Hesse Parliament - Wiesbaden

2.14 There is no direct televising of proceedings with a small number of exceptions, for example, the opening of Parliament. There are 2 sittings monthly of the parliament. Televising is restricted to excerpts on the daily news plus a program, Perspective on Parliament. Cameras are operated from 2 remote controlled fixed installations. The Speaker observed samples of the televising of proceedings and found them to be quite acceptable.

The European Parliament

2.15 The European Parliament's TV unit has been operational since November 1982. It gives technical support to journalists in the form of recording, editing and transmitting reports on a first come first served basis. In busy periods urgent news traffic has priority. Journalists can request the recording of parliamentary debates, select extracts and record linking material and interviews. Video tape editing is available on the spot to those who wish to prepare reports for transmission. Normally there is no charge for the use of facilities by

journalists from broadcast organisations. Use on an extended basis or by known broadcast clients is subject to charge. Film and television crews have a right of access to all public parliamentary meetings. Accreditation and assistance on technical and production questions are provided by the parliament. The filming of parliamentary committees is done on a selective basis at the invitation of the committee. Guidelines have been developed for the filming of proceedings. Panning or individual shots are allowable. Outside camera crews are admitted, which creates some difficulty but is allowed by the parliament as the publicity given by television exposure is invaluable to a body which is aware of the need for its recognition as a parliament.

2.16 The service covers parliamentary activities in 3 places. Sessions at present are held in Strasbourg. Subject to demand and availability, services are available in Brussels and Luxembourg. In Brussels there is a 40m<sup>2</sup> TV studio and coverage of public meetings of parliamentary committees can be provided. The core of the operation has an outside broadcast vehicle able to record and feed simultaneously either live or recorded material. Equipment includes 4 mobile broadcast cameras and 2 control rooms, one with a mixer desk. All equipment is PAL. The equipment was obtained by public tender (restricted to the European Economic Community). The European Parliament's televising authorities advised that the staff situation should be determined at the outset. It was most important to avoid industrial disruption or an over involvement by any external element in the drawing up of the guidelines.

#### USA Congress

2.17 In the United States of America the Rules Committee of the Congress was greatly impressed by the Ottawa arrangements, discussed in more detail below. After visiting Ottawa the committee recommended, in a report to the House, that the House

should operate its own broadcast coverage system following the example, and building upon, the experience of the Canadian Parliament.

2.18 The House carefully considered the alternatives of whether a pool of the national television networks should be able to bring cameras into the chamber or whether the House should control the cameras. Following tests of House broadcasting conducted in 1977, the House voted overwhelmingly for the Speaker to control the broadcast system. Much consideration was given to the overhead lighting in the chamber which initially, according to the Rules Committee, produced a 'raccoon' effect of shadows around the members' eyes. The almost universal problem arose of determining the balance between sufficient lighting for television but not so strong as to inconvenience members. According to the local authorities, the only time that inconvenience is experienced is when the President delivers the State of the Union address, when all networks are admitted and 'commercial' light levels apply. The House spent approximately \$US44 000 to hire several consultants, including professional broadcasters, for advice on the setting up of a system. The Canadian lead of hiring professional broadcasters to operate the House system was followed. The Clerk of the House is responsible for day to day operation of the system, performed by broadcasters with at least 5 years experience in the commercial field. Advertisements were placed in over 20 cities to obtain appropriate operators. There are 12 technical positions operating the system. The total of the salaries is approximately \$US300,000. There are 6 remote controlled cameras. Equipment costs were \$US1.2M to buy the cameras, monitors, sound equipment, recording machines for tapes and other equipment. The equipment has been set up in a basement room of the Capitol. Annual maintenance costs are in the order of \$US100 000. The main replacement costs are associated with replacing the colour 'bulbs' in cameras. Unfortunately from the point of view of televising the House of Representatives proceedings, the main

replacement costs are in the bulbs which are sensitive to the colour green. Remote controlled cameras are fixed on the Speaker's rostrum, the minority table and the majority table in the House. The basic rule is to focus the cameras only on the officially recognised members. Some reaction shots are permissible where these are necessary to make the coverage meaningful (but with faded light and without sound). The US officers stressed the need to have the camera manufacturers prove their claims in a trial period. Taping facilities are available free of charge if the tapes are supplied and if the tapes are not put to commercial or political use. The television networks are charged for access to the feed, with major customers cable television systems. A non-profit organisation called Cable Satellite Public Affairs Network (C-SPAN) is the greatest user. It sends the House broadcast signal from Capitol Hill to a cable system in Virginia where it is transmitted to a satellite. Cable systems with a special antenna can pick up the broadcast from the satellite and run it live or tape it. C-Span customers are encouraged to make sequences of the broadcast available free to local commercial television stations; up to 3 minutes may be used by giving credit to the cable company.

2.19 The proceedings of the United States Senate were only recently opened to television. Previous to the introduction of cameras there was a growing feeling that the House of Representatives had gained dominance over the Senate because of the fact that it allowed telecasting. However, in 1982 the Senate authorised television and radio broadcast coverage, such coverage to be supervised and operated by the Senate and made available on a live basis and free of charge to any accredited member of the Senate gallery, the capital cable system and the Architect of the Capitol or news gathering or educational groups.

Legislative Assembly - Saskatchewan

2.20 The Saskatchewan legislature uses an automated switching system for televising its proceedings. The automated system grew out of a need to provide a television system on a sessional basis (sessions less than 6 months per year) at a reasonable cost. This necessitated a method requiring a minimum of personnel. Only 4 people are required to operate the system: a director of television services, 2 technician/operators and a microphone switcher. They are paid an annual salary but their presence on duty is not required for much of the non-sitting period. The system operates with 5 remote controlled cameras: 1 camera faces the Speaker and 2 cameras are situated in the corners to the Speaker's left and right. When the Speaker is on his feet the camera facing him is activated. When the Speaker recognises a Member, the microphone switcher activates that Member's microphone. The fact that a microphone is active automatically stimulates the appropriate camera to tilt, pan, zoom and focus on the Member who has been called by the Speaker. The name of the Member and his constituency automatically flash on the screen for 5 seconds. The other 2 remote controlled cameras are used for a variety of alternate shots, for broad applause shots and for recorded divisions. Most of the switching is done by the computer.

2.21 Before television could commence chamber lighting had to be upgraded. Previously most of the lighting came from the skylight which consisted of banks of fluorescent tubes, costly to maintain and providing insufficient light. These were replaced with metal halide lamps increasing the light level to approximately 35 foot candles. This was found to be a very acceptable and comfortable level and most adequate for the technical demands of modern camera equipment.

2.22 Ikegami cameras fitted with Schneider lenses were chosen. Vinton microprocessors are used. This mix of equipment was purchased on the advice of a chief television consultant based in Toronto, Ontario. The Assembly is well satisfied with the equipment.

2.23 The total cost of the television system and necessary renovations was approximately \$C1.5M (including the cost of equipment consultancy). Operating costs (salaries and video cassettes) are approximately \$C100,000.

#### Canadian House of Commons

2.24 In January 1977 the Canadian House of Commons agreed to an order approving the radio and television broadcasting of its proceedings and proceedings of its committees. A committee was appointed to supervise the implementation of this resolution. In January 1977 the committee gave approval to a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation project team to proceed with system installation. The operational date was recommended to be September 1978 but at Parliament's request it was advanced by almost a year to October 1977. It is the belief of the Canadian technical operators that moving forward the date resulted in a scramble to obtain equipment and manpower and led to several system shortcomings and excesses which are still being felt by the Broadcasting Services Branch. For example, the rush did not allow the CBC project team to define equipment standards adequately. Consequently, equipment was purchased to meet almost every contingency and was of the highest quality, with some being used at about 20% of capacity and with operating costs much greater than less sophisticated equipment. The cost for supply and installation of the equipment was \$C3.9M. The architectural, electrical and mechanical work done by the Department of Public Works cost an additional \$C0.8M. A decision to provide video cassettes to companies willing to pay shipping costs required the acquisition of additional equipment and cost about \$C100 000. The technical details are as follows.

2.25 There are 7 RCA TK-76 cameras remotely operated and equipped with a Schneider lens. The present lighting installation consists of 24 1200W lamps; 60 1000W luminaries are also used. Special equipment is used to reduce the glare factor. A combination of both lighting systems provides a total of 64 foot candles which is considerably lower than normal television lighting but is still felt to be excessively bright and glaring for exposure for long periods. The system provides for a live broadcast quality audio visual record of House proceedings in Canada's 2 official languages. The service is available live via satellite across Canada, to cable companies, to broadcasters, the media and educational institutions. The Branch is composed of 4 sections, the production unit, the control room, the operations centre and the engineering section. The television control room is located in a newly constructed mezzanine overlooking the chamber. The operations centre is located in a remote building. It is the main distribution and recording centre. In the recording centre proceedings are recorded and a French and an English copy are archived. The live feed is transmitted to the Bell Telephone Company in video and audio form for all their media customers and as an auto feed to 12 media clients. The tapes go to 3 cable companies for all day coverage and to 9 cable companies for the question period only. Sitzings of the Senate are available in audio form only to 5 media clients. Members, media and educational institutions have access to the tapes with return payment for tape being the only condition. Members have access to their own speeches only (also their questions/answers) unless they receive approval from other Members or the Speaker.

2.26 Presently daily televising is restricted to House proceedings only (not committees). The proceedings of the Committee on the Constitution were covered on an experimental basis. Outside help was necessary to provide technical crew and equipment. The possibility of increased coverage of committee

activities is envisaged by the Canadians and the possibility of specially equipping 2 committee rooms is being considered. Party caucuses will probably decide which committees will be recorded.

2.27 The content of broadcast matter is determined by Parliament-directed guidelines. The shooting technique is based on a policy that an electronic version of Hansard is being produced. Therefore only the Member who has been given the call is on camera. When the Member finishes or the Speaker calls 'order' the 'on-air' camera returns to the Speaker. Through the years Members have expressed concern about camera angles and zoom shots and the image of Parliament they produce. Thus the standard procedure is limited as much as possible to head and shoulder shots of the Member addressing the House. However, the techniques which have been instituted to maintain the dignity of the House have led to some criticism that viewers are denied the opportunity to see events reach their natural conclusion. For instance, a Member's reactions are transmitted when he is addressing the House but the actions prompting his response are not telecast. This leads to some artificiality. Filming procedures are influenced by the fact that nothing is covered that is not normally recorded in Hansard. The degree of regulation of the content is believed to be assisted by the fact that televising is controlled by Commons staff and paid for by the Parliament.

2.28 Presently over half the population of Canada have access to the national proceedings, either live or taped. To receive the House of Representatives broadcast a home must subscribe to cable facilities and a converter be part of or fitted to the television set (cost about \$C100). The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation include an opening and closing announcer on camera and provide a 'signer' to interpret for the hearing impaired. The then Speaker had the opportunity to discuss arrangements with Senators and Members to obtain the reactions of those most intimately involved in the televising process. There



is a belief that behaviour in the House has improved. Some procedures (e.g. desk thumping during question time) have altered. There were some initial fears that the coverage would be dominated by Members seeking maximum exposure. Whilst it does appear that some Members receive greater exposure than others, this is believed to be merely a matter of circumstance.

2.29 The following points emerged during discussions with Members of the Canadian House of Commons:

- . Control by the Parliament was essential.
- . It had been a mistake to put aside the televising of committees, as was done because of the cost. There was a distortion if only the plenum was telecast. One major problem with televising committees was the staffing consideration of providing telecast crews.
- . Televising had made debate more relevant. Television was an intimate medium and brought the speaking style back to addressing one person, and inhibited the oratorical approach. Conversational speakers were the most effective. Consequently, television would alter the way Members speak and, for some, it may be advisable to obtain professional advice on speaking in the medium. However, there should be no coaching by the Parliament; it was preferable for Members to arrange this themselves if they so wish.
- . The medium will not make actors of Members of Parliament. Those who are inclined to 'ham' will continue to do so.

- . It was very important not to have a light on the television camera indicating which camera was transmitting.
- . There were 3 major reasons why the concept of an electronic Hansard was favoured:
  - It was important not to go too far too fast. To use the 'accepted' guidelines of Hansard built on established practice helped to determine what were the 'real' events - it was essential to have consistency between the printed and the visual record. Also, it was possible to liberalise the practice once acceptance was won.
  - Televising practices must ensure that all Members are treated equally. The electronic Hansard approach facilitates this. There were certain basic accompanying principles, e.g. a Member anywhere must get a good angle. A camera angle change could lead to questions from the electorate about where a Member was during debates. For example, a Member might be perpetually 'on the fringe' of one camera angle, but disappear from the screen if the camera angle suddenly changed. Panning could be a problem. The interpretation and public perception of Parliament must not be

distorted. The 'head and shoulders' shot does provide a distortion which the public sometimes cannot understand. There was a need for public education or a public relations component.

- The Commons decided that no enabling legislation was required to institute an electronic Hansard approach, as Hansard provisions were adequate.
  
- . However, there was also the belief that the public was being 'sold short' on the implementation of an electronic Hansard. Printed Hansard does contain asides, interjections that evoke a response, etc. Liberalisation of the guidelines, it was felt, would bring a larger viewing audience. Split-screen techniques should be investigated.
  
- . Political advantage of televising is slightly weighted towards the Opposition.
  
- . The lighting is draining (especially for those who spend a lot of time in the chamber). There is, however, adequate but more comfortable lighting available.
  
- . Informed commentary by professional commentating staff adds significantly to the value of the broadcast.

- . One significant advantage in televising proceedings is that it provides a counter to the media, which has to make its interpretations more closely allied to the depiction of proceedings that members of the public may have seen for themselves.
- . Obtaining the appropriate microphones is essential.
- . There will be a transitional period, possibly lasting a year, which will be very difficult. There will be major changes (microphones, etc.) and during this period it is essential that there is no over reaction by Members against the concept. The concept needs to be given a reasonable and unprejudiced opportunity to proceed.
- . There will be changes (e.g., in Canada the desk-thumping - equivalent to our 'hear, hear!' - was eliminated). Question time was transformed, with parties assuming more control.
- . It was advisable to have a television committee (including the administration) - perhaps a Speaker's Committee.

2.30 Discussion with Canadian Senators covered the following points:

- . The question to be determined by the Canadian Senate was not whether televising of Senate proceedings should go ahead, but the extent to which the Commons practice is applicable.

- . Parliamentary control was essential:
  - acceptance by Members was largely attributable to the fact that control was by the Parliament;
  - outside agency control would need to be accompanied by stipulated conditions;
  - it is most desirable to have a continuous feed under parliamentary control and allow those interested to make selections for transmission as they desire;
  - with parliamentary control there was not the slightest suggestion of imbalance.
  
- . Some advantages of televising are that it:
  - helps overcome isolation,
  - improves quality and conduct of debate and
  - satisfies a demand by electors as evidenced by good membership of cable TV.
  
- . Senators check the proceedings of the Commons (especially Question Time).

- The 'head and shoulders' approach was best because coverage otherwise could detract from the message. It has worked in volatile circumstances and, if something works, it is advisable not to interfere with it. A 'little bit of theatre' is difficult to administer, and it should be remembered that, with panning, the theatre presented will be that which is decided by the director. Perhaps, however, a full chamber pan would add to the impact of the telecast.

#### United Kingdom

2.31 The United Kingdom House of Commons does not permit the televising of its proceedings. A committee report in 1966 recommended a trial period of closed circuit televising but a motion to endorse the recommendation was negated 130 votes to 131 in 1966 and by 165 votes to 191 in 1972. In 1974 a motion proposed by a private Member that he have leave to bring in a Bill to facilitate televising of proceedings was defeated by 165 votes to 189. In the last months of 1983, the second reading of a private Member's bill, to enable televising of proceedings, was agreed to by the House of Commons. However, the majority supporting the measure was narrow, and the measure did not attract the backing of the Government.

2.32 In the House of Lords, a motion sponsored by Lord Egremont in 1966 in favour of an experimental period of public televising of proceedings was successful. Subsequently a Select Committee on Televising the Proceedings of the House of Lords was appointed which made 2 substantive reports and had referred to it, pursuant to its recommendation, the question of sound broadcasting. In the parliamentary session 1967-68, the committee was appointed as the Select Committee on Broadcasting Proceedings.

of the House of Lords. The committee recommended a closed circuit experiment, which took place over 3 days in February 1968, and following the experiment, recommended a public experiment in televising.

2.33 On 8 December 1983, the House of Lords agreed on the motion of Lord Soames, to the following resolution:

That this House endorses its decision of 15 June 1966 in favour of the public televising of some of its proceedings for an experimental period and instructs the Sound Broadcasting Committee to consider and report how this decision should be implemented.

The Sound Broadcasting Committee reported on 25 July 1984. The committee did not evaluate reasons for and against televising, but took as its starting point the decision in favour of experimental televising in Lord Egremont's motion endorsed by the 1983 resolution on the motion of Lord Soames. It saw its function as being to investigate the ways in which the decision could be implemented. Among the committee's recommendations were:

- . The period of public televising of some of the proceedings of the House should be approximately 6 months in duration starting, if possible, in January 1985; the BBC and IBA should be permitted to come to the House on occasions chosen by themselves on a 'drive-in' basis for the purpose of obtaining material for broadcasting on television.
- . Matters of selection and editorial control should be left to the broadcasting authorities, subject to the ultimate control of the House.

- . The broadcasting authorities should have access to certain select committees for the duration of the experiment.
  
- . The terms of the resolution of the House of 27 July 1977, under which sound broadcasting of the proceedings of the House operates, should, so far as practicable, be applied to the proposed experiment in televising proceedings; subsequent decisions of the Sound Broadcasting Committee controlling the sound broadcasting of proceedings should, in the same manner, be applied to the experiment.

The proceedings of the Lords were first televised live with some extra lighting on 24 January 1985. Striking coal miners staged a demonstration in the Lords' gallery but were not telecast as public interruptions were not to be covered. Generally the telecast was well received. On 29 January 1985 the Government announced that it would facilitate a debate on televising the proceedings of the House of Commons after the 6-month trial in the House of Lords is completed. On 22 November 1985 the House rejected by 275 to 263 a proposal to televise proceedings.

#### The United Nations

2.34 The technical work of televising United Nations debates and committees is carried out by a private contractor. Outside film organisations may be permitted to interview but the coverage of all proceedings is restricted to the United Nations group. Originally the major American networks were invited to televise proceedings but the American view of what was newsworthy was not widely acceptable to many of the delegates: gallery disturbances, the behaviour of certain delegates and isolated cases of 'undignified behaviour' were all considered to be within the



ambit of commercial coverage. In order to emphasise the dignity of the organisation and to protect delegates from embarrassment the United Nations assumed responsibility for televising. The television section is conscious of the need to provide interesting coverage if it is to be accepted by the news networks, at the same time as seeing a responsibility to preserve the dignity and integrity of the institution in the eyes of the world.

2.35 The concept of television as an electronic Hansard is not observed in the United Nations. All proceedings are recorded on audio-tape. Selected debates are televised throughout on 2 inch videotape which are usually kept 1 or 2 weeks and then re-used.

House of Assembly, South Australia

2.36 The South Australian House of Assembly has been allowing the televising of its proceedings for some 2 years. Access is allowed to any debates. However, the television networks have until now shown interest exclusively in filming proceedings in Question Time. Discretion as to what is telecast resides exclusively in the television and radio stations. The decision was made to permit the broadcasting organisations access; they were assembled and had explained to them the basis on which access was being granted, mainly:

- difficulties with defamation - only qualified privilege applied;
- there was to be no ridicule;
- a fair coverage was to be provided and equal time was to be provided to the parties (though not necessarily in the same debate).

On occasions there had been a need to remind the operators when cameras were observed to be panning around the Chamber that disruptive events etc. were not to be telecast. On one recent occasion broadcasters who replayed a disruptive incident in the public gallery contrary to the Speaker's express instructions had their privileges withdrawn until they had apologised.

2.37 In South Australia there is no provision for a parliamentary press gallery. Part of the strangers' gallery was used to provide stations for 4 manually operated cameras. A good deal of the strangers' gallery was in fact blocked off. Modern equipment is such that there was no need for additional lighting.

2.38 The ABC has a camera continually recording the complete proceedings. The other networks limit their filming currently to Question Time. The ABC's telecasts have been primarily concerned with Question Time.

2.39 Members' reaction has been particularly good. Prominent parliamentary figures (government and opposition) have expressed satisfaction.

#### Televising of proceedings of the Australian Parliament

2.40 While Australia was a pioneer in radio broadcasting of the proceedings of Parliament, as the preceding paragraphs of this chapter indicate, it has lagged behind many other countries and provincial parliaments in respect of televising.

2.41 The only extensive telecasts of proceedings of the Parliament occurred during the joint sittings of both Houses in 1974. On that occasion the telecast was conducted by the ABC under the direction of the committee. The telecasts were carried out in accordance with the Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act, which was amended to cover televising (and broadcasting) of the joint sittings (defined in the Act as amended as a joint sitting convened in pursuance of section 57 of the Constitution only - joint sittings are also held following casual vacancies in ACT Senate representation), and in accordance with determinations

made by the committee under the Act. The amendments to the Act, inter alia, extended absolute privilege to any person involved in the televising of proceedings or televising from a recording of proceedings. The amended Act does not deal with the televising of proceedings of either House, only of joint sittings held pursuant to section 57 of the Constitution. More than half of each day's proceedings of the joint sitting was telecast 'live' and transmitted to all States. The ABC was directed by the committee to prepare a 1 hour composite program consisting of extracts from the entire proceedings of the joint sitting. The extracts were compiled under the supervision of a parliamentary officer. Copies of the program were permitted to be taken for distribution to Australian overseas posts. Guidelines were issued for producers, directors and editors. These guidelines were framed to provide a means, in conformity with acceptable standards of dignity, propriety and decorum, by which the debates could be covered accurately and impartially. Participants in debate were covered as they addressed the joint sitting from a lectern in the House of Representatives Chamber. The Australian Information Service was authorised to make a cinematographic record of the first 5 minutes of the joint sitting without accompanying sound. The film was made available for use in news programs by television networks in Australia and overseas.

2.42 The only other occasion on which televising of proceedings regularly occurs is in respect of the Governor-General's Speech and procedures associated with the opening of a new session of Parliament. In the case of the House of Representatives, the proceedings merely cover the entry of the Usher of the Black Rod to summon Members to the Senate Chamber. The Speaker has occasionally permitted filming in the Chamber, for television purposes, for 'background' shots (without sound). Similarly, parliamentary committees have been filmed without sound to provide background footage to a news commentary. There is closed circuit televising of both Houses at present but only on a restricted access basis.

2.43 In 1984 the Treasurer sought the then Speaker's agreement to have televised a section of the budget speech and the reply by the Leader of the Opposition. The Speaker's reply to the Prime Minister indicated that there would be no difficulty from a procedural point of view, nor would the legal aspects, while worthy of particular consideration, appear to raise difficulty. The Speaker suggested the following arrangements:

- . The 2 speeches should be available for live or recorded telecast on special budget programs, and news and news commentary programs.
- . The ABC should perform the filming but, to ensure its availability to other networks, the ABC's full production costs should be reimbursed by the House of Representatives.
- . Advertising would be permitted but care would be taken that it was not of an inappropriate kind; 'spot' advertising would not be permitted so as to interrupt 'live' telecasting of the speeches but would be permitted in programs incorporating the material in recorded form.
- . Cameras and additional lighting would be kept to a minimum.
- . Cameras would be directed to focus on those formally taking part in proceedings; panning or reaction shots would not be allowed.

The Speaker indicated that it would be appropriate if the decision to proceed was reached by means of formal endorsement of the House, hopefully with the concurrence of all political parties represented in the House. The House authorised the arrangements on 21 August 1985.<sup>25</sup>

2.44 The telecasts were well received, although several commentators observed that the coverage restrictions resulted in a somewhat artificial depiction of the proceedings of the House of Representatives and made for what could not be described as a 'newsworthy' presentation. Mr Whitehead, Managing Director of the ABC, wrote that the ABC assessment and the reaction of the media and public lead to the conclusion that the presentation constraints presented the ABC from conveying to viewers a true reflection of proceedings in the House.

2.45 The ABC was re-imbursed just under \$40 000 in 1984, \$37 301 in 1985, covering salaries, airfares, titles/opticals, film costs, talents and salaries. The comparatively high cost of the telecasts is understandable, given the 'drive-in' nature of the telecasts (similar to that adopted by the United Kingdom House of Lords). It should be noted that the cost did not involve the expense of the outside broadcast van.

2.46 A request to televise the corresponding segments of the 1985 budget was endorsed by the committee and agreed to by the House of Representatives. The guidelines for the 1985 budget were relaxed somewhat to those applicable in 1984 (although, paradoxically, some observers felt that the presentation was more liberalised under the 1984 guidelines). The telecasts were well received and now appear to have become an accepted component of the presentation of proceedings of the House.

Reasons advanced for televising Parliament

2.47 The committee received a large number of representations from Ministers, Opposition and Third Party office holders, other Members of Parliament, journalists, broadcasters, academics and members of the general public advocating the televising of proceedings.

2.48 The following reasons have been advanced for televising parliament:

- . the public's right to know;
- . reducing the communication gap between parliament and the people;
- . bringing parliamentary events into living rooms without the sometimes distorting influence of commentators;
- . in such a large country as Australia, television could bring to the citizens (particularly those in remote areas) an experience of the national Parliament in which they otherwise might never share;
- . Australians are now relying on television more for their information, and any failure by Parliament to exploit television's unique ability to capture attention and to highlight issues might well have detrimental long-term consequences;
- . the educational element (schools, etc., and the public at large);

- it may lead to an improvement in debate in the Houses.

2.49 Perhaps the most poignant expression of a major reason for televising Parliament was delivered by Madame Lapointe, then Speaker of the Canadian Senate, at the 5th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of Commonwealth Parliaments in Canberra in 1978:

'One of the most effective arguments heard in Canada for televising Parliament's business was that the time had come to take Parliament to the people. For too long its debates and crises had been filtered through the mouths and eyes of others. Not all those others were impartial, detached or objective observers. Program editors, for example, decided which interviewers, commentators, academics or politicians would monopolise the screen to portray their version of events. Program editors, we know, are not responsible to any electorate ...

There was another good reason for allowing television into Parliament. Politicians resented being at the mercy of reporters and commentators who interpreted their words, motives and actions to the nation. This, they said, conferred dangerous power on the Press Gallery.'

2.50 In its report of 1974 the committee released the findings of a survey conducted at its request by the Australian Broadcasting Control Board in late 1973. The survey revealed that-

- 52% of respondents said that it would be a good idea to televise Parliament;

46% of respondents said they would watch a half-hourly summary program at 9pm (on a sitting day) and

50% of respondents said they would watch a summary program on the weekend.

2.51 It is believed that there has been a significant increase in public interest in parliamentary affairs since 1973. It would not appear unreasonable to suggest that a similar survey conducted now would reveal a substantially larger potential audience for televised proceedings of the House.

2.52 The committee recognises the importance of television as an information source to Australians. It also recognises the need for the proceedings of the Houses of Parliament to be available as a balance to the filter provided through the newsprint or electronic media. The committee recommends that the proceedings of both Houses be available for television coverage. However, the committee does not believe that the 'gavel to gavel' coverage presented in the USA and Canada is appropriate for Australia at this stage. There are many more available channels in those countries. Moreover, those countries have the benefits of cable television, and the continuous parliamentary broadcasts are delivered to an audience desiring to receive them and willing to pay for the service; they do not disrupt or displace normal network programming unless the networks consider the occurrence to be of such significance as to warrant 'live' transmission. The committee recommends that there be no compulsion to broadcast the television signal of the proceedings of the Houses on a continuous basis.

2.53 Mr James Fitzmaurice, Controller, ABC Television Programs, suggested that the committee consider transponders or transponder space on Aussat being obtained by Parliament for



transmitting the television signal of proceedings. This would achieve a remarkable degree of penetration throughout the country. The proceedings of both Houses could be transmitted simultaneously and all television stations would have the facility to record the selected transmissions. This would mean that items of a local or regional nature, which would not normally be taken by the ABC or a major national commercial network, could be transmitted if a local station had invested in a receiving dish. The local Member or a Senator could advise the station, or an accompanying data channel could advise of progressive expectations in each Chamber.<sup>26</sup> Mr D.A.T. Jones, then Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal expressed the belief that it was the ability to tap into systems of this kind that really led to the expansion of the coverage of parliamentary and committee proceedings in the USA and Canada. He envisaged a growing community expectation, as the technology made it possible, for full access to what the Houses of Parliament and their committees were doing.<sup>27</sup> The committee was also advised by an officer of the Department of Communications 'that space on the satellite is not unlimited and that the Government is considering several options for the use of the satellite at the moment.'<sup>28</sup> The committee recommends that if the decision is made to permit televising of the proceedings of the Houses, provision be made for the television signal of the proceedings of the Houses of Parliament to be transmitted Australia-wide by means of the Australian communications satellite.

2.54 The experience of the 1984 and 1985 budget speeches has provided a valuable aid to consideration of the prospect of televising in the provisional Parliament House. The telecasts could only take place by means of an outside broadcast van located in a street adjacent to the building. Additional lighting was necessary, and though reflected from the ceiling of the House of Representatives Chamber and in use for only relatively short periods, gave the impression that Members might be inconvenienced from sustained exposure.

2.55 Evidence was given to the committee by Mr Alec Cohen, Project Director, Engineering Services and Consultancy, ABC, who is also a consultant to the Parliament House Construction Authority, that quite a few technical problems existed in the provisional Parliament House. The lighting presented problems because of the existing very low light levels, because of the dark chambers and because of the contrast ratios resulting from the dark surfaces and lighter ceilings, so that ad hoc lighting would be quite severe. Additional lighting would be accompanied by air conditioning problems. There have been improvements in camera sensitivity, but any improvements in camera sensitivity were not sufficient to overcome the problems. An image-intensified camera had been developed but was not taken up by the industry. (The emphasis was towards smaller cameras and there was ample light in the studios). There were also equipment housing problems. There was no available space around the Chambers, so that a large vehicle would need to be parked in the building's environs to house operational staff.<sup>29</sup>

2.56 There is also the consideration of cost. The Senate Standing Orders Committee, in its 4th report<sup>30</sup> for the 60th session 1980-82 (dated November 1982), indicated that televising the proceedings of both Houses in the building currently occupied by the Houses of Parliament would involve capital costs of \$5M and annual operating costs of \$680 000. Provision of equipment to enable televising of proceedings would cost approximately \$750,000 and an annual operating cost of \$250 000 would be involved. The Senate committee considered that the Senate would not be justified in embarking on expenditure of this kind in the current building.

2.57 This committee feels that given the cost involved and the short period of time over which the cost/benefit could be returned before the Houses move to the new Parliament House, expenditure on the scale required would not be justified. There:

is also the makeshift nature of arrangements that would be necessary and the not inconsiderable inconvenience to Senators and Members that would attend them. Equally importantly is the fact that the presentation of televising from the current chambers would fall far below the presentation available from the new building. There is a very real risk that a false impression would be conveyed to members of the public and Members of Parliament with transmissions from the present building. The committee therefore recommends that televising of proceedings from the provisional Parliament House should not be undertaken with the exception of specific parliamentary events authorised by the House concerned and proceedings of Opening Day .

2.58 Representatives from the Parliament House Construction Authority (PHCA) provided the committee with information on systems to be installed in the new Parliament House relating to the televising and radio broadcasting of proceedings. The Report of the Joint Select Committee on the New and Permanent Parliament House (March 1970) recommended the televising of proceedings throughout the building on a closed circuit basis. The Joint Standing Committee on the New Parliament House, appointed (when the decision had been made to proceed with the building) to act for and represent the Parliament as client in all matters concerned with *planning, design and construction of the new House*, commissioned a study in 1981 outlining the likely range of broadcasting and related facilities for the building. Further refinement of user requirements occurred following parliamentary approval for the Construction Authority to assume responsibility for the provision and co-ordination of equipment and furniture items for the new House. The user requirements statement approved by the Joint Standing Committee in May 1983 aimed for broadcasting and related sound and vision systems which have maximum operational flexibility.

2.59 Relevant to parliamentary broadcasting in the user requirements statement are the sound system, the television system, the House Monitoring System (HMS), the Hansard sound and vision recording system, and the recorded information system. The Construction Authority issued a brief to the ABC for the design, installation and commissioning of the systems. Mr J.D. Fowler, Assistant Secretary, External Relations, PHCA, explained to the committee that the Authority was currently designing a proposed sound and vision system to meet a brief provided by the Joint Standing Committee. The Authority was attempting to provide as much flexibility as possible in the designed system.<sup>32</sup> The following is an extract from PHCA's submission to the Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings explaining the facilities to be provided in the new House:

Video and audio systems are to be provided in the Chambers and all Committee Rooms and other selected locations throughout the building.

The audio system will provide speech reinforcement for the Chambers and Committee Rooms. It will also provide the sound source for Hansard recordings and for distribution through the House Monitoring System.

The video or television system is being designed to complement the sound system. Colour, pan/tilt, remote controlled cameras will be installed permanently in the Chambers and all Committee Rooms. The approved user requirements statement provided that seven cameras will service each Chamber, six will be installed in Committee Room No.1, four in each Type 2 and 3 Committee Room and two in each Type 4 and 5 Committee Room.

Modern technology is such that cameras are relatively small items of equipment. The most sensitive cameras and lenses available will be selected so as to minimise the effect on the lighting, air conditioning and comfort of the occupants, while maintaining the requirements for network quality output. Cameras to be used in the Chambers will be located discretely in wall recesses.

The cameras will be active during sitting periods, providing a signal for distribution throughout the building via the House Monitoring System. Equipment is therefore being designed to be capable of simple automatic presentation for closed circuit house monitoring purposes, as well as full scale network style broadcasting of proceedings and special events. The design of the cameras will also enable them to operate as part of the security surveillance system when the Chambers and Committee Rooms are not being used for Parliamentary proceedings.

Full scale TV production facilities will be provided in a series of sound and vision control rooms situated in the basement. Four vision control rooms will be located in the central operations area, and under normal conditions one of these will be dedicated to the Senate, one to the House of Representatives and the remaining two to Committee Rooms or other events taking place in the building or in its immediate environs. Production facilities will include a graphics generator and related storage to provide textual information about each speaker and for the identification of the order of proceedings. A series of related record and edit booths would enable special programmes to be prepared and packaged for either network or educational release.<sup>33</sup>

While there have been some modifications to the provision of systems in the interests of expenditure reduction, the situation is currently the same as described above. The facilities provided will mean that closed circuit televising will be available in the new Parliament House. The signal produced will be of broadcast quality. The means will thereby be provided for the proceedings of the Houses and their committees to be made available to the electronic media.

2.60 The committee also considered the scope of coverage to be permitted for telecasting. While the electronic Hansard approach might result in a somewhat distorted depiction of parliamentary proceedings, the committee believes that this is a firm concept for commencement, familiar to Members of Parliament and well understood by Press Gallery members. There may be some scope for widening the concept - for example, 'reaction shots' may well be included with an interjecting Member of Parliament being covered in a faded shot and with greatly reduced sound. There may be scope for split-screen techniques and some limited panning. It is important for the guidelines to be known and understood by all Members of Parliament. The committee believes that it is preferable to proceed cautiously at the outset. By the same token the committee stresses that any guidelines adopted by the Houses must remain fluid and under review. The most appropriate body to monitor the coverage guidelines would be this committee. At the outset, however the committee recommends the endorsement by both Houses of the guidelines most recently adopted by the House for the Budget speech as initial guidelines for television presentation coverage. A copy of these guidelines is at Appendix 4. The committee also recommends that it be accorded the responsibility of monitoring these guidelines and recommending changes for endorsement by each House.

#### Televising of committee proceedings

2.61 If the committee's recommendations concerning televising from the new Parliament House are adopted, all proceedings distributed by means of the House monitoring system would be available for transmission by the media via the Parliamentary Audio Visual Unit (see Chapter 3). As provision has

been made in the new House for coverage from some committee rooms, this would mean that the proceedings of committees would be available for distribution. The committee feels that to open committee proceedings in this way has much to recommend it. While the existence of parliamentary committees is well known, their proceedings apart from isolated print media reports are not known to most Australians. Committees are excellent examples of the co-operative workshop atmosphere in which Members of Parliament frequently operate. They demonstrate a facet of parliament which can be more effectively done by smaller groups of Members of Parliament: the calling for submissions, the taking of evidence and the examination of witnesses. They demonstrate citizens interacting with their parliament. They assist the Houses in the performance of one of the vital functions of parliament, namely, the accountability of the government to the parliament. Coverage of the proceedings of committees would assist in placing the role of the backbench Member of Parliament in perspective and in providing a balance in portrayal of the operation of Parliament. The committee therefore recommends that where possible the public proceedings of parliamentary committees be available for television coverage in the new Parliament House. It is recognised that there may be difficulties attendant upon the adoption of this recommendation. For example, the propensity of committees to deliberate or take in-camera evidence often at short notice means that close monitoring of proceedings transmitted would be necessary.

2.62 Senate standing committees are authorised under the standing orders to have their proceedings televised subject to rules approved by the Senate. The Senate has not, as yet, formulated such rules. It has been the practice of joint committees and the committees of both Houses to permit the recording of their proceedings without sound for later use in news or news commentary programs. If the committee's recommendation concerning permitting radio broadcasters access to committee proceedings is adopted, the committee can see no reason

to continue the prohibition on the sound and picture. The committee therefore recommends that edited audio-visual presentations of committee proceedings be permitted on television programs provided their use is not for the purpose of satire or ridicule.

Still frame or background overlay television presentation

2.63 The committee also feels that the sound signal presentation should be immediately available to television stations. The Presiding Officers have authorised the television networks to take monitored films without sound of the proceedings of each House for screening with a news reader providing commentary. This material could be used to effect with the actual sound of the Member of Parliament recorded from the chamber. The committee recommends that excerpts from the audio presentation of proceedings be authorised for use by television stations over still frames or overlay material (e.g. sound of Senator's or Member's voice and 'still' shot of Member simultaneously telecast, or previously taken footage of Senator or Member simultaneously telecast). This usage has been authorised for the trial period of the broadcasting of excerpts of proceedings (see paragraphs 1.42 and 1.43).



## CHAPTER 3

## PARLIAMENTARY AUDIO VISUAL UNIT

3.1 In its 1974 report the committee recommended the establishment of a Parliamentary Television Unit:

'It is recommended that there be established by the Australian Parliament a Parliamentary Television Unit. To this unit should be entrusted the responsibility of establishing and operating such television equipment as is necessary for the production of all official Parliamentary television programs. The unit should be responsible for providing the various television networks with access to the television signal in those circumstances where such access is permissible. The head of this unit should be an officer of the Parliament responsible, through the Clerks of the two Houses, to the Presiding Officers. This officer should be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the unit and for advising the Presiding

Officers on the exercise of their discretionary powers over the use of the television signal. The technical operatives and other ancillary staff of the unit might be seconded to the Parliament from the Australian Broadcasting Commission for the period of their service with the unit or might be permanently appointed to the service of the unit. All costs of this unit should be borne directly under the Parliamentary vote.<sup>34</sup>

The Parliament House Construction Authority in its submission to the committee indicated that the maintenance and operation of radio and television systems in the new building would require a considerable increase in staffing levels from those operative in the provisional building. The Authority advised that the Parliament would need to give early consideration to the organisational structure necessary to take control of the systems in the handover period prior to 1988; staff may need to be created 2 or 3 years prior to the building's occupation.<sup>35</sup>

3.2 Several broadcasting and televising organisations and individuals supported the establishment of a broadcasting unit. One witness, Mr C.H. Stokes, then Lecturer in Journalism, Department of Government, University of Queensland, while limiting his comments to radio broadcasting, suggested that the unit be established within the ABC, with the director responsible to this committee. Mr Stokes stressed the need to have professional broadcasters in charge, not a public relations officer from the public service.<sup>36</sup> The unit he proposed would have the maximum possible journalistic freedom.

3.3 The committee has balanced the benefits of open media access to proceedings as is occurring in the South Australian Parliament and in the House of Lords with the benefits of a

parliament-controlled signal available from a parliamentary unit. The existence of a house monitoring system suggests that it would be practical and economical to extend this signal to the media. There are also considerations of quality control and Member-confidence to support delivery to the media of a signal that is determined by an authority under the control of the parliament. The committee recommends that a unit be established and from the time of occupation by the Parliament of the new Parliament House the television signal produced by means of the house monitoring system be made available for transmission live or in recorded segments for use on news, documentary and news commentary programs.

3.4 The USA House of Representatives and the Canadian House of Commons both possess parliamentary broadcasting units, which they stress are essential, to ensure balance of presentation, to assist Member acceptance and to obviate the need for detailed regulations or articles of understood practices if outside agency control was permitted. The Australian National Parliament is in an advantageous position in comparison with the USA when televising began - proceedings of the US Senate were not then televised - and Canada, in that recommended arrangements for televising proceedings of the Australian Parliament encompass both Houses; Australia has the opportunity to establish a unit encompassing the proceedings of both Houses and to ensure uniformity of broadcast.

3.5 In considering functions to be performed by a unit of this kind, the committee believes that, due to the advance of technology, the advantages extend further. The unit, as well as being responsible for production of audio and vision signals of broadcast quality for transmission throughout the building by means of the house monitoring system and externally by making them available to the electronic media, could develop audio-visual packages and educational programs, perform Hansard, Library and

archival services and could possibly integrate in information retrieval duties. Consequently, the committee recommends that the unit be termed the "Parliamentary Audio Visual Unit" (PAVU).

3.6 Similar considerations of balanced presentation and advertising constraints would apply to the use of television excerpts as would apply to radio excerpts. The committee believes that the PAVU would be the most appropriate body to administer these guidelines, given in principle indications as to the guidelines by the committee.

3.7 A submission was received from the Department of the Parliamentary Reporting Staff suggesting that the sound and vision systems in the new Parliament House should be incorporated in one Parliamentary Broadcasting Unit. The Department saw the principal functions of a unit of this kind as:

- . origination of audio and video signals from the two chambers and all committee rooms;
- . provision of factual and descriptive - but not editorial - commentaries and presentations on the proceedings;
- . reticulation of such signals throughout the building on a live and replay basis;
- . making such signals available to authorised users, including the ABC and other media, on a live and replay basis and for use in full or in part, and
- . recording for reference and archival purposes.

The Department also saw the unit as being able to produce and distribute special programs, such as summaries of proceedings of the Houses and their committees, programs for special interest groups or for specific geographical areas and educational programs. Because of its experience and expertise in audio and video systems, but particularly audio systems, the relationship between the present printed Hansard record and any proposed 'electronic Hansard' record of Parliamentary proceedings, and the Department's knowledge and understanding of the Parliament and its requirements, the Department believed that it was the most appropriate body to have responsibility for the management and operation of the sound and vision systems in the new Parliament House.<sup>37</sup> The Department has 6 technical officers responsible for studio quality audio signals from committee rooms in Parliament House and external venues which would provide the nucleus operational staff. It does not possess camera operations or production staff.

3.8 The committee recognises the advantage of parliamentary control of the outputs of the unit, one principal advantage being to maintain the quality of the product and to sustain the confidence of Members of Parliament. However, the committee was also concerned to seek staffing arrangements that best ensured that the unit's personnel were experts with current state of the art knowledge. So as to resist professional atrophication, movement to and from the PAVU in relation to a progressive media environment would be a definite advantage. A secondment arrangement from a broadcasting organisation such as the ABC was considered. However, the committee concluded that the Houses of Parliament were being provided with the opportunity to establish a PAVU staffed by multi-skilled persons covering the wide range of functions which the unit might pursue. This would also enable individuals to exercise greater flexibility in career path and to incorporate in the required positions potential for individual professional growth and the acquisition of multiple skills. There was also the possibility to establish non-permanent positions.

Contractual employment for a fixed term (renewable) would be an acceptable solution. The ABC has offered assistance in the recruitment process (job specifications and person identification) and in providing personnel to occupy critical positions at critical times.

3.9 With decisions being made and systems being installed in the new Parliament House, the committee is aware of the need to treat the appointment of key elements of the unit with some urgency. The duties of the officer in charge of the unit should be identified immediately and a person appointed to the vacancy as a matter of priority. It did not prove possible during the course of the committee's inquiry to determine the staffing levels that would be necessary for the manning of a Unit performing the functions envisaged by the committee. Significantly high levels were indicated by Mr A. Cohen, ABC consultant to the Parliament House Construction Authority, to operate the house monitoring system (HMS) as a 'ballpark' figure.<sup>38</sup> In its submission to the committee, the Authority pointed to the HMS as involving a significant number of additional staff.<sup>39</sup> Despite this, the committee is mindful of the operation of the computerised system operating in Saskatchewan, Canada, which appears to perform most satisfactorily with a staff of 3. While conscious of the fact that the system at Regina operates with much smaller numbers of Members, is a unicameral parliament, as with all Canada's provincial legislatures, and does not operate within a building of the size as Australia's new Parliament House, the committee is aware that a product of high standard is possible without enormous staffing levels. However, the committee deliberately refrained from reaching conclusions on the staffing matter until the principle is determined. There should be no sudden increase in the levels of parliamentary bureaucracy to implement this recommendation. The committee recommends that the officer in charge of the Unit and other key organisational figures be appointed immediately so as to make the transition to the new Parliament House as smooth as possible.

3.10 The Parliament House Construction Authority submission to the committee stated:

'The sound and vision systems cannot be treated in isolation and the Authority considers that the Parliament needs to examine the likely administrative arrangements for the systems described in this submission in conjunction with the full range of other electronic services to be provided in the building. The inter-relationship between the sound and vision, communications, information and security systems and their infrastructure suggests that the most appropriate way to manage them may be to co-ordinate the administrative structures.'<sup>40</sup>

The committee notes the suggestion that the co-ordination of the administrative structures for the various elements be observed by the parliamentary departments where the primary nature of the elements necessitates their placement in separate areas.

3.11 Ms Baiba Berzins, President, and Mr Robert French, Member, of the Australian Society of Archivists, appeared before the committee urging that matters deemed to be of significance to legislators and/or the community be recorded and that selected tapes and films considered to be of long-term importance be retained as archives.<sup>41</sup> The Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act requires the ABC to sound record, when so directed, notable occurrences in the proceedings of parliament. The ABC has been given the initiative to choose occasions for recording, but it does not normally exercise this initiative. It will make a recording when so directed. The very limited sound recordings that have been made have occurred without any overriding policy or principle. A recording of a typical day's

proceedings in both the House of Representatives and the Senate has been lodged with the British Institute of Recorded Sound and various archival authorities in Australia.

3.12 The Canadian and USA legislatures vest archival functions in their broadcasting units. In the United Kingdom a parliamentary sound archive has been set up in the House of Lords Record Office (which is the repository of the records of the House of Lords and the House of Commons). The Parliamentary Sound Archive provides a reference service to Members of Parliament and limited public reference facilities, and the current practice appears to have been virtually total preservation of records.

3.13 The representatives of the Society of Archivists argued that the records of the broadcasts should be properly and adequately looked after and preserved as a national resource. Selection is necessary, and skill is necessary in the selection and storing of the material, and in describing and providing access to it.<sup>42</sup>



## CHAPTER 4

## LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 There are several legal considerations consequent upon adoption of several of the committee's recommendations. These mainly fall into the categories of parliamentary privilege and the law of defamation, actions other than defamation, copyright and revision of the Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act 1946.

Privilege and defamation

4.2 As has been explained earlier, Members of Parliament enjoy absolute privilege in respect of statements made as part of the actual proceedings in the House, a protection which extends to the Member when the House is being broadcast. This privilege derives from Article 9 of the UK Bill of Rights 1688 which provides that freedom of speech, and debates or proceedings in Parliament, ought not to be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of Parliament. Absolute statutory protection attaches to those persons authorised to broadcast or rebroadcast the proceedings by radio or, with respect to a joint sitting convened under section 57 of the Constitution, by radio or television. The Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act provides that no action or proceeding, civil or criminal, shall lie against any person for broadcasting or rebroadcasting any

portion of the proceedings of either House of the Parliament or of a (section 57) joint sitting. Similarly, Hansard and those who publish it are absolutely protected under the Parliamentary Papers Act. Hansard is, however, absolutely privileged only in its entirety; the circulation of a single speech, even complete in itself, is not protected by absolute privilege in the same way, but attracts qualified privilege only. Such qualified privilege only exists where there is absence of malice.

4.3 In the United Kingdom, matters of privilege and law drew close attention of the various select committees concerned with aspects of broadcasting parliament, particularly after the 1968 closed circuit experiment in the House of Lords. It should be kept in mind however that there is no Parliamentary Broadcasting Unit in the UK Parliament; recordings and transmissions are made by permission of the Houses rather than under their authority. A Joint Committee on the Publication of Proceedings in Parliament was appointed in 1969, and considered whether the existing qualified privilege, enjoyed by the media where there is no malice, should be made absolute. The committee's conclusion was that qualified privilege was sufficient unless a broadcasting unit was established under authority of the House, in which case absolute privilege should be conferred on the Unit. The Commons Committee on Sound Broadcasting pointed to the vulnerable position of broadcasters with respect to live broadcasting and recommended the conferring of absolute privilege on the broadcasters by means of legislation.

4.4 It appears that legislation would be required if absolute protection of radio and television stations and their employees were desired. The committee notes that clause 14 of the draft Unfair Publication Bill appended to the Report of the Law Reform Commission on UNFAIR PUBLICATION: Defamation and Privacy (1979)<sup>43</sup> provides that it is a defence to a defamation action that the publication of defamatory matter was made, inter alia,

in the course of the proceedings, or by the authority, of a parliament or in an official or authorised record or a true copy of the debates or proceedings of a parliament. Section 16 of the draft bill provides that it is a defence that the matter was published by the defendant without any adoption of the substance of the matter contained in a fair and accurate report of proceedings set out in clause 14. The committee also notes the Defamation Act 1958 (New South Wales) as the only express legislative provision made in relation to reports of proceedings of an Australian Parliament. Under the NSW Defamation Act it is lawful to publish in good faith for the information of the public a fair report of the proceedings of either House or a committee of the Commonwealth Parliament. The very lack of uniform legislation in Australia's defamation laws makes statutory protection highly desirable.

4.5 The committee believes that if, a particular agency or group of persons is required by either House to televise all or part of proceedings, it would be proper for that organisation or group to be provided with absolute protection in respect of any suit or prosecution for defamation arising out of their actions. This would be reasonable because the recipient of the 'order' would have no discretion as to what would be telecast. The committee therefore recommends that absolute protection be conferred by legislation on the Parliamentary Audio Visual Unit with respect to the radio and television signal provided to media organisations with respect to the continuous broadcast of proceedings of both Houses. The committee also recommends that legislation provide protection for radio and television broadcasting of proceedings of the Houses and their committees where the broadcast constitutes a fair and accurate report and where the broadcasting body does not adopt or endorse matter contained in the broadcast which might be considered actionable.

Actions other than defamation

4.6 In the United Kingdom shortly after the sound broadcasting experiment began, 4 Members of the House of Commons named in proceedings a witness in a secret trial whose anonymity was protected by a court order and referred to in reports as 'Colonel B'. Two magazines which published the identity were proceeded against by the Attorney-General for contempt of court. The broadcasting authorities originally published reporters' accounts of proceedings, then substituted excerpts from the House, identifying the witnesses. No action was taken against the broadcasters and the Committee of Privileges recommended subsequently that fair and accurate reports of proceedings should be qualifiedly protected for all purposes, not simply against actions for defamation. The Committee of Privileges also found that the 4 Members had offended the sub judice rule.

4.7 While the committee believes that proceedings in the Houses of Parliament should be available for reporting to all segments of the media, it is of the opinion that circumstances which might be regarded as abuses of the parliamentary system or attempts to circumvent the practices or conventions of the Houses should not be employed by the media. Should circumstances arise similar to those in the United Kingdom, the committee recommends that the material not be available for later televising or rebroadcast.

Copyright

4.8 In the United States of America legislation was considered to enable the House of Representatives to copyright its telecasts, which would impose conditions on the use and distribution of the telecasts, an important point in the USA where cable television is more cheaply distributed by satellite than by landline. The point of issue in the USA was whether the taxpayer owned the signal so no individual or corporation should be able to assert a property right.

Signature

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sale to recover costs only (not for profit)  
part of the Joint Committee on Sound  
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The purpose was to enable the Commons to  
non-broadcasting use of tapes.<sup>45</sup> Legislation  
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determining parliament's position in determining the broadcasting  
and non-broadcasting use of the signals. The important  
consideration is that of control. The committee therefore  
recommends that control of access to the sound and visions  
signals of proceedings be vested in the Presiding Officers, who  
would in the normal course of events, advise the committee of  
important developments and decisions in this regard.

Amendments to the Parliamentary Proceedings  
Broadcasting Act

4.11 Adoption of many of the committee's recommendations  
will involve amendment of the Parliamentary Proceedings  
Broadcasting Act. Technological advances have been significant  
since this Act, which came into operation in 1946, was drafted.  
The committee recommends that, if its recommendations lead to a  
review of the legislative basis on which the broadcasting of  
parliamentary proceedings occurs, the opportunity be taken to  
revise completely the Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act  
1946. The committee also recommends that it be involved in the  
pre-Parliamentary consideration process of any proposed  
amendments to the Act.

Frank Child  
3/6/86.

4.9 In the United Kingdom the matter was considered in association with commercial use of the record of proceedings. While copying tapes is permitted (sometimes on a large scale) for educational purposes, sale to recover costs only (not for profit) is permitted. The report of the Joint Committee on Sound Broadcasting in 1977 indicated that no copyright would rest in the 2 Houses.<sup>44</sup> The House of Commons Sound Broadcasting Committee in 1983 recommended legislation to vest copyright of the clean feed of proceedings in the House of Commons or an appropriate holder on its behalf. The purpose was to enable the Commons to charge royalties for non-broadcasting use of tapes.<sup>45</sup> Legislation has not as yet been introduced.

4.10 The question of copyright of the sound and picture feed of proceedings in the Australian context is important in determining parliament's position in determining the broadcasting and non-broadcasting use of the signals. The important consideration is that of control. The committee therefore recommends that control of access to the sound and visions signals of proceedings be vested in the Presiding Officers, who would in the normal course of events, advise the committee of important developments and decisions in this regard.

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3/6/86.

ENDNOTES

- 1 H.R. Deb. (2.5.84) 1704
- 2 Transcript of evidence p 40
- 3 Ibid, p 378
- 4 Ibid, p 138-9
- 5 Ibid, p 193
- 6 Ibid, p 586
- 7 Ibid, p 476-7
- 8 Ibid, p 464-5
- 9 Ibid, p 454
- 10 Ibid, p 223
- 11 Ibid, p 496
- 12 Ibid, p 481-2
- 13 Ibid, p 498
- 14 Ibid, p 234
- 15 H.R. Deb. (5.7.46) p 2312
- 16 Ibid, (17.7.46) p 2616
- 17 PP 134 (1978)
- 18 Ibid, pp 553-5
- 19 Transcript of evidence p 276
- 20 Ibid, pp 416-7
- 21 Ibid, pp 466-7
- 22 Ibid, pp 545-6
- 23 PP 1975/
- 24 VP 1985/56
- 25 VP 1985/774

- 26 Transcript of evidence pp 225-7  
27 Ibid, pp 464-5  
28 Ibid, p 487  
29 Ibid, pp 251-3  
30 PP 274/1982  
31 PP 32/1970  
32 Transcript of evidence p 13  
33 Ibid, pp 8 and 9.  
34 PP 61 (1974) p 5  
35 Transcript of evidence p 11  
36 Ibid, p 4  
37 Ibid, pp 511-3  
38 Ibid, p 239  
39 Ibid, p 11  
40 Ibid  
41 Ibid, p 399  
42 Ibid, pp 404-5



## APPENDIX 1

## INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS WHO MADE SUBMISSIONS

<u>Submission No.</u>	<u>Name of Person(s)/Organisation</u>
1.	Submission received from Mr J. David Parmiter, 4 Camelia Lane, Moggill, Queensland 4070 dated 26 September 1983.
2.	Submission received from Dr Spiro Moraitis, OBE, MB, BS., 52 Chapel Street, St. Kilda, Victoria 3182 dated 27 September 1983.
3.	Submission received from Mrs C. Radcliffe, 25 Coyne Street, Leichhardt, Queensland 4305 dated 29 September 1983.
4.	Submission received from Mr Stephen E. Burdett, 47 5th Avenue, Palm Beach, Gold Coast, Queensland 4221 dated 29 September 1983.
5.	Submission received from Mr Graeme Wells, 37 Carramar Drive, Karingal, Frankston, Victoria 3199 dated 30 September 1983.
6.	Submission received from Ms Nora Jones, 59 Iona Terrace, Taringa, Queensland 4068 dated 30 September 1983.
7.	Submission received from Mr Peter Burns, 6 Kylie Court, Murray, Queensland 4814 dated 1 October 1983.
8.	Submission received from Mr Peter Wicks, 66 Debra Street, Toowoomba, Queensland, 4350 dated 10 October 1983.
9.	Submission received from the Hon John Howard, MP, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600 dated 13 October 1983.
10.	Submission received from Mr J. Corbould, Corbould Gallery, 88 Mains Road, Sunnybank, Qld 4109 undated.
11.	Submission received from Mr John Dooley, 1520 Sturt Street, Ballarat, Victoria 3350 dated 15 October 1983.

12. Submission received from Mr R.H. Wickens, 6 Sandpiper Street, Inala, Queensland 4077 dated 17 October 1983.
13. Submission received from Mr A.C. Asbury, ABC News, GPO Box 9994, Brisbane, Queensland 4001 undated.
14. Submission received from Senator the Hon Donald L. Chipp, Leader of the Australian Democrats, The Senate, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600 dated 21 October 1983.
15. Submission received from Mr Martin Harris, PO Box 545, Sandy Bay, Tasmania 7005 dated 22 October 1983.
16. Submission received from Mrs E.M. Buchanan, 14 Crestway Street, Keperra, Queensland 4054 dated 24 October 1983.
17. Submission received from Mr Len Morrison, 108 Edinburgh Street, Flemington, Victoria 3031 undated.
18. Submission received from Mrs Gwen Rowe, 'Saltbush Corner', White Cliffs, New South Wales 2836 dated 13 October 1983.
19. Submission received from Mr L.W. Male, 14 Holdway Street, Kenmore, Queensland 4069 dated 25 October 1983.
20. Submission received from Mr Max Thorburn, Managing Director, Mildura News Group Pty. Ltd., PO Box 2181, Mildura, Victoria 3500 undated.
21. Unsigned submission received from E.J.L., C/- General Post Office, Brisbane, Queensland 4000 dated 27 October 1983.
22. Submission received from Mr D. Cuthbert, 28 Hiern Road, Blackman's Bay, Tasmania 7152 undated.
23. Submission received from Senator the Hon. A.T. Gietzelt, Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600 dated 2 November 1983.
24. Submission received from Mr Charles H. Stokes, Lecturer in Journalism, University of Queensland, St Lucia, Queensland 4067 dated 11 November 1983.
25. Submission received from Baiba Berzins, President, Australian Society of Archivists Incorporated, PO Box 83, O'Connor, ACT 2601 dated 15 November 1983.
26. Submission received from Mr Peter Hume, 21 Dickson Street, West Strathfield, New South Wales 2140 undated.

27. Submission received from The Hon. Chris Hurford, MP, Minister for Housing and Construction, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600 dated 7 December 1983.
28. Submission received from Mr Ivan G. Trembath, 49 Colin Road, South Oakleigh, Victoria 3167 dated 10 February 1984.
29. Submission received from the Mr J.M. Rushton, Deputy Federal Director, Federation of Australian Radio Broadcasters, PO Box 294, Milsons Point, New South Wales 2061 dated February 1984.
30. Submission received from Mr J.D. Fowler, Assistant Secretary, External Relations, Parliament House Construction Authority, PO Box 100, Manuka, ACT 2603 dated 29 February 1984.
31. Submission received from Mr D.M. Blake, VRD, Clerk of the House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600 dated 11 May 1984.
32. Submission received from Mr A.W. Thompson, Director, Member Services, Federation of Australian Commercial Television Stations, 13th Floor, 447 Kent Street, Sydney, New South Wales 2000 dated 5 March 1984.
33. Submission received from Mr Tony Townsend, Group Co-ordinator, Macquarie Group of Radio Stations, GPO Box 4290, Sydney, New South Wales 2001 received 30 March 1984.
34. Submission received from Mr Geoffrey Whitehead, Managing Director, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 145-153 Elizabeth Street, Sydney, New South Wales 2000 dated April 1984.
35. Submission received from Mr Deane Wells, MP, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600 dated 14 May 1984.
36. Submission received from the Hon. John Dawkins, MP, Minister for Finance, Parliament House dated 10 November 1983.
37. Submission received from Mr D.N. Sligar, Assistant Secretary, Secretariat Branch, Department of Science and Technology, PO Box 65, Belconnen, ACT 1616 dated 30 May 1984

38. Submission received from Mr R.E. Powell, Special Broadcasting Service, 5 Elizabeth Street, Sydney, New South Wales 2000 dated May 1984.
39. Submission received from Mr R.J. Rowe, Director, Richard J. Rowe & associates, Communications Consultants, 2/225 Miller Street, North Sydney, NSW 2060 dated 28 September 1983.
40. Submission received from The Department of the Parliamentary Reporting Staff, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600 dated August 1984.
41. Submission received from Mr A.R. Cumming Thom, Clerk of the Senate, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600 dated 13 August 1984.

## JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE BROADCASTING OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS

CONDITIONS FOR GRANTING ACCESS  
TO PROCEEDINGS OF THE SENATE AND THE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE  
PURPOSE OF RECORDING AND BROADCASTING  
EXCERPTS

1. Excerpts may be taken from the proceedings of each House (whether or not the proceedings are being continuously broadcast) commencing at the time fixed for the meeting of the House until the adjournment of that House until the next sitting.
2. Excerpts shall be recorded from the audio signal of proceedings transmitted by the house monitoring system throughout Parliament House, Canberra.
3. Excerpts are not to be used for the purposes of satire or ridicule.
4. Excerpts shall not be used for the purposes of political party advertising or in election campaigns.
5. Fairness and accuracy and a general overall balance should be observed.
- 5A. Excerpts shall not be available from a portion of a debate or proceedings in either House which is subsequently withdrawn.
6. Excerpts must be placed in context. Commentators should identify Senators and Members at least by name.
7. Unusual events in the galleries should not be given undue emphasis.
8. Qualified privilege only shall apply to broadcasters in the use of excerpts.

9. The instructions of the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives or their delegated representatives on the use of recorded excerpts, shall be observed at all times.
10. Where the excerpts are used on commercial networks, the station should try to ensure that advertising before and after excerpts is of an appropriate nature.
11. Where the audio excerpts of proceedings are used on television, their use may be that of audio over still frames, or overlay material.
12. Access to proceedings for the purpose of recording excerpts shall be on the basis of an undertaking to observe these guidelines.

SUMMARY OF EXCERPTS OF PROCEEDINGS RECORDED BY  
ABC AND TRANSMITTED TO LOCAL STATIONS

11.9.85-12.11.85

PARTY	SENATE		HOUSE		HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
	No. of Excerpts	Average Time (Seconds)	No. of Excerpts	Average Time (Seconds)	No. of Excerpts	Average Time (Seconds)
ALP EXECUTIVE BACKBENCH	65 6	29 34	18 28		47 51	
LP EXECUTIVE BACKBENCH	18 20	30 31	5 19		36 52	
NP EXECUTIVE BACKBENCH	7 4	- 28	10 18		59 41	
A.D.	12	27	-		-	
OTHER	1	27	-		-	

NOTES

1. Summary is of excerpts recorded and sent "down the line", not necessarily of receiving station's usage.
2. "Executive" includes Presiding Officers or their deputies on a subject relating to the Parliament.
3. "Backbench" includes Party Whips.

USE OF EXCERPTS OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS  
MELBOURNE TELEVISION AND RADIO STATIONS 18 - 29 NOVEMBER 1985

STATION	EXCERPTS USED AND THEIR DURATION IN SECONDS	COMMENTS FROM STATION
<u>TELEVISION</u>		
ATV 10	19/11: Mr J.J. Brown (15") 21/11: Mr Hawke (9") 25/11: Mr Hayden (14") 25/11: Mr Howard (9")	-
GTV 9	20/11: Mr Keating (10") 26/11: Dr Jenkins (5")	-
HSV 7	19/11: Mr J.J. Brown (10") 22/11: Mr Chynoweth (47") 26/11: Dr Jenkins (8")	-
<u>RADIO</u>		
3AK	19/11: Mr J.J. Brown	-
3AW	25/11: Mr Hawke (32")  25/11: Mr Willis (30") 28/11: Mr Connolly (40")	Participated in second week only.  Fewer than usual were used.
3MP	NIL	Expect to use in future
3KZ	19/11: Mr Hawke (40") 20/11: Mr Hawke on tax reform (32")  20/11: Mr Keating (35") 20/11: MR Haydon (42") 22/11: Mr Keating (35")	From 2UE News feed line.
3UZ	NIL	Station has policy of not using excerpts from any source because they interrupt flow of news.
3DB	NIL	-
3XY	NIL	-
3FOX	18/11: Mr Hawke (30") 20/11: Mr Hayden (23") 21/11: Mr Carlton (25") 21/11: Mr Howard (34") 27/11: Mr Young (20") 28/11: Mr Hayden (20")	-
3EON	As for 3AW above	New services were taken from 3AW's Macquarie News Service until 30/11/85.