

How to make a submission to a Senate Committee inquiry

1. A submission may be as short or as long as you like. It may contain facts, opinions, arguments or recommendations. It may cover all the points in the terms of reference or only some of them, depending on what interests you. Supporting documents may be attached.
2. There is no prescribed format. However, to make submissions most useful we suggest:
 - the terms of reference of the inquiry can be a good guide to structuring a submission;
 - if the submission is longer than a few pages, please include a summary at the front.
3. If possible please provide submissions on computer disk (include a hard copy) or by e-mail. Otherwise please type or write clearly in black ink on A4 paper. We can read all documents created on Apple Mac and IBM PCs. The preferred format is Microsoft Word 97.
4. Make sure you sign the submission. E-mailed submissions must include your name, phone number and postal address so we can verify them. If it is the submission of an organisation, say so clearly. Show the signatory's position and say at what level the submission was authorised.
5. Submissions belong to the Committee and are confidential until the Committee releases them. You must not disclose your submission to others without the Committee's permission. The Committee normally releases submissions at some stage during the inquiry and you may publicise your submission after that. If you disclose your submission without the Committee's permission, it is not protected by Parliamentary Privilege (see below).
6. If you want your submission to be kept confidential, please say so clearly at the top or in a covering note. Say why you want it to be kept confidential. If you want part of the submission to be confidential, please put that part on a separate page(s). The Committee will sympathetically consider requests for confidentiality, but cannot make promises in advance. If you have concerns about confidentiality, please discuss with the Committee secretary before you make the submission.
7. If your submission 'reflects adversely' on another person (for example, accusing them of lying or corrupt behaviour), the Committee will send the comment to the other person so they can reply. This applies even if the Committee agrees to keep your submission confidential.
8. Making a submission is protected by Parliamentary Privilege. It is an offence for anyone to try to stop you from making a submission by threats or intimidation. It is an offence for anyone to harass you or discriminate against you because you have made a submission. The content of the submission is also protected but only after the Committee has accepted it. This means that what you say in the submission, once the Committee has accepted it, cannot be used in court against you or anyone else. More information is available in another brochure, entitled 'Procedures to be observed by Senate Committees for the protection of witnesses'.
9. A committee may reject a submission that is not relevant to its inquiry. In that case the content of the submission is not protected by Parliamentary Privilege.
10. If you make a submission, the Committee may invite you to give evidence at a public hearing.
11. For more information contact the Senior Clerk of Committees, phone (02) 6277 3506, fax: (02) 6277 3899, em: seniorclerk.committees.sen@aph.gov.au or the relevant Committee Secretary.

Legislative and General Purpose Standing Committees

	Phone	Fax
Community Affairs (References Committee & Legislation Committee) www.aph.gov.au/senate_ca	(02) 6277 3515	(02) 6277 5829
Economics (References Committee & Legislation Committee) www.aph.gov.au/senate_economics	(02) 6277 3540	(02) 6277 5719
Employment, Workplace Relations and Education (References Committee & Legislation Committee) www.aph.gov.au/senate_employment	(02) 6277 3520	(02) 6277 5706
Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (References Committee & Legislation Committee) www.aph.gov.au/senate_environment www.aph.gov.au/senate_communications	(02) 6277 3526	(02) 6277 5818
Finance and Public Administration (References Committee & Legislation Committee) www.aph.gov.au/senate_fpa	(02) 6277 3530	(02) 6277 5809
Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (References Committee & Legislation Committee) www.aph.gov.au/senate_fact	(02) 6277 3535	(02) 6277 5818
Legal and Constitutional (References Committee & Legislation Committee) www.aph.gov.au/senate_legal	(02) 6277 3562	(02) 6277 5794
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport (References Committee & Legislation Committee) www.aph.gov.au/senate_rrat	(02) 6277 3510	(02) 6277 5811
Joint Committees		
Corporations and Financial Services www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/corporations_ctte/index.htm	(02) 6277 3581	(02) 6277 5719
National Crime Authority www.aph.gov.au/nca	(02) 6277 3567	(02) 6277 5866
Native Title and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Fund www.aph.gov.au/native_title	(02) 6277 3598	(02) 6277 5866
Select Committees (appointed from time to time)		
General Committee Inquiries seniorclerk.committees.sen@aph.gov.au	(02) 6277 3555	(02) 6277 3899