

How to make a submission to a Senate or Joint Committee inquiry

General Information

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; and
 - submissions published on the Senate website will be converted to *pdf* format and, therefore, may have a different appearance to the document that was submitted. Sensitive material and confidential information should not be sent via email because it is not a secure medium.
3. The committees prefer electronic submissions uploaded via the [Senate online system](#). Otherwise submissions can be emailed or if posting please type or write clearly in black ink on A4 paper. The preferred format for electronic submissions is Microsoft Word but all submissions are considered regardless of their format or medium.
4. The Senate prefers the committee process to be as transparent as possible. The majority of submissions to Senate or Joint committees are published on the internet by a decision of the relevant committee. Committees publish the name of the person making the submission but they take care not to publish the person's contact details on the world wide web. If you have a concern about having your name published on the internet or if you wish to make a confidential submission, you must make this clear from the start.
5. If you intend to request that your submission be considered on a confidential basis you must ensure that the actual submission document or documents that you create do not contain your contact details and that you have removed document metadata properties. 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.
6. If you are making a submission by post and 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). As stated above, 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 your postal submission.

Making a submission using the online submission system or via post

- a) The majority of inquiries are now accepting submissions via the [Senate online system](#). The online submission site is a secure site and is suitable for uploading sensitive and confidential material.
 - b) Make sure you sign written submissions. 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.
7. Inquiries from hearing and speech impaired people should be directed to the Parliament House TTY number (02) 6277 7799. Adobe also provides tools for the blind and visually impaired to access PDF documents. These tools are available at: <http://access.adobe.com/>. If you require any special arrangements in order to enable you to participate in a committee inquiry, please contact the committee secretary.

8. A submission to a committee becomes a committee document, and must not be disclosed to any other person until it has been released ('published') by the committee. Unless you have requested that the submission remain confidential, it is normally published after the committee has received and examined it and authorised its publication. Once a committee has authorised the release of a submission, subsequent publication of it is protected by parliamentary privilege (see below). The content of a submission may be published in another form or for another purpose before the submission is released by the committee, but this publication will not be protected by parliamentary privilege.
9. 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.
10. 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'.
11. 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.
12. If you make a submission, the committee may invite you to give evidence at a public hearing.

For more information contact the Senior Clerk of Committees, phone: (02) 6277 3506, fax: (02) 6277 3899, email: seniorclerk.committees.sen@aph.gov.au or contact the relevant committee secretary.

<i>Legislative and General Purpose Standing Committees</i>	<i>Phone</i>	<i>Fax</i>
Community Affairs – Standing Committee www.aph.gov.au/senate_ca	(02) 6277 3515	(02) 6277 5829
Economics – Standing Committee www.aph.gov.au/senate_economics	(02) 6277 3540	(02) 6277 5719
Education, Employment and Workplace Relations – Standing Committee www.aph.gov.au/senate_eewr	(02) 6277 3520	(02) 6277 5706
Environment and Communications – Standing Committee www.aph.gov.au/senate_ec	(02) 6277 3526	(02) 6277 5818
Finance and Public Administration – Standing Committee www.aph.gov.au/senate_fpa	(02) 6277 3530	(02) 6277 5809
Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade – Standing Committee www.aph.gov.au/senate_fadt	(02) 6277 3535	(02) 6277 5818
Legal and Constitutional Affairs – Standing Committee www.aph.gov.au/senate_legalcon	(02) 6277 3560	(02) 6277 5794
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport – Standing Committee www.aph.gov.au/senate_rrat	(02) 6277 3511	(02) 6277 5811
<i>Joint Committees</i>		
Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity www.aph.gov.au/joint_aclei	(02) 6277 3419	(02) 6277 5809
Corporations and Financial Services www.aph.gov.au/joint_corporations	(02) 6277 3583	(02) 6277 5719

Human Rights www.aph.gov.au/joint_humanrights	(02) 6277 3823	(02) 6277 5767
Law Enforcement (formerly Australian Crime Commission) www.aph.gov.au/joint_le	(02) 6277 3419	(02) 6277 5809
Select Committees (appointed from time to time)	Phone	Fax
Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (Joint Select) www.aph.gov.au/jscatsi	(02) 6277 3540	(02) 6277 5719
Gambling Reform (Joint Select) www.aph.gov.au/senate_gambling_reform	(02) 6277 3433	(02) 6277 5952
General Committee Inquiries: seniorclerk.committees.sen@aph.gov.au	(02) 6277 3555	(02) 6277 3899