



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

# Procedural Digest

## Fifty-eighth Parliament, First Session

No. 4/2025: 27 May – 5 June 2025

*This document provides a summary of significant procedural events and precedents in the Legislative Assembly. It is produced at the end of each sitting period. Where applicable the relevant Standing Orders are noted.*

May 2025				
M	T	W	T	F
26	27	28	29	30
June 2025				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6

## Chamber

### The Hunter and Mid North Coast Floods

When the House resumed sitting on 27 May it did so after heavy rainfall had caused widespread and severe flooding across the Hunter and Mid North Coast regions of New South Wales. That week in the chamber, members across the political spectrum joined in acknowledging the significant impact on those communities and in commending the work of frontline responders.

Tuesday 27 May commenced with the Speaker making a statement acknowledging '...all those who have been affected by the floods, the frontline service workers, our incredible volunteer army—who are still working today—and all of the local members who are working with their communities'. During Question Time, which followed shortly afterwards, eight of the 14 questions asked of the Government were related to the floods, including all five Opposition questions. Unusually for Question Time in the Assembly, there were no points of order taken and no members were removed for disorderly conduct.

The Public Interest Debate on 27 May was moved by the Minister for Emergency Services, the Hon. Jihad Dib and was entitled 'Hunter and Mid North Coast flooding emergency'. The debate reflected the bipartisan concern over the impacts and approbation for the responders. Nine other members contributed to the debate, with three of these members speaking by leave of the House. The motion was unanimously supported, being agreed to on the voices without amendment.

On Thursday 29 May 2025, the House, through a resolution agreed to on the voices the day before, significantly changed its routine of business to move Question Time from 11.00am to 3.00pm. This allowed the Premier to travel to the flood affected areas and return in time to answer questions without notice.

*Votes and Proceedings:* 27/05/25, p. 1244; 28/05/25, pp. 1249 – 1250; 29/05/25, pp. 1263 – 1264

*Hansard (Proof):* 27/05/25, pp. 1, 35 – 43; 28/05/25, p. 20; 29/06/25, pp. 37 – 49

Standing Orders 97 (Routine of Business)



### **Amendment to Sessional Order 97 to include a ten-minute pause before Question Time on Wednesdays and Thursdays**

On Wednesday 28 May, the House resolved to amend Sessional Order 97 to require the Speaker to leave the Chair at 10.50am and to resume the Chair at 11.00am for Question Time on Wednesdays and Thursdays. In other words, to implement a ten-minute break in proceedings prior to Question Time. To alert members to this ten-minute pause, the bells will ring for 20 seconds once the Speaker leaves the Chair.

Prior to this change, Question Time commenced directly after Government Business on Wednesdays and after General Business Orders of the Day for Bills on Thursdays, with the majority of members of the Assembly entering the chamber during debate.

The Leader of the House, the Hon. Ron Hoenig, who moved the motion, commented on the reasoning behind the change:

'It has been unworkable trying to start question time or go into question time whilst the business of the House continues right up to that point. I think 10 minutes is appropriate for the House to settle in order for question time to commence on time at 11 o'clock on Wednesday and Thursday.'

This change will apply to both the regular Routine of Business and the Supplementary Friday sitting week schedule. Updated versions of the [Sessional Orders](#) and the [Routine of Business schedules](#) are available on the Parliament website.

*Votes and Proceedings:* 28/05/2025, p. 1250

*Hansard (Proof):* 28/05/2025, p. 21

Standing Orders 97 (Routine of Business), 142 (Moving motions) and 365 (Suspension of Standing Orders)

## **Committees**

### **Matter of privilege not suddenly arising referred to the Parliamentary Privileges and Ethics Committee**

On 29 May 2025, the Leader of the House, Mr Hoenig, on behalf of the Premier, the Hon. Chris Minns moved, pursuant to Standing Order 92, that a matter of privilege not suddenly arising be referred to the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics (the Ethics Committee) for inquiry and report.

The Committee will be reporting on the implication for the exclusive cognisance of the Assembly raised by the Legislative Council's Select Committee on the Relationship Between the Dural Caravan Incident and Parliamentary Debates on Legislation (the Select Committee), and other related matters.

As noted in [Procedural Digest No.1/2025](#), the Crimes Amendment (Places of Worship) Bill 2025, the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Racial and Religious Hatred) Bill 2025, and the Crimes Amendment (Inciting Racial Hatred) Bill 2025 passed both Houses on 20 and 21 February 2025 following a series of antisemitic attacks against the backdrop of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Gaza. One incident involved 'an explosives-laden caravan' discovered in January at Dural. While giving evidence at Budget Estimates on 12 March 2025, the Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force, David Hudson APM gave evidence that police had ruled out the Dural Caravan Incident as a legitimate terrorist threat on 21 February 2025.

During Question Time on 18 March 2025, the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Mark Speakman questioned the Premier on when he was first briefed that the Dural Caravan Incident could be a 'fake terrorism plot'. The Premier



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responded that 'as we have said many times in the media over the past few weeks, we were briefed early on that the incident could be something other than terrorism, as it is classically defined'.

The Council's Select Committee was established by resolution of that House on 19 March 2025. The Select Committee was established to inquire into the relationship between the Dural Caravan Incident and parliamentary debates on legislation and in particular, inter alia, any references to the incident in briefing materials prepared for the development, introduction and debate on the Crimes Amendment (Places of Worship) Bill 2025, the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Racial and Religious Hatred) Bill 2025, and the Crimes Amendment (Inciting Racial Hatred) Bill 2025.

The Select Committee held its first hearing on 7 April 2025 at which the Commissioner and two Deputy Commissioners of the NSW Police Force gave evidence. In mid-April, the Premier, Attorney General, the Hon. Michael Daley, and the Hon. Yasmin Catley, all declined the Select Committee's invitation to appear at a hearing.

On 15 May, the Premier wrote to the Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 92(1), advising that the Government intended to introduce at the earliest available opportunity a motion to refer the Select Committee's terms of reference to the Ethics Committee. The letter stated that the terms of reference of the Select Committee raised concerns about 'whether any parliamentary privilege of the Assembly may be infringed' and 'the observance of the principle of comity and the relationship between the two Houses'.

In accordance with Standing Order 92(2), the Speaker responded to the Premier in writing on 16 May 2025 advising that a motion to refer the matter to the Ethics Committee would take precedence under the Standing Orders. Notice of the motion was given on 28 May 2025, and scheduled to be considered by the House the following day.

On Friday 16 May, the Chiefs of Staff for the Premier, the Attorney General and the Minister for Police and Counter Terrorism all declined, in writing, the invitations of the Select Committee to attend and give evidence at the second hearing of the inquiry on 22 May 2025. However, the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of the Premier's Department and the Secretary of The Cabinet Office did attend and give evidence at the hearing.

On the evening of 28 May 2025, the Council agreed to amend the Select Committee's terms of reference to remove any reference to the Assembly and to confine the inquiry to the passage of the bills through the Council only. However, in moving these amendments the Chair of the Select Committee stated that the amendments were being moved 'simply to facilitate the work of the committee to ensure reluctant witnesses appear before it' and he strongly asserted 'that there is nothing in the current terms of reference that necessitates these amendments'.

On 29 May the Assembly agreed to refer the matter to the Ethics Committee. During debate on the motion, it was argued by the Leader of Opposition Business that change in the Select Committee's terms of reference the night before meant that circumstances no longer gave rise to a matter of privilege. In contrast, the Leader of the House highlighted the comments of the Chair of the Select Committee regarding his assertion that the Council 'is absolutely entitled to consider statements by Ministers in the other House'. The debate was also notable for the fact that the Speaker made a contribution to the debate from the Chair. The Speaker noted that while he would not normally speak from the Chair on such a matter, that in this case 'the role of the Speaker in this situation has been invoked in the other place.' The motion was agreed to on division (47–27) with the Government and nine members of the crossbench voting in favour and members of the Opposition voting against the motion.

*Votes and Proceedings:* 29/05/2025, p. 1258; 18/03/2025, p. 1106 –1107

*Hansard (Proof):* 29/05/2025, p. 2; 18/03/2025, p. 2–3



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*Hansard (Proof) LC:* 19/03/2025, p. 46; 28/05/2025, p. 75  
Standing Order 92 (Matters of privilege not suddenly arising)

### **Health Services Amendment (Splitting of the Murrumbidgee Health District) Bill referred to Committee**

On 29 May, the House resolved to refer a second bill proposing changes to a Local Health District to a committee. The Health Services Amendment (Splitting of the Murrumbidgee Health District) Bill was introduced to the Assembly on 27 March 2025 by the independent Member for Murray, Mrs Helen Dalton. The purpose of the Bill is to split the Murrumbidgee Local Health District into two, creating a new Western Riverina Local Health District.

During the second reading debate, the Member for Coffs Harbour, Mr Gurmeh Singh, moved an amendment to the second reading question, pursuant to Standing Order 198, to refer the Bill to the Committee on Community Services for inquiry and report. The question of the referral was put at the conclusion of the second reading debate, after all Members had an opportunity to contribute, and after Mrs Dalton's reply. The House agreed to the motion on the voices.

This follows the referral of a similar bill to the same committee earlier this year. As noted in [Procedural Digest No. 1/2025](#), the Health Services Amendment (Splitting of the Hunter New England Health District) Bill 2025, introduced by the independent Member for Barwon, Mr Roy Butler, was also referred to the Committee on Community Services. However, on that occasion, the House suspended Standing and Sessional Orders to limit contributions to the debate to one member of the Government and one member of the Opposition, with Mr Butler giving his reply speech before the referral was agreed to.

Both bills are set to lapse if not passed before 14 August 2025.

*Votes and Proceedings:* 20/2/2025, pp. 1093–109 and 29/5/25, pp. 1259–1260

*Hansard (Proof):* 20/2/2025, pp. 1–7 and 29/5/25, pp. 12–25

Standing Order 198 (Amendment – referral to committee)

## **Bills**

### **Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill**

The Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 (the Bill) was introduced on 27 May by the Minister for Industrial Relations, the Hon. Sophie Cotsis. The Bill, which aims to amend workers compensation legislation to implement changes to liability and entitlements for psychological injuries, had been reported widely in the media as a significant reform to the New South Wales workers compensation scheme.

The second reading of the Bill was debated on Tuesday 3 June with 30 members in addition to the Minister contributing to debate. The House considered 46 amendments to the Bill. Thirty-three of these were circulated by Ms Eleni Petinos for the Opposition, three by Ms Jenny Leong for the Greens and nine by independent member Mr Alex Greenwich. Independent member Mr Roy Butler also circulated an amendment to Mr Greenwich's amendment number 8.

Consideration in detail commenced at 5.52pm on 3 June and continued until 11.40pm that evening, with many amendments being considered in globo with the leave of the House. The House agreed, on the voices, to all nine of Mr Greenwich's amendments, as well as Mr Butler's amendment to an amendment. The House did not agree to



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any of the Opposition or Greens amendments, with a total of nine divisions being called during consideration in detail, and one further division called on the third reading of the Bill.

The Bill was forwarded to the Council for concurrence. However, rather than debate the Bill, the Council instead resolved to refer it to its Public Accountability and Works Committee with the second reading debate to be set down on the tabling of that Committee's report.

*Votes and Proceedings*: 27/5/2025, p.1243; 3/6/2025, pp. 1273–1287.

*Hansard (Proof)*: 3/6/2025, pp. 16–38, 46–99.

