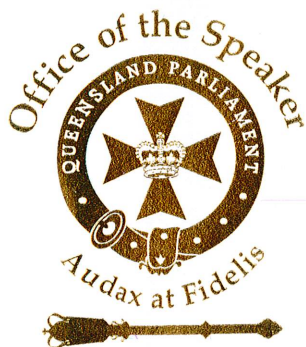


INQUIRY INTO THE RULES FOR QUESTIONS

Organisation: Queensland Legislative Assembly
Name: Hon Peter Wellington
Date received: 23 January 2017



Your Ref:

Our Ref: 8.1.25

18 January 2017

The Honourable Don Harwin MLC
 President
 Legislative Council
 Parliament House
 Macquarie Street
 SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr President

Thank you for your letter of 24 November 2016, inviting a submission to the Procedure Committee's inquiry into the rules for questions and inquiry into the rules for notices of motions.

Inquiry into the rules for questions

The Legislative Assembly of Queensland has not considered similar variations to the rules for questions in recent time. The Legislative Assembly of Queensland's Sessional Orders provide an hour for question time each sitting day. Queensland has a similar rule for answers, in that, answers must be relevant to the question. Additionally, in answering a question, a Minister or member shall not debate the subject to which it refers (Standing Order 118). The rules apply to both questions with and without notice.

Inquiry into the rules for notices of motions

Since August 2004, the Legislative Assembly of Queensland's Standing Rules and Orders have provided rules governing the content and length of notices of motions. The Standing Orders also restrict the number of notices a member may give until other members have had an opportunity to give notice of a motion. Prior to the current Standing Orders there were occasions where motions were very lengthy.

Standing Order 70 provides that a notice of motion is not to contain unbecoming expressions, exceed 250 words in length, or offend against any standing order or practice of the House. The Speaker may amend a notice of motion that offends this rule or order that it not be published. The House may also order that a notice of motion that offends the rule be expunged from the Notice Paper. If a notice of motion contains unrelated matters the Speaker may instruct the Clerk to divide the notice into two or more notices.

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Standing Order 66 provides, with the exception of Ministers, a member shall be restricted to giving one notice of motion until other members each have had an opportunity of giving one notice of motion.

The Legislative Assembly of Queensland's Sessional Orders provide regular mechanisms through which members can place matters they believe to be of importance on the parliamentary record.

Private members' motions have been a feature of the Assembly's sessional orders since 1996. From the commencement of this Parliament additional time has been allocated for private members' motions each sitting day.

A notice of private members' motion for debate is stated in the House and delivered to the Clerk. In practice, the majority of notices of motion have been given by non-government members. The debate is scheduled between 6.00pm and 6.30pm for a maximum of 30 minutes. Members may speak for a maximum of 5 minutes and amendments can be moved to the motion. The mover of the motion is not entitled to a reply.

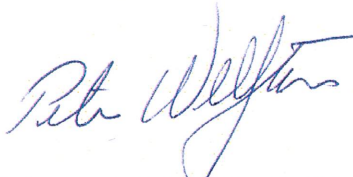
A range of additional mechanisms also exist for members to address broad matters. For example:

- Private Members' Statements: Each sitting day (total time 15 minutes, 5 members [3 minutes each, Leader of the Opposition or nominee has first call]).
 - Additional private members' statements are also allocated on Thursdays between 2.30pm and 3.00pm. The total time is 30 minutes and 10 members are allocated 3 minutes each.
- Matters of Public Interest: On Tuesdays of each sitting week one hour is set aside (between 12.00pm and 1.00pm) for members to make statements. The Leader of the Opposition or nominee is allocated 10 minutes and other members are allocated 5 minutes. There is no question before the House and there are no specific rules governing the content of matters of public interest.

Similar to your jurisdiction, members may also raise matters during the adjournment debate. The adjournment debate is 30 minutes and each member can speak for 3 minutes.

I trust this information is useful for your committee's inquiries. I wish you the best for the progress of the committee's inquiries and await the committee's report with interest.

Yours sincerely



HON PETER WELLINGTON MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly