



Review of Standing Orders 2026

REPORT OF THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

September 2026



NEW ZEALAND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



New Zealand House of Representatives
Te Whare Māngai o Aotearoa

Standing Orders Committee

Komiti Whiriwhiri Whakataunga Tū Roa

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Review of Standing Orders 2026

Presented to the House of Representatives
by Rt Hon Gerry Brownlee, Chairperson

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Review of Standing Orders 2026

Summary of recommendations

The Standing Orders Committee has conducted the Review of Standing Orders 2026 and makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation to the House

- We recommend that the House adopt the amendments to the Standing Orders set out in Appendix A of this report, with effect from the day after the dissolution or expiration of the present Parliament.

Recommendation to the next Business Committee

- We recommend that the next Business Committee consider arranging at least one special debate on the topic of foreign affairs each year.

Recommendation to the next Standing Orders Committee

- We recommend that the Standing Orders Committee in the next term of Parliament receive a briefing on the use of AI in summarising submissions.

Recommendation to the Government

- We recommend that the Government update the guidance that the Minister of Foreign Affairs uses to decide which bilateral treaties are presented to the House, to state that bilateral treaties that the Government intends to implement through legislation should be presented.

Recommendation to the Speaker

- We recommend that the Speaker refer a question of privilege to the Privileges Committee about the development of a framework for reaching recommendations for punishing members for contempt, including both a process that may be followed and factors that may be considered.

Introduction

The House of Representatives has the great responsibility of determining its own rules and procedures.

The Standing Orders Committee reviews the Standing Orders, procedures, and practices of the House. This usually occurs once every parliamentary term. During each term, the House may face new experiences that reveal a need to adapt, fine tune, or evolve existing practices. The flexibility to review the Standing Orders is of significant advantage to ensuring that the House and its committees continue to operate effectively.

The Standing Orders Committee operates on the basis of overwhelming support. It is most appropriate that changes to the Standing Orders are made through reaching broad support across all parliamentary parties. This principle upholds the legitimacy of the House's rules and practices.

To effectively review the rules and practices of the House of Representatives, we need to seek the views of those who the House represents. A keystone element of each review of Standing Orders is consideration of public views. At the beginning of our review, we invited submissions from the public. We would like to record our sincere appreciation for the time the public took to engage with us, for their thoughtful contributions, and the diversity of opinions received.

In our call for submissions, we indicated we were particularly interested in views related to how the House could enhance legislative scrutiny or improve examination of international treaties. We also asked for feedback on changes to financial scrutiny processes recommended during the previous Review of Standing Orders. We thank submitters for their contributions to our fruitful discussions on these topics.

In this report, we set out our unanimous recommendations for amendments to the Standing Orders, guidance for how practices should operate, and expectations for how the House and its committees should function. Many of our recommended amendments are in the nature of refinements. We have sought to improve clarity and precision about how certain procedures and practices should operate. Other changes constitute major evolutions, such as our proposed Legislative Scrutiny Committee.

Much of our consideration has focused on improving how Parliament makes law. We recognise that there are increasing pressures on the legislative process and the workload of both the House and its committees. There is need to navigate these pressures and ensure that the House's rules and practices promote good legislative and democratic outcomes. Scrutiny of legislation should result in law that is of high quality and involve being informed of public views.

Our main proposals:

- **Legislative Scrutiny Committee**—establishing a Legislative Scrutiny Committee as a specialist select committee with the primary purpose of assisting the House to make high-quality legislation, that could consider some bills in detail in lieu of committee of the whole House.
- **Omnibus bills**—altering the procedures related to omnibus bills to support the maintenance of the statute book while ensuring omnibus bills are not miscellaneous or unexpected in their content.
- **Purpose of select committee consideration of bills**—adding a purpose statement to guide select committees in how they consider bills, including relating to submissions and organising hearings with the public.
- **Use of AI by members, staff, and departmental advisers**—articulating initial guidance in our report around the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to process and analyse public submissions, and recommending that the next Standing Orders Committee receive a briefing on the use of AI in this area.
- **Reason for omitting select committee consideration**—providing that a bill that has its first reading under urgency is referred to a select committee for consideration, unless the member in charge of the bill moves that it be set down immediately for second reading and explains the circumstances that warrant omitting select committee consideration.
- **Reason for shortening select committee consideration**—requiring a member in charge of a bill, when moving a motion to instruct a select committee to report on a bill in less than 6 months, to specify with some particularity the circumstances that warrant the proposed time frame.
- **Local and private bills**—changing procedures that must be followed before a local or private bill can be introduced to the House.
- **Time during which a member is suspended**—changing the periods of time for which a member would be suspended after being named in the House.
- **Delegation of a chairperson’s authority**—providing for circumstances in which another member of a select committee can perform the duties and exercise the authority of the chairperson outside meetings.
- **Further guidance on financial scrutiny procedures**—setting out further guidance and expectations related to the operation of changes made to financial scrutiny procedures recommended during the Review of Standing Orders 2023.
- **International treaties**—updating procedures related to the House’s examination of international treaties.
- **Highly discriminatory electronic petitions**—empowering the Clerk to decline to host an electronic petition on the Parliament website if it is highly discriminatory.
- **Framework for recommending punishments for contempt**—recommending that the Speaker refer a question of privilege to the Privileges Committee about the development of a framework for reaching recommendations to punish members for contempt.
- **Test for declaring members’ indirect interests**—providing that a member’s indirect interests only need to be declared if a member has significant control over the holding entity, and may significantly benefit from the indirect interest.

1 General provisions and office-holders

Definition of Government amendment

The Regulatory Standards Act 2025 requires the Government to prepare consistency accountability statements for “Government amendments”. The Act leaves the definition of a “Government amendment” to be determined by the House. We therefore recommend defining “Government amendment” to mean an Amendment Paper that contains an amendment or amendments to a Government bill, and is in the name of a Minister.

Amendment 1 Definitions

Define “Government amendment” for the purposes of the Regulatory Standards Act 2025.

Regulatory Standards Act 2025 section 5, Standing Order 3

Suspension of Standing Orders

Standing Order 4 provides that a Standing Order or other order of the House may be suspended in whole or in part on motion with or without notice. By convention, this procedure is rarely used. Motions to suspend Standing Orders may be moved to facilitate a particular event or item of business, or as the first step towards changing the House’s rules, such as where a sessional order may suspend provisions to trial new procedures.

Standing Order 4(3) provides that a suspension motion “must state the object of or reason for the proposed suspension”. We consider that this provision could be strengthened, to require that the member moving the motion must inform the House with some particularity of the circumstances that warrant the proposed suspension. This wording would align with Standing Order 57(3), which requires that on moving a motion to accord urgency, a Minister must inform the House with some particularity of the circumstances that warrant urgency.

We consider that the existing requirement that a suspension motion can only be moved without notice if at least 60 members are present should also be strengthened. It is not uncommon for there to be an overhang that causes the membership of the House to exceed 120 members. We recommend that Standing Order 4(2) be amended so that a suspension motion may be moved without notice only if an absolute majority of the membership of the House is present in the Chamber when the motion is moved.

Amendment 2 Suspension of Standing Orders

Require that a member moving a motion to suspend Standing Orders must inform the House with some particularity of the circumstances that warrant the proposed suspension.

Require that a motion to suspend Standing Orders may be moved without notice only if more than half of all members are present in the Chamber when the motion is moved.

Standing Order 4

Swearing-in of members in exceptional circumstances

Members are sworn in by taking the oath or affirmation of allegiance that is required by law. Members are called to the Table for the purpose. In December 2023, the House adopted a sessional order to allow a member to be sworn in outside a sitting of the House and without presenting themselves at the Table, in some limited circumstances.

This is a valuable contingency for members who are too unwell to come to the Chamber and for those who become members at the beginning of breaks in the parliamentary sitting calendar. We recommend that this contingency be incorporated into the Standing Orders.

The Standing Orders would provide that the Speaker may permit a member to be sworn in at times when the House is not sitting or at another location than the Chamber. This would apply if exceptional circumstances beyond the member's control were otherwise likely to prevent the member from being sworn in for a significant period of time.

Amendment 3 Swearing-in of members in exceptional circumstances

Provide that the Speaker may permit a member to be sworn in by taking the oath or making the affirmation required by law at times when the House is not sitting or at another location, if exceptional circumstances beyond the member's control were likely to prevent the member from being sworn in for a significant period of time.

Standing Order 14A

Updating parliamentary terminology

We recommend updating some of the terms currently used in the Standing Orders:

- We propose that references to the term “Budget statement” in the Standing Orders be replaced with the more widely used term, “Budget speech”.
- We propose replacing the terminology “adjournment of debate” with “interruption of debate”. The use of the term “adjournment” in the context of adjourning a debate can be confusing. Normally, the term is used in relation to adjourning the House.
- We recommend that any reference to “Supplementary Order Paper” in the Standing Orders be replaced with “Amendment Paper”, making permanent a sessional order from the beginning of the term.

We also recommend minor amendments to the Standing Orders to refresh some terminology, align with the Parliament Act 2025, or update references to legislation.

Amendment 4 Updating parliamentary terminology

Replace...	With...	Relevant Standing Orders
Budget statement	Budget speech	341, 342, Appendix A
Adjournment of debate	Interruption of debate	54, 70, 72, 134, 135, 136, 181, 342
Supplementary Order Paper	Amendment Paper	99, 177, 256, 276, 314, 315, 317, 333, 347, 356, Appendix C

Recognition of tikanga Māori

In December 2024, we had an initial discussion about the broader role tikanga Māori could have in the proceedings of the House. At this point, we consider the best way to progress this matter would be for the parliamentary agencies to develop proposals for ways to reflect tikanga in parliamentary practice and bring those proposals to the Standing Orders Committee in the next term of Parliament.

Official coverage of Parliament

The Petitions Committee referred the petition of Hira to our committee, and we resolved to consider it as part of this review. The petition requests:

That the House of Representatives require that date and time watermark stamps be placed into all future Parliament TV videos.¹

In the petitioner's view, including timestamps on Parliament TV videos would improve the traceability of proceedings, support accurate reporting and analysis, and strengthen public trust in Parliament's transparency.

Official coverage of the House's proceedings is broadcast live and is made available on demand.² A tool is available on the *Parliament TV On Demand* website to the right of each video that includes a timestamp linked to the video. *Hansard* reports also include timestamps that reference the time of day a statement was made or a question was asked. Together, these could be used to verify the date and time that something was said in the House.

There would be a financial cost to embed a watermark timestamp into Parliament TV video. The provider contracted to provide Parliament TV broadcasting would require time to research, acquire, install, and test new equipment and processes to introduce a watermark timestamp. We encourage the Office of the Clerk to further consider the feasibility of the petitioner's proposal when conducting any future work to upgrade broadcasting.

¹ Petition of Hira: Place date and time watermark stamps into all future Parliament TV videos, presented to the House by Celia Wade-Brown on 24 March 2026.

² Parliament TV is broadcast live on Freeview 31, Sky 86, and online. Videos of past proceedings are made available on demand online.

2 Sittings of the House

Official business

Members are obliged to attend the House on sitting days. Standing Order 38 provides that a member is recorded by the Clerk as being present if they attend the House, a select committee meeting, other official business approved by the Business Committee, or participate in the official inter-parliamentary relations programme. This recognises that there are various ways in which members contribute to the functions of the House.

Near the start of the Parliament, the Business Committee made determinations about some of the activities that are considered to be official business. A member is considered to be present in the House if they attend a:

- course offered by the Parliamentary Education Charitable Trust while the House is sitting
- meeting in secure facilities in Defence House while the House is sitting
- virtual meeting between 10 pm of the previous day and 7 am of a sitting day that is part of the official inter-parliamentary relations programme (members would be considered as attending for that sitting day).

We recommend that the above instances of official business be recognised in the Standing Orders.

Amendment 5 Attendance

Broaden the grounds on which a member is considered as attending official business for the purposes of Standing Order 38 in the way described by this report.

Standing Order 38

Permission to be absent on Thursday to return home

On 20 February 2025, the House adopted a sessional order that allowed members to be given permission to be absent on Thursdays for the purpose of returning home. Permission can be granted if the location of the member's home means it is not practicable for them to return on a Thursday unless they leave Parliament before 5 pm. Permission is given by the leader or whip of a party, or the Speaker.

Standing Order 146 sets a limit on the proxy votes each party can cast. If a member has been granted permission to be absent for the purpose of returning home as described above, their proxy vote is not counted towards the limit on proxy votes.

We consider that this procedure has improved accessibility and flexibility to allow members to return home on Thursdays. We recommend that it be incorporated into the Standing Orders.

Amendment 6 Permission to be absent

Provide for members to be given permission to be absent on Thursdays for the purpose of returning home, with the limitations set out in this report.

Standing Order 39, 39A, 144, and 146

Special debates

The Business Committee is required to allocate at least seven hours of House time each year to special debates.³ In 2020, the Standing Orders Committee proposed that arranging special debates should be a standard item on the Business Committee's agenda.⁴ In 2023, the Standing Orders Committee reported that special debates have been working well, but that the Business Committee had at times struggled to find topics to debate.⁵

We consider that special debates have continued to work well during this parliamentary term. Special debates provide opportunities for different topics to be discussed outside the House's usual menu. We encourage the Business Committee to consider arranging some special debates in place of some general debates.

Special debate on foreign affairs

Standing Order 80 lists examples of topics for special debates. We consider that foreign affairs should be added to this list. Foreign affairs is an important sphere of Government activity, and, in our view, the subject area warrants at least one special debate each year.

Later in this report, we recommend that the Standing Orders set out several specialist functions for the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee. This includes arranging the theme for a special debate on foreign affairs. This responsibility would be similar to the existing procedure for the Petitions Committee to select topics or themes for a special debate on petitions. The Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee would write to the Business Committee with its suggested theme.

Amendment 7 Special debates

Add foreign affairs to the list of special debate themes.

Standing Order 80

Recommendation to the Business Committee

We recommend that the Business Committee consider arranging at least one special debate on the topic of foreign affairs each year.

³ Standing Order 80(2).

⁴ *Standing Orders Committee, Review of Standing Orders 2020*, (3 August 2020), [2017–2020] AJHR I.18A, p 15.

⁵ *Standing Orders Committee, Review of Standing Orders 2023*, (30 August 2023), [2020–2023] AJHR I.18A, p 58.

3 General procedures

Time during which member is suspended

If a member's conduct in the House is grossly disorderly, the Speaker can name the member. The House is then asked to judge the member's conduct, with the Speaker immediately putting the question that the member be suspended from the service of the House. If the motion is carried, the member is suspended, for a length of time depending on the number of occasions they have been suspended in that term of Parliament.

Suspension from the service of the House has a number of consequences for the member concerned. These include prohibitions on entering the Chamber, voting in the House, and serving on select committees. Furthermore, the Parliament Act 2025 provides for a deduction from a member's salary for each day the member is suspended from the service of the House.

The current penalty—for a member to be suspended for 24 hours, when named and suspended for the first time—can vary in its effect. For example, if a member is named towards the end of a sitting day, the effect of the suspension would vary depending on whether the House was sitting the following day. If it was not, the suspension would have less practical effect than if it was. If the House was sitting the next day under urgency, then the effect could be to prevent the member participating in a substantial amount of business. Penalties should not have such variable effect.

To address this, we recommend that a member be suspended for the rest of the calendar day on which the House resolved to suspend the member, and for a further penalty period starting on the next sitting day. The further penalty period would run for a specified number of days, depending on the number of occasions on which the member has been named previously in that term of Parliament, as follows:

	Current penalty	Proposed penalty
First occasion	24 hours	Day of suspension, and the next calendar day on which a sitting commences
Second occasion	7 days, excluding the day of suspension	Day of suspension, and 6 calendar days starting on the next sitting day
Third occasion	28 days, excluding the day of suspension	Day of suspension, and 27 calendar days starting on the next sitting day

The effect of this change would be that the penalty for the first occasion would be increased, from 24 hours to the remainder of the day of the suspension and the next day on which a sitting commences. The financial penalty for the first occasion would be double what would currently be calculated. The current practice is for the Speaker to certify that the day on which the 24-hour period ends is the day for which the salary deduction is made. The new penalty would mean the salary deduction would be made for both the day of suspension and the next day on which a sitting commenced.

For the second and third occasions, the intention is to replicate the current penalties.

Amendment 8 Time during which member is suspended

Provide that the period for which a member is suspended includes the day on which the House resolves to suspend the member, and:

- on the first occasion, the next day on which a sitting commences, or
- on the second occasion, 6 days, commencing on the next sitting day, or
- on the third or a subsequent occasion, 27 days, commencing on the next sitting day.

Standing Order 94

Members' attire

The standard of attire required for members in the House is determined by the Speaker. In 2003, the Standing Orders Committee stipulated that members are expected to wear "appropriate business attire" in the Chamber.⁶ In 2017, the Standing Orders Committee affirmed that appropriate business attire extends to non-western formal attire and that members may dress in the formal wear of the culture they identify with. It encouraged members to consult the Speaker if they were unsure about what would be acceptable.⁷

In November 2025, the Speaker circulated expectations for attire in the House:

Members are elected as representatives of voting New Zealanders and should, accordingly, present a dress style that shows respect for the people who elected them, and by publicly presenting themselves in a dress style that reflects the importance of their work and the privilege they have to serve.

The Speaker set out a few specific expectations, including:

- men must wear jackets
- women must have covered shoulders
- t-shirts are not acceptable
- clothing that conveys a graphic or message is not acceptable
- national dress is to be permitted upon application to the Speaker, if that national dress does not comply with the above expectations.

The standard of attire should continue to be determined by the Speaker and adapt as standards of business attire in the workplace also evolve.

⁶ *Standing Orders Committee, Review of Standing Orders 2003*, (11 December 2003), [2002–2005] AJHR I.18B, p 23.

⁷ *Standing Orders Committee, Review of Standing Orders and Petition 2014/107 of Malcolm Harbrow*, (26 July 2017), [2014–2017] AJHR I.18A, p 14.

Discriminatory and unparliamentary language

The Petitions Committee referred the petition of Raiha McDonald to our committee, and we resolved to consider it as part of this review. The petition requests:

That the House of Representatives amend its rules so that comments that are discriminatory against immigrant New Zealanders, such as those by Rt Hon Winston Peters and Hon Shane Jones on 28 January 2025, are no longer considered acceptable in Parliament's rules.⁸

Submitters also raised concerns about the use of discriminatory comments in the House. In particular, submitters expressed concerns about comments that are discriminatory towards immigrant communities and disabled people.

Conduct or remarks in the House may be dealt with by the Speaker as a matter of order. Standing Order 120 provides that one of the rules of debate is that the presiding officer intervenes if offensive or disorderly words are used. The presiding officer can require members to withdraw and to apologise for unparliamentary expressions.

We acknowledge submitters' concerns that the use of discriminatory or unparliamentary language in the House could cause harm to communities in New Zealand. Members are high-profile public figures who should hold themselves to the highest standards. Members' behaviour can influence public perceptions of Parliament and about what kind of behaviour and language is acceptable. We reiterate that using offensive language is not considered acceptable.

We also wish to reiterate Speakers' Ruling 58/5 which states that a "member reading or quoting unparliamentary words is in the same position as if that member had used them". Similarly, Speaker's Ruling 50/5 states that "quotations should be as free from unparliamentary language as a member's own speech". We expect members' use of quotations to align with the expectations regarding parliamentary language.

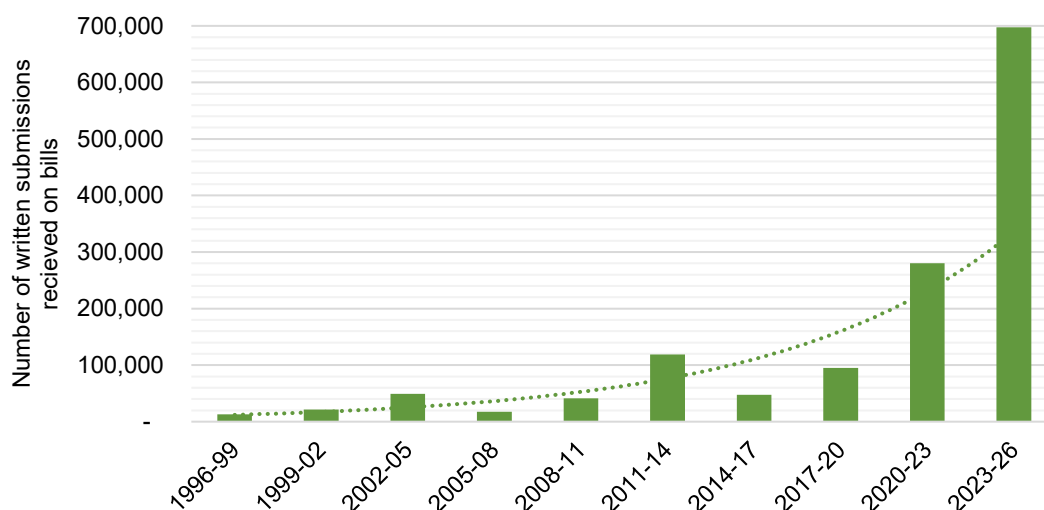
⁸ Petition of Raiha McDonald: Amend rules on comments in the House about immigrant New Zealanders, presented to the House by Steve Abel on 14 October 2025.

4 Select committees

Dramatic increase in submissions

Public submissions are fundamental to the operation of select committees. Along with advice from officials, submissions are the key source of information to assist members in debating and deciding the issues before them. The submissions process is one of the most publicly recognisable features of the select committee system, and it shapes the public's perception of select committees and Parliament generally.

There has been a sharp increase in the number of submissions received in recent years. This trend is illustrated by the following graph, which shows the number of submissions received on bills that were reported to the House during each term of Parliament since 1996. Half of the nearly 1.4 million submissions received on bills in the last 30 years were received in the current Parliament.⁹



Although there have been a few bills that have attracted an extremely high number of submissions during this term, the dramatic increase shown above cannot be entirely attributed to that handful of bills. For comparison, in the whole of the 51st Parliament (2014 to 2017), only 6 bills attracted more than 1,000 submissions. During the current Parliament, 39 bills have attracted more than 1,000 submissions.

Although the number of written submissions received by committees has dramatically increased, the time available for committees to read submissions and hold hearings with submitters has not. The increased number of submissions is exceeding members' capacity to give them meaningful consideration. High volumes of submissions risk drowning out considered and informative submissions.

The challenge for committees is to manage such high levels of public participation within their overall work programmes, while gaining the most value possible from the information contained in submissions in the context of each item of business being considered.

⁹ The statistics in this graph are as at 11 September 2026. Refer to Appendix B for further information.

Purpose statement

To assist committees to make trade-offs and manage high levels of public participation, we propose a purpose statement for select committee consideration of bills as follows:

- (1) When a bill is referred to a select committee, the committee's primary purpose in considering the bill is to ensure that, if the bill was passed, it will result in high-quality legislation.
- (2) Another purpose is for the committee to be informed, to the extent practicable, of public views on the bill.
- (3) The committee receives evidence and advice as necessary or desirable for the purposes set out in paragraphs (1) and (2).

Ensuring a bill would result in high-quality legislation is the primary purpose

The primary purpose of a select committee considering a bill is to ensure that it would result in high-quality legislation. A committee should undertake the stages of evidence, advice, drafting, and reporting in a way that prioritises this aim. Adequate time must be allocated to each stage in full awareness that dedicating more time for one stage means less time for the others. Committees may wish to prioritise different stages over others depending on the context of each bill and what work would best support them to ensure that the bill would result in high-quality legislation.

We would define high-quality legislation along the lines of the *Legislation Guidelines* published by the Legislation Design and Advisory Committee. The *Legislation Guidelines* describe three core objectives of high-quality legislation, as follows:¹⁰

- **Legislation should be fit for purpose**—used only when necessary, with a purpose that is clearly defined and robustly tested; effective for that purpose, with certainty as to rights and obligations; flexible enough to last; comprehensive enough to deal with likely scenarios; and well-integrated with other legislation, wider regulatory systems, and common law.
- **Legislation should be constitutionally sound**—consistent with the Treaty of Waitangi and reflecting the fundamental values and principles of a democratic society, including in the processes by which it is made.
- **Legislation should be accessible**—easy to find, navigate, and understand.

Committees could explore the extent that bills meet such objectives. This could involve discussion with advisers about how policies and proposed solutions were defined and tested while the bills were being developed. In considering and inviting public submissions, committees could consider what further perspectives they require to satisfy themselves that bills reflect these objectives.

¹⁰ *Legislation Design and Advisory Committee, Legislation Guidelines (2021 edition)*, p 9.

Being informed of public views is another purpose

Although legislative quality would be the primary focus, the select committee process is also very important as a forum for public participation. We therefore propose that another purpose is for the committee to be informed of public views, but that this be qualified by reference to what is practicable for the committee in the circumstances.

The intention is to recognise the significance of this aspect of select committee work, while essentially indicating that it is secondary to promoting legislative quality—because the law is the enduring product that will regulate society on an ongoing basis.

Committee processes should be guided by the purpose statement

Committees should be guided by the purpose statement when deciding how they consider a bill, including as it relates to arrangements for public submissions and hearings.

Hearings should be arranged in line with the purpose statement

An intended effect of this purpose statement is for committees to prioritise hearing from submitters who have provided specific feedback about the policies and provisions of bills, their potential effects, including on people and communities, and ways to improve legislative quality. Committees should identify key submitters with expertise or lived experience of the matters at hand. Hearings should be organised to allow time for sustained conversations with these key submitters so that committees can understand their perspectives and ideas and test the particular provisions of the bill in front of them.

Beyond this, committees should arrange hearings so that they hear from submitters who express a range and balance of views, and who represent different sectors, communities, and stakeholders. We discourage committees from allocating multiple timeslots to someone who has made a submission as an individual as well as on behalf of one or more organisations. If many submissions are similar in content, then it is desirable for a committee to adopt a process to select who should be heard.

The emphasis should be on ensuring that public participation in the select committee process has a demonstrable impact. What this means exactly will depend on the context of each bill.

Not everyone can be heard

Given the high volume of public submissions, committees are not able to invite every person who requested to make an oral submission to attend a hearing. There is no requirement for committees to do so, nor should committees necessarily attempt to. This point was made previously by the Standing Orders Committee in 2020.¹¹ The need to take such an approach has become more evident with the exponential increase in the number of submissions and requests to be heard.

Although committees are expected to inform themselves of a wide range of public views, we stress that the select committee submissions process is not designed to function as a straw poll or a perfectly representative survey of the public.

¹¹ *Standing Orders Committee, Review of Standing Orders 2020*, (3 August 2020), [2017–2020] AJHR I.18A, p 26.

Committees should actively consider time allocations

It has become convention that select committees allocate five minutes to individuals and ten minutes to organisations to make oral submissions. Our view is that, with a strong focus on legislative quality, there would be value in some submitters receiving longer than ten minutes, so sustained conversations can occur. Experts, including academics, should be treated more like organisations are currently, and given more time than other individual submitters. We encourage committees to actively turn their minds to how much time submitters are allocated, rather than simply defaulting to a blanket approach.

Committees should communicate with submitters

We encourage committees to communicate with the public about relevant decisions related to the public submissions process. The public should be informed if a committee has adopted specific criteria or procedures to determine who will be invited to make an oral submission. Committees, or chairpersons with the agreement of committees, can make public statements or media releases to inform the public of such decisions. This would help facilitate effective and transparent public engagement.

An example of best practice is the Justice Committee's media statement that indicated it would prioritise hearing from submitters who engaged with a list of specified questions.¹²

Amendment 9 Purpose of select committee scrutiny of bills

Provide a purpose statement for the consideration of bills by select committees that confirms the primary purpose is to ensure each bill, if passed, would result in high-quality legislation, and that another purpose is to be informed of public views to the extent practicable.

Standing Order 299

Use of artificial intelligence by departmental advisers

The increase in submissions has at times placed considerable pressure on committee staff and officials to process them and provide information to committees in a timely way. The Standing Orders Committee recognised in 2023 that departmental officials could make use of AI tools to assist with summarising submissions. It recommended that the Public Service Commission, in conjunction with the Office of the Clerk, review the guidance for public servants who provide advice to select committees.¹³

The Public Service Commission updated its guidance accordingly, as follows:

In some situations, departments may outsource or use digital tools (including the application of artificial intelligence-based technologies) for summarising submissions. Departments must have policies and controls in place for these approaches to ensure the product delivered to committees is accurate and unbiased. Departments need to understand all the risks involved in such approaches, including privacy, security and accuracy, and ensure that these are robustly managed. In this regard, the digital.govt.nz website has

¹² Justice Committee, *Submissions are now open on the English Language Bill*, (12 March 2026).

¹³ Standing Orders Committee, *Review of Standing Orders 2023*, (30 August 2023), [2020–2023] AJHR I.18A, p 24.

information for departments on the benefits and risks of using digital tools in their work. For transparency, the departmental report should describe how submissions were summarised, including any tools and approaches used and how relevant risks have been managed. Where a department outsources the work of summarising submissions, information about this outsourcing should be disclosed to the committee, including about the provider of the service. The department must ensure any such provider understands and complies with the Standing Orders relating to the confidentiality of select committee proceedings.¹⁴

We largely endorse this guidance. However, it would be our strong expectation that a department would seek permission from a committee before it outsources the work of summarising submissions. We strongly expect that information about how submissions were analysed will be included in departmental reports.

It is likely that the use of AI in preparing advice for committees will become more common, with increasing numbers of submissions and initiatives in the public service to modernise government through AI use. We think it would be possible to strengthen the confidence that members and the public may have in summaries of submissions for which AI has been used. This may involve developing principles, potentially along the lines of those proposed by the New Zealand Law Society.¹⁵

To this end, we recommend that the Standing Orders Committee in the next term of Parliament receive a briefing on the use of AI in summarising submissions.

Recommendation to the next Standing Orders Committee

We recommend that the Standing Orders Committee in the next term of Parliament receive a briefing on the use of AI in summarising submissions.

Independence and quality of advice to committees

Submitters noted that select committees are heavily reliant on departmental officials for advice on legislation and suggested that these officials, as part of the executive and as those working on developing policy, have a conflict of interest.

It is fair to highlight the potential conflict that may arise when government officials summarise submissions on Government bills. There is a very strong expectation that all matters raised in submissions will be conveyed in good faith in summaries provided to committees, whether or not those matters align with government policy. Failure to do so could be treated as a contempt, and more generally could undermine the legitimacy of legislative outcomes.

That said, countless public servants over many years have worked very hard to properly summarise and analyse submissions, and through this effort have contributed considerably to our democratic institutions and law-making process. Departmental advisers also provide specialist expertise to summarising submissions, which could not easily be replicated by generalist parliamentary advisers.

¹⁴ Public Service Commission, *Guidance: Officials and Select Committees*, (October 2024), para 61.

¹⁵ New Zealand Law Society Te Kāhui Ture o Aotearoa, *Submission of the New Zealand Law Society Te Kāhui Ture o Aotearoa*, (25 September 2025), para 2.40.

Independent advice

We note that committees can access independent advice. All subject select committees are assigned a Parliamentary Library research adviser, who can provide independent research support when required. Committees may also appoint independent advisers.

Although funding for independent advisers is not unlimited, demand from committees has remained within what can be met through current funding. Increased and effective use of independent advice could substantially improve both the quality of and capacity for select committee consideration. Committees could make greater use of targeted independent advice within current funding baselines, and the Office of the Clerk continues to encourage committees to adopt this approach. For example, the routine use of independent advice for bills that have attracted reports under section 7 of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 would be a positive step.

Systematic use of independent advisers across committee business would require additional resources, but it would be worth considering as a way to empower members and committees in their scrutiny without adding to the already high workloads of members. For example, committees could appoint independent advisers to provide additional analytical support to prepare for hearings of evidence, or to test the policies and recommendations provided by Government officials. Committees also could develop enhanced linkages with the scientific and research community, so they have ready access to relevant expertise when needed.

Ministerial influence on advice

It is very much in the interests of legislative quality for Ministers to make departmental officials available to support select committee consideration of bills. Although public servants are politically neutral, they serve the Government of the day. There is a long-standing expectation that departmental officials manage risks and avoid surprising Ministers. These are important principles of executive government that need to be observed within the parliamentary context. Moreover, Ministers are members of Parliament and, like all other members, are generally entitled to view select committee proceedings, as long as they comply with confidentiality requirements in the Standing Orders.

On the other hand, advisers must act responsibly and in good faith in relation to select committees. As noted previously, when summarising submissions, they must properly convey all matters raised.

We consider that it is entirely appropriate for a select committee to be informed of the policy preferences of the Minister in charge of a bill, and for this to be transparent. The committee is not bound to implement those preferences. Consultation by Ministers with their colleagues (including through Cabinet processes) is a matter for them. However, in our view, Ministers and officials should avoid any perception that select committees are taking instructions from the Government.

Use of artificial intelligence by members and committee staff

The Office of the Clerk is investigating how AI could assist committee staff to process submissions. We believe there are substantial efficiencies to be gained from using AI to assist in processing and categorising submissions.

For example, AI could be used to detect content in submissions that may raise issues about admissibility. Staff would then check those submissions and consider whether to recommend that submissions be returned. The technology could also help staff to identify submissions that contain unique, substantive, and relevant content. This should enable submissions to be provided to members much faster, to assist committees to make informed decisions about hearings, and allow committees to release submissions sooner.

There is also potential to provide members with AI tools for interacting with submissions, so they can arrange information according to their needs, and to complement summaries prepared by departments. The Office of the Clerk and the Parliamentary Service have been discussing possible solutions with external suppliers and with other public sector agencies that have used AI to process and analyse submissions.

The use of AI is intended to facilitate—and not replace—human interaction with submissions and other information. There will remain a strong expectation that public submissions to committees will be engaged with personally by members, staff, and officials to understand the issues and proposals put forward.

Calling for evidence

The authority to call for public submissions is not expressly provided for in the Standing Orders. Rather, it is a long-standing practice derived from the general power to send for persons, papers, and records.¹⁶ Calling for submissions is of central importance to the select committee system and, in our view, it would be useful for this to be made explicit in the House's rules. We therefore recommend that the Standing Orders include a new provision to this effect.

Amendment 10 Calling for evidence

Expressly provide in the Standing Orders that a select committee may call for evidence on an item of business before the committee and set a closing date.

Standing Orders 198 and 218A

Chairperson's power to call for submissions

The chairperson of a select committee may also call for submissions, again relying on a general power to request persons, papers, and records.¹⁷ The chairperson may set a closing date for submissions to be received. We recommend that this power be provided for expressly in the Standing Orders.

A chairperson tends to call for submissions when their committee is not scheduled to meet for some time. This enables submissions to be called for promptly, so members of the public have as much opportunity as practicable to prepare submissions after business is referred to committees.

Typically, the decision of a chairperson to call for submissions is discussed at the next committee meeting, where the decision may be noted, confirmed, repudiated, or altered.

¹⁶ Standing Order 199.

¹⁷ Standing Order 198.

However, there is no requirement for this to occur. We consider that there should be an explicit requirement, when a chairperson has called for submissions, that notice of the closing date must be included on the agenda for the committee's next meeting. It should be open for members to hold the chairperson accountable and possibly propose an alternative for the committee to consider.

In our view it is good practice for a chairperson to consult committee members with different party perspectives when calling for submissions. Although this is not obligatory, this practice would reflect that the power is exercised on behalf of the committee and minimise the prospect of the decision being reversed. Committees may wish to establish their own processes for how chairpersons may call for submissions on their behalf.

Amendment 11 Chairperson's call for evidence

Provide that the chairperson of a committee has the authority to call for evidence on the committee's behalf and to set a closing date, and require that notice of the closing date must be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the committee.

Standing Orders 198 and 218A

Time available to make submissions

Submitters said there is often insufficient time to prepare submissions on bills, especially when bills are complex or important. Submitters told us that short submission deadlines can make it impracticable to produce a meaningful submission. Some submitters proposed requiring committees to open for submissions for a minimum length of time.

In 2017, the Standing Orders Committee summarised previous guidance and principles about setting deadlines:

- committees should generally allow a minimum of six weeks when setting a closing date for submissions
- a lesser period than six weeks may be allowable in exceptional circumstances, but submitters should be given a realistic period to comment on a substantial bill or inquiry
- longer than six weeks can be decided when dealing with large or complex bills—this is up to the committee concerned
- committees examining bills must allow sufficient time for proper drafting and consideration of amendments and commentaries.¹⁸

The committee also stated that:

We endorse these previous comments. Ultimately, committees make political judgements—which thus can be subject to political critique—about how long to allow for submissions, the provision and consideration of advice, and the drafting and consideration of amendments and commentaries. However, select committees must bear in mind their crucial role in engaging with the public on the House's behalf, and ensuring that New Zealand's interests are served by

¹⁸ Standing Orders Committee, *Review of Standing Orders and Petition 2014/107 of Malcolm Harbrow*, (26 July 2017), [2014–2017] AJHR I.18A, p 28.

quality legislation. On this basis, they should endeavour to allow reasonable timeframes for public input.

This guidance provides a useful framework for committees to set closing dates for submissions. It is fair to point out that the repeated addressing of this matter by the Standing Orders Committee has not resulted in a cessation of concerns about closing dates that have been set.

We consider that incorporating guidelines into the Standing Orders would not necessarily be appropriate, given that the timeframe for which bills are referred to select committees can vary. It should be up to select committees to plan and manage their work in the time accorded to them. Earlier in this report, we recommend introducing a purpose statement for select committee consideration of bills. Committees should ultimately plan their work in a way that enables them to achieve this purpose.

Although a reasonable time for making submissions is important, it should not necessarily be at the expense of the time available for the hearing of evidence, preparation and consideration of advice, caucus consultation, and drafting and consideration of amendments and reports. More time for one stage means less time for the others; these decisions are zero-sum. Committees need to strike a careful balance of time devoted to each stage, including the length of a call for submissions. This balance is for each committee to determine within the context of the bill being considered.

Challenges can arise when submissions close on a weekend or public holiday. When submissions close on a working day, staff are on hand during the day to respond if submitters make contact, for example to assist with issues people may be experiencing when seeking to lodge submissions through the Parliament website. For this reason, we encourage committees and chairpersons to avoid closing submissions on weekends and public holidays.

We therefore do not recommend amending the Standing Orders to set a minimum submissions period for all bills. However, we reiterate the guidelines set out by the Standing Orders Committee in 2017 and strongly expect that they will be followed.

Submissions by post or through the Parliament website

The ease with which people can make a submission to a select committee is a real strength of our democracy. People can make submissions by post or online through the Parliament website. Anyone is able to go to the Parliament website, fill out the submission form, and express their views in a secure way.¹⁹ Submitters who use the Parliament website are informed that:

- their submissions will be permanently published on the Parliament website
- contact details are held separately to submissions, and therefore will not be published to the Parliament website
- contact details are only collected to be used in circumstances submitters choose
- they may request that the committee receive their submission in private or secret.

¹⁹ [New Zealand Parliament, *Make a submission*](#).

People would not get the same information if they attempted to make a submission by email, and accepting those submissions would not provide the same assurance to members. We would not want the integrity of the submissions process to be undermined by coordinated email campaigns that appear to be motivated in part by a desire to collect people's contact details.

We therefore endorse the established practice that, when there has been a public call for submissions, committees only accept submissions that have been received by post or through the Parliament website. It is important that submissions made by post continue to be accepted, as not all members of the public have reliable access to the internet.

Return of evidence

Standing Order 220 states that a select committee may return or expunge any evidence or statement that it considers to be irrelevant to its proceedings, offensive, possibly defamatory, or suppressed by an order of a New Zealand court. These grounds are non-exhaustive, and a committee can return or expunge evidence for other reasons. We recommend amending Standing Order 220 to make this clear.

It is an important principle that no one can force a committee to accept evidence into its proceedings that it does not wish to receive. Tabling evidence requires a proactive decision from a committee. A committee is not obliged to accept a submission if it considers it inappropriate or undesirable to do so. However, committees must be mindful that they have an important role in facilitating public engagement and representation with Parliament. Committees should carefully consider their responsibility to be informed of public views (as provided for by our proposed purpose statement) when making decisions to return evidence.

For example, a committee may decide to return evidence that it considers may breach someone's right to privacy. Committees should exercise their best judgement in evaluating what constitutes private or personal information. Committees may wish to request that people re-submit evidence with certain information such as the identity of third parties removed, suggest that submissions be anonymised to protect privacy, or contact submitters to check they understand their submission will be made public on the Parliament website. Committees should communicate transparently and consistently with submitters regarding decisions for how they will treat submissions with personal information in them.

Amendment 12 Return of evidence

Make clear that the reasons for returning evidence that are listed in Standing Order 220 are non-exhaustive.

Standing Order 220

Alternative engagement mechanisms

In 2020, the Standing Orders Committee encouraged committees to use alternative public engagement mechanisms. The committee expressed concern that the "perceived formality of submitting to a select committee may be a barrier to people who want to make their voices heard on matters that are of particular interest to them". It stated that committees should be "more innovative" in using alternative mechanisms to engage with the public. The intention

was to encourage committees to opt in to using alternative mechanisms, alongside the normal submissions process.

The committee set out four principles for alternative engagement:

- Target engagement efforts at groups whose interests are most relevant to the business at hand, or who tend to be overlooked by traditional engagement.
- Make it easier for people to submit in the way that best suits their need.
- Gather information in order to add value to consideration, not just for its own sake.
- Provide updates or feedback to people who submit, so they know that their information was considered and their contribution mattered.²⁰

We note that committees have used online surveys alongside the normal submissions process to help reach a wider range of people. For example, in 2025, the Justice Committee used an anonymous survey and social media to gather views on the Crimes Legislation (Stalking and Harassment) Amendment Bill.²¹ The committee also ran a standard submissions process.

However, generally, there has been very little use of alternative engagement methods since the Standing Orders Committee encouraged this practice in 2020. We wish to once again encourage committees to consider using alternative mechanisms to support the effectiveness and accessibility of public engagement.

Committees may wish to make greater use of online surveys and social media to inform themselves of public views on an issue or a bill. These formats may support committees to engage with people who might not otherwise make a formal submission. Surveys also enable committees to ask targeted questions to the public to help them gather information most relevant to the issues they are considering.

Similarly, committees may wish to explore ways to conduct hearings with submitters in alternative, informal, or accessible ways. The chairperson, with the approval of the committee, is responsible for how hearings with submitters are run. Hearings can ultimately be as formal or as structured as members choose.

Ultimately, committees should adopt alternative engagement processes and run hearings in a way that is most appropriate to the business under consideration. In the case of a bill, committees should make decisions around how to best engage with the public in a way that supports them to ensure that it is of high legislative quality and that they are informed of public views.

We acknowledge that committees sometimes receive large numbers of written submissions that contain little substantive or original content. It may be worth investigating ways that alternative engagement mechanisms could support submitters to engage in the ways that work for them, and for committees to be able to gauge public sentiment on an issue without being overwhelmed with submissions. For example, there could be opportunities to create

²⁰ Standing Orders Committee, Review of Standing Orders 2020, (3 August 2020), [2017–2020] AJHR I.18A, pp 29–30.

²¹ New Zealand Legislation, Crimes Legislation (Stalking and Harassment) Amendment Bill.

channels for people to indicate their support, opposition or other sentiment towards legislation, without them necessarily needing to prepare and lodge separate submissions.

Exercise of chairperson's authority

Standing Order 205 provides that the deputy chairperson may perform the duties and exercise the authority of the chairperson when the chairperson is absent during a meeting or outside New Zealand, or if there is a vacancy in the office of chairperson.

Standing Order 205 does not cover situations where the chairperson is in New Zealand but is unavailable to exercise their authority outside meetings. This means the deputy chairperson does not automatically assume these responsibilities when a chairperson is unavailable for more than a short period.

When the chairperson is in New Zealand but is unavailable, the committee can give authority to the deputy chairperson or another member to carry out particular actions outside meetings, such as presenting a report to the House. The committee also can set its own meetings. However, difficulties can arise if an unexpected meeting needs to be called, or if circumstances arise that have not been anticipated at the previous meeting.

We consider there should be a straightforward procedure for authority to automatically be delegated when a chairperson is unavailable to perform their duties. This would make it clearer who is able to exercise the chairperson's authority in cases when a chairperson takes sick leave, parental leave, or bereavement leave.

Exercise of authority when chairperson is absent from duty

We propose providing that the deputy chairperson may perform the duties and exercise the authority of the chairperson outside meetings, in cases when the chairperson is unavailable. The deputy chairperson should be able to assume authority in cases when the chairperson is "absent from duty" (a phrase used elsewhere in the Standing Orders and in the Parliament Act 2025). A chairperson would be considered absent from duty when the Speaker has granted the chairperson permission to be absent under Standing Order 39(1), or when the chairperson is otherwise unavailable when the duties of the chairperson need to be exercised without delay. The term "absent from duty" is the same phrase used to describe the situation when an Assistant Speaker may exercise the powers and functions of the Speaker outside the House.²²

Importantly, the chairperson should still be able to exercise their authority if they wished to. The chairperson would not automatically lose their authority if granted permission to be absent. Rather, the intention would be to provide for a clear line of delegation in cases where the chairperson is legitimately unavailable to perform their duties. Operationally, committee staff would always seek to contact the chairperson in the first instance, if there was no pre-arranged delegation of authority. For example, committee staff would not be expected to turn to the deputy chairperson if the chairperson was unavailable only for a short time (such as when the chairperson was on a flight or in another meeting). Notably, the Standing Orders

²² Standing Order 29(3). The phrase also is used in the Parliament Act 2025, section 49(1), in a similar context.

would no longer assume that a chairperson was unavailable to exercise authority when outside New Zealand.

The aim would be to ensure essential administrative functions could occur, so that the committee's proceedings were not hindered. This would be consistent with recent developments in the Standing Orders and through the Parliament Act 2025 to provide resilience in the House's arrangements.

We consider that committees should be also empowered to appoint a member who may act as the deputy chairperson in cases when the deputy chairperson is acting as the chairperson, or the deputy chairperson is absent from duty.

Transfer of power to exercise authority

During a meeting, a chairperson can invite the committee to authorise the deputy chairperson or another member to chair the meeting while a particular item of business is being considered. This allows a chairperson to transfer their authority in situations when they consider it to be appropriate for another member to chair an item of business. The procedure relates only to chairing during a meeting. It does not enable the chairperson to transfer the ability to perform their duties and exercise their authority outside meetings.

We consider that there should also be a procedure for a chairperson to be able to transfer the exercise of their authority in respect of a particular item, or items, of business outside meetings. We recommend that Standing Order 206 be amended to provide for this. A chairperson would then be able to invite a committee to authorise the deputy chairperson to perform the duties and exercise the authority of the chairperson in relation to a particular item of business outside meetings. For example, this would enable the deputy chairperson to call for evidence or organise hearings with submitters related to the item of business for which the chairperson's authority has been transferred.

In cases when the deputy chairperson is absent from duty, the procedure should allow the chairperson to invite the committee to transfer their authority to another member of the committee.

Amendment 13 Powers of chairperson

Provide that the deputy chairperson of a select committee may exercise the chairperson's authority outside meetings when the chairperson is absent from duty.

Empower a committee to appoint another member who may act as deputy chairperson when the deputy chairperson is acting as chairperson or is absent from duty.

Enable a chairperson to invite the committee to transfer the chairperson's authority to the deputy chairperson (or another member appointed by the committee if the deputy chairperson is absent from duty) in respect of an item of business, including for the exercise of that authority outside meetings.

Standing Order 192(3), 205, and 206

Timeliness of differing views

Standing Order 249 sets out the rules and processes for differing views being included in a select committee report. Differing views must:

- be relevant and succinct
- not include an allegation against a person that may seriously damage the reputation of that person, if no reasonable opportunity has been provided for a response
- not include any attachment or appendix, unless the committee agrees
- comply with the Standing Orders and practices of the House.

We recommend that an additional requirement be added to this list: that differing views must be provided to the committee in a timely manner.

Our intention is to ensure there is sufficient time for differing views to be checked for compliance with the existing requirements as listed above. Committees often specify a time and date that differing views must be received by the secretariat. Generally, this deadline is the day before deliberation. This practice has developed so that differing views can be reviewed for compliance with the Standing Orders. Our recommendation is intended to support and recognise this practice.

We stress that, in assessing compliance with this requirement, consideration must be given to the timeframe in which the committee has been provided access to all evidence, advice, and information relevant to deliberation on any item of business. For example, if additional advice has provided immediately before deliberation is scheduled, committee members should reasonably expect to be able to decide to include or edit a differing view. Likewise, if a decision at deliberation (such as inserting or deleting a provision) causes a member to change their position, they should be able to decide to include or edit a differing view to reflect this.

Amendment 14 Differing views

Require that a differing view must be provided to a committee in a timely manner.

Standing Order 249

Presentation of report

Once the committee has adopted a report, it must be presented to the House by the chairperson within a reasonable time. The presentation of a report should be deferred for a committee to meet again only if any doubts arise as to what the chairperson was directed to report, or if a factual error is identified.

Notice of meeting

A notice of meeting must contain a summary of the items of business proposed to be dealt with. It is equally important that a notice of meeting also inform members of the date, time, and venue of that meeting. We recommend amending Standing Order 209 accordingly. This change would confirm established practice.

Amendment 15 Notice of meeting

Require a notice of meeting to include the date, time, and venue of the meeting.

Standing Order 209

Remote participation by members

Videoconferencing has made it significantly easier and cheaper for select committees to meet in non-sitting weeks. Members do not need to travel to Wellington to conduct committee business. We consider that committees should continue to have the flexibility to determine whether to hold their meetings in person, online, or in a hybrid format, where these meetings occur on non-sitting days.

However, on sittings days, we consider there should be some limitations. Members are already in Wellington for sittings of the House and thus are able to attend select committee meetings in person.

We consider that a member who is present on the parliamentary precincts on a sitting day should not ordinarily be able to participate remotely in a select committee meeting. However, a member could seek permission from the Speaker or from the leader or whip of their party to participate remotely from the precincts if they are unwell (primarily to reduce the spread of infectious illnesses).

Amendment 16 Remote participation by members

Provide that a member who is present within the parliamentary precincts on a sitting day may not participate remotely in committee proceedings, unless their remote participation is approved by the Speaker, or by the leader or whip of their party, on account of illness.

Standing Order 212A

Examination of parliamentary papers

Appendix E of the Standing Orders comprises a list of some parliamentary papers that are referred to select committees for examination. We consider that it would be useful for Appendix E to contain a complete list of papers that stand referred to select committees. This would include adding references to papers referred to committees under other Standing Orders into Appendix E. It should also include any relevant references to legislation, for papers referred under statutory requirements.

Appendix E currently provides that long-term insights briefings stand referred to the Governance and Administration Committee, which may refer them on to other select committees as appropriate. The Public Service Amendment Act 2026 altered the requirement for all departmental chief executives to prepare long-term insights briefings, and instead requires only the chief executive of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to do so—on behalf of the public service. We recommend that this reference in Appendix E be updated accordingly.

We note that, in its report on the bill, the Governance and Administration Committee expressed the view that long-term insights briefings provide the public and Parliament with important insights into longer-term trends, opportunities, and challenges, and that it is

important for long-term thinking in the public service to be shared in this way. The committee considered that the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet should seek input from other government agencies that have previously been required to produce their own long-term insights briefings.²³ We endorse these views.

As there will be only a single long-term insights briefing, it becomes more straightforward to provide for it to be debated. We recommend that the long-term insights briefing be debatable instead of the first general debate after the committee reports. We propose that the debate be 1 hour long. We consider that the next Standing Orders Committee should consider whether this length is appropriate.

Emergency management papers

We recommend that Appendix E align with the Emergency Management Act 2026.

National emergency management strategy

Sections 83 to 86 of the Emergency Management Act relate to the national emergency management strategy. We recommend that Appendix E be amended to refer to this strategy, rather than the strategy made under the previous Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002.

We propose that the strategy be referred to the Governance and Administration Committee, and that the committee be required to report on the strategy within 12 sitting days of its presentation to the House. This is to allow for the committee to report within the 15-sitting-day period within which a notice of motion, for the House to resolve under section 86 not to approve the strategy, must be passed if it is to have effect.

It should be noted that any such notice of motion would engage the negative resolution procedure under Standing Order 331, and would itself be referred to a select committee as allocated by the Clerk (which would be the Governance and Administration Committee). A notice of motion referred under Standing Order 331 must be reported back within 10 sitting days. The select committee probably would report on the notice of motion together with the strategy, in which case the report and the notice of motion should be set down for debate together. We recommend that Appendix E recognise this possibility. However, notices of motion that engage the negative resolution procedure are rare.

National emergency management plan

Sections 89 to 96 of the Emergency Management Act provide for a national emergency management plan. We propose that Appendix E be amended to include reference to the national emergency management plan, replacing the current reference to the National Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan. The current deadline for the committee to report within 60 working days would be retained.

²³ Governance and Administration Committee, *Public Service Amendment Bill (190–2)*, (27 November 2025), pp 4–5.

Reporting on states of national emergency and national transition periods

Schedule 4 of the Emergency Management Act sets out new requirements for forms of reporting on states of emergency and transition periods. Clauses 2 and 6 of Schedule 4 require these reports to be presented to the House. We recommend that they stand referred to the Governance and Administration Committee and that they be reported within 90 working days.

Amendment 17 Examination of parliamentary papers

Set out a complete list of papers that stand referred to select committees in Appendix E.

Replace the reference to “Long-term insights briefings” in Appendix E with “long-term insights briefing”, as provided for by the Public Service Amendment Act 2026.

Amend Appendix E in light of the Emergency Management Act 2026.

Standing Order 383 and Appendix E

5 Legislative procedures

Expediting the legislative process

Expediting the legislative process, particularly through the use of urgency, was a prominent theme in the submissions we received. Submitters raised concerns that expediting the process:

- reduces safeguards, scrutiny, and the quality of legislation
- undermines the collegial nature of the select committee process
- reduces opportunities for members to influence legislation
- limits opportunities for public participation
- reduces public understanding of why legislation is introduced and passed.

Submitters were particularly concerned about omitting or limiting select committee consideration. Submitters commented on the importance of select committee consideration in the legislative process, and noted this consideration was often truncated or bypassed.

In 2011, the House amended the Standing Orders to allow for extended sittings, as a way to reduce the extent to which Governments resort to urgency. Initially, this succeeded, and there was a reduction in the number of sitting hours under urgency. However, in recent Parliaments the use of urgency has increased. So too has the total number of sitting hours and the number of bills introduced to the House. Parliament's workload has increased.²⁴

Ultimately, the main constraint on the use of urgency is political: a Government that uses urgency excessively or without justification may be subject to criticism. Each Government is accountable to the public for its use of urgency and for any potential adverse effects (such as those identified by submitters).

To assist accountability, we recommend that, after a bill is read a first time under urgency, it stands referred to a select committee, unless the member in charge moves that the bill be set down immediately for second reading without being considered by a select committee. In moving the motion, the member in charge should be required to inform the House with some particularity why the omission of select committee consideration is warranted.

Amendment 18 Motion to omit select committee consideration under urgency

Provide that, after a bill is read a first time under urgency, it stands referred to a select committee unless the member in charge moves that the bill be set down immediately for second reading without being considered by a select committee.

Require the member in charge, in moving the motion, to inform the House with some particularity of the reason why the omission of select committee consideration is warranted.

Standing Order 296 and 296A

²⁴ Refer to [Appendix B](#) for statistics about Parliament's workload.

Changes to manage workload while safeguarding scrutiny

Although the use of urgency can be problematic, it may be a symptom of other settings being askew. We recommend the following package of changes, which we consider will help to manage the House's increased workload while safeguarding legislative scrutiny:

- establishing a Legislative Scrutiny Committee that could consider some bills in lieu of the committee of the whole House
- providing more flexibility for minor and technical amendments to Acts to be made through omnibus bills
- encouraging the Business Committee to associate bills that deal with related matters, and in doing so to consider arranging longer debates and speeches for associated bills that are large, complex, or important
- recognising Regulatory Systems Amendment Bills in the Standing Orders.

We set out each of these below.

Establishing a Legislative Scrutiny Committee

We recommend establishing a Legislative Scrutiny Committee as a specialist select committee with the primary purpose of assisting the House to make high-quality legislation. The creation of a such a committee is intended to ease the workload of the House and busier select committees. The committee would do this by providing additional capacity to deal with bills that improve the statute book but might not otherwise be prioritised.

The functions of the Legislative Scrutiny Committee would include:

- carrying out select committee consideration of some non-controversial bills
- undertaking consideration in public session of non-controversial bills, involving the questioning of Ministers (similar to committee of the whole House but in return for the committee of the whole House stage being omitted or substantially limited)
- examining bills that are before other select committees and reporting to them on legislative quality matters
- receiving briefings and initiating inquiries that relate to its purpose and functions.

These functions are discussed further below. Overall, some of the functions would be, in relation to bills, analogous to functions that the Regulations Review Committee performs in respect of secondary legislation.

The next Review of Standing Orders should critically evaluate whether a Legislative Scrutiny Committee has assisted in managing the House's workload. It might be that other changes related to the operation of the House, for example limiting the amount of time a member can speak, may need to be revisited.

Amendment 19 Establishment of a Legislative Scrutiny Committee

Provide for the establishment of a Legislative Scrutiny Committee as described in this report.

Standing Order 185, 196A, 204, 279A, 279B, 296, 307, 318A, 318B, 318C, 320

Membership, chairperson, and meeting times

The committee's membership would not include a majority of members from Government parties, so as not to curtail the committee's scrutiny of the legislative quality of Government bills. We expect the Legislative Scrutiny Committee to operate along the lines followed by our committee, which seeks overwhelming support for proposals without conducting votes. We suggest below a procedure of reserving decisions in certain situations where there is not unanimous or broad support.

The Deputy Speaker would automatically be the chairperson of the committee, in recognition of the committee's important role in overseeing and promoting legislative quality. The Deputy Speaker would be able to delegate their duties and authority as chairperson to the deputy chairperson, and also to any Assistant Speaker when the committee is undertaking its consideration in detail function (see below). This flexibility would assist the Deputy Speaker in balancing their role chairing the committee with their duties as a presiding officer in the House.

Unlike other select committees, all members of the House would be able to attend meetings of the Legislative Scrutiny Committee and participate without needing to obtain leave of the committee. However, only committee members would be able to vote.

Like other specialist committees, the Legislative Scrutiny Committee would have special powers to meet during a sitting of the House. In addition, the committee would be able to meet after 6 pm on a day on which there was a sitting of the House and on Fridays of sitting weeks. This would provide flexibility for meetings at times that enable members to attend. We envisage that the committee will meet on the afternoons of sitting days, like other specialist committees.

Select committee consideration of bills

Most bills are referred to subject select committees for consideration, and this represents a large proportion of committee work. This work is not evenly spread across committees. For example, during this term of Parliament, the Justice Committee has considered 60 bills, compared with the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, which has considered only 8 bills. The number of bills before a committee does not necessarily align with overall workload—some bills contain major reforms, and others are relatively minor.

The referral of some non-controversial bills to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee would ease the burden on the busier committees. This would generally be appropriate for bills with policy that is relatively settled, although the committee would not be prevented from considering substantive amendments.

How would a bill be chosen for consideration by the committee?

The Business Committee would have overall discretion over which bills should be referred to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee to consider at the select committee stage. However, the following bills would be referred to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee automatically:

- local bills
- Local Legislation bills (which include Local Legislation (Repeal) Bills)
- private bills

- Regulatory Systems Amendment bills
- revision bills
- Statutes Amendment bills.

There may be some situations where such bills would be more appropriate for a subject select committee to consider. For example, where a local bill raises important policy issues in a particular subject area, the bill might best be referred to the relevant subject select committee. The Business Committee could arrange this accordingly.

How would the committee consider bills?

The Legislative Scrutiny Committee would receive evidence and advice, recommend amendments, and report to the House like any other select committee. Its focus would be on legislative quality, but if submissions raised substantive policy matters the committee could deal with them if there was broad agreement to do so. The committee might develop a practice of consulting relevant subject select committees about important policy matters, or could even consider making a joint report.

Consideration in detail

Proposals to manage the House's workload by operating a second chamber have been considered over the years. The Standing Orders Committee looked at the idea in 2003, potentially modelling it on the second chamber used by the Australian House of Representatives. The committee acknowledged the possible benefits of the model for easing the House's capacity, but did not reach agreement. It cited the difficulties of maintaining a presence in two chambers at once, especially for smaller parties.²⁵

The establishment of a Legislative Scrutiny Committee offers an alternative approach. The committee would undertake the sort of consideration done by the committee of the whole House. Ministers would be questioned in a public session, with the committee having the power to amend bills directly while operating in that mode. This would happen instead of committee of the whole House consideration, or in some cases could be a preliminary step before a shortened committee stage.

We propose that this type of work be known as "consideration in detail", borrowing a term from the Parliament of Australia.

Referral for consideration in detail

We propose that a bill be selected for consideration in detail through a determination of the Business Committee. Such a determination could be made at any time, including before the bill is introduced, to take effect after the bill's second reading. It is likely that most, if not all, of the bills that the Legislative Scrutiny Committee considered as a select committee would return for consideration in detail, but this is not guaranteed. Equally, a bill that has been considered by another select committee might be referred for consideration in detail, especially if its policy is settled and the bill enjoys unanimous or widespread support.

Provision also would be made for a bill to be referred for consideration in detail when awaiting its third reading, as an alternative to recommittal. This could encourage the

²⁵ *Standing Orders Committee, Review of Standing Orders 2003*, (11 December 2003), [2002–2005] AJHR I.18B, p 10.

correction of errors or improvement of drafting at that late stage in the legislative process, without the deterrent of using House time.

When a bill is referred for consideration in detail, it would remain on the Order Paper. However, it would be postponed, thereby providing an opportunity for the consideration in detail to take place. Like other postponements for Government bills, the member in charge would have control of when the postponement would end. However, if an end date was determined by the Business Committee, that date would take precedence. If the committee did not report before the date on which the postponement ended, the bill would be discharged without a report. The bill then would be available for its committee stage, or third reading, as usual.

Conduct of consideration in detail

When the Legislative Scrutiny Committee is undertaking consideration in detail, its procedures would resemble those of the committee of the whole House. The consideration and adoption of amendments and the order in which provisions are considered would be the same as for committee of the whole House. The Legislative Scrutiny Committee would also have authority to divide a bill.

However, the committee would still be a select committee, and would operate on that basis where not otherwise provided. The Minister or member in charge of a bill that is being considered in detail would be required to attend the committee and give evidence in public. Departmental officials or other advisers on the bill could accompany and assist the Minister and could also provide evidence. However, to be clear, it is the Minister who is expected to speak primarily, and be held accountable. No speech or debate limits apply, as distinct from the committee of the whole House.

Some select committee rules would not apply during consideration in detail, for example, the confidentiality of proceedings. Consideration in detail would occur in public session and be livestreamed on the Parliament website. A large room would be used, which would be a room with sound equipment to enable the production of a full transcript.

Reserved decisions

In general, the committee would be expected to make decisions on the voices.

When dealing with provisions and amendments during the consideration in detail stage, the committee would reserve its decision on a question if two or more members of the committee disagreed with the result of the vote, as announced by the chairperson. Provisions or amendments that were subject to reserved decisions would be listed in the committee's report, and these decisions then would be determined in a committee of the whole House.

The debate in a committee of the whole House on the reserved provisions or amendments would be limited, because they would have already been debated in public at the Legislative Scrutiny Committee. This would depend, though—for example, if the amendments were substantive new provisions or policies, then a longer debate in a committee of the whole House might be warranted. Ideally, the Government should not put forward bills for consideration in detail when it was intended to make large or controversial policy changes.

Report on consideration in detail

The Legislative Scrutiny Committee's report on consideration in detail would resemble a report from a committee of the whole House, rather than a normal select committee report on a bill. The bill would be reprinted if there were amendments that were agreed without reserved decisions. The report would also set out a list of any reserved decisions, and could contain additional information that the committee decided to include to inform the House. The report template would have information such as the dates when the committee considered the bill, the committee members and others who participated, the name of the Minister or member in charge who gave evidence, and the advising department.

After the report was adopted by the House, the amended bill would be set down for the next stage in its reprinted form. If there were no provisions or amendments that were subject to reserved decisions, then the next stage would be the third reading.

Legislative scrutiny of bills and general oversight

The committee would also have the function of examining bills that are before other select committees and reporting to them on legislative quality matters. This would follow a similar process to that employed by the Regulations Review Committee in reporting to committees on bills that contain powers to make secondary legislation, and would relate to other legislative quality matters arising from bills.

Like other specialist committees—the Standing Orders Committee, Petitions Committee, and Regulations Review Committee—the Legislative Scrutiny Committee would have a general power to consider and report to the House on any matters that fall within its specialist area by initiating a briefing or inquiry. For example, it could develop guidance for legislative scrutiny, or could report on its activities. The committee could liaise with the Parliamentary Counsel Office about legislative stewardship matters, including the development of the revision programme and use of revision powers. The committee could report on matters that arise from select committee amendments to bills.

Revision bills

The Legislation Amendment Act 2026 broadened the scope of revision bills.²⁶ They will now be able to more substantively alter the meaning and effect of the law than was previously the case. The streamlined parliamentary processes may no longer be appropriate where revision bills substantively alter the law.

There should continue to be no amendment or debate on the question for the first reading of a revision bill. As referenced above, we recommend that all revision bills be referred to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee for select committee consideration. After their second reading, revision bills should be referred back to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee for consideration in detail. Revisions bills would then have a normal third reading debate. The Business Committee may decide to vary parts of this process.

²⁶ Legislation Amendment Act 2026, section 40, compared with the previous provisions (section 96(3) to (4)) in the Legislation Act 2019.

Amendment 20 Revision bills

Provide that revision bills progress through the legislative process in the manner set out in this report.

Standing Orders 276 and 296

Single-subject rule and omnibus bills

We recommend some changes to the rules for single-subject bills and omnibus bills. We anticipate that these changes will be beneficial for legislative quality by facilitating amendments to improve and update the statute book, and possibly reducing the number of bills that need to be introduced.

Current approach

The Standing Orders limit the ability of bills to contain unrelated or miscellaneous provisions. This is achieved primarily through Standing Order 264, which provides that a bill must relate to one subject area only. In practice, this means that a bill introduced under this Standing Order either:

- substantively amends only one principal Act, or
- creates a new principal Act that deals with an identifiable single subject area.

Such a bill can make consequential amendments to other principal Acts.

Where a bill is not admissible under the single-subject rule in Standing Order 264, it might be admissible as an omnibus bill under Standing Order 267. Essentially, an omnibus bill can be introduced that, while substantively amending more than one principal Act, still observes the concept that each bill should relate to a single subject. Criteria for admissibility on this basis are set out in Standing Order 267(1). For example, a bill can be admissible if it “contains amendments that deal with an interrelated topic that can be regarded as implementing a single broad policy”.²⁷

Certain categories of omnibus bills are permitted despite not dealing with a single subject. These are listed in Standing Order 266, and include such types of bills as taxation bills and Statutes Amendment Bills.

Finally, a bill can also be admitted as an omnibus bill by being approved by the Business Committee.²⁸

Maintaining current overall approach

Our overall view is that the single-subject and omnibus bill rules are important for clarity and transparency in the content of bills and Acts. They also avert the bartering of unrelated legislative propositions, support the House’s function of scrutinising legislation, and limit the extent of legislative upheaval. A substantial loosening of these rules could reduce public

²⁷ Standing Order 267(1)(a).

²⁸ Standing Order 267(1)(c).

trust in Parliament if it resulted in the combination of miscellaneous or scarcely related legislative proposals.

Parliament is the supreme legislative body. We consider that decisions as to the acceptable breadth and content of proposed laws must rest with the House and the Speaker. The rules set out parliamentary expectations for admissibility, while allowing for them to be set aside by the House or through cross-party agreement in the Business Committee. A substantial relaxation of the rules would effectively shift that power to Ministers. We do not consider that would be in the interests of good legislative scrutiny.

However, we accept that the rules as they stand can inhibit maintenance of the statute book. We also consider that the current rules may be resulting in the workload of the House and select committees being higher than need be. These issues need to be addressed, while upholding the House's authority.

We propose that Standing Order 264 be amended to set out the single-subject rule more clearly.

Omnibus bills—minor amendments additional to single broad policy

Standing Order 267(1)(a) provides that an omnibus bill to amend more than one Act may be introduced if the amendments deal with an interrelated topic that can be regarded as implementing a single broad policy. Although we do not recommend a wholesale change to the omnibus bill rules, we consider that they could be adjusted to facilitate minor amendments to improve the statute book.

We therefore propose that Standing Order 267 be amended so that an omnibus bill introduced under paragraph (1)(a) may include minor amendments to one principal Act that would be amended by the bill. With approval from the Business Committee, an omnibus bill would be able to make minor amendments to two or more principal Acts that are to be amended by the bill.

In this context, amendments would be treated as “minor” if they:

- are intended to improve or update provisions in the Act, and
- do not result in the bill having more than one broad or substantive policy.

In our view, this change to the Standing Orders would support the maintenance of the statute book while ensuring omnibus bills were not miscellaneous or unexpected in their content. Roughly a quarter of bills are admissible omnibus bills, and this proposed rule change would permit several additional legislative vehicles for maintenance amendments to be made available during each term of Parliament.

It would operate as follows:

- A bill amends two or more principal Acts, with the amendments dealing with an interrelated topic that can be regarded as implementing a single broad policy. It therefore is admissible as an omnibus bill under Standing Order 267(1)(a).
- Under the recommended change to Standing Order 267, the bill also could include additional amendments to one of those principal Acts, if those amendments are minor

and are intended to improve or update provisions in the Act.²⁹ These minor amendments would not need to be regarded as implementing the single broad policy.

To facilitate this approach, the bill could be structured so minor amendments unrelated to implementing the single broad policy were in a separate part or schedule. This would highlight their intended nature as minor amendments, for the information of members and the public. Of course, it would be open for submitters to draw attention to any unforeseen policy matters that might arise from those amendments. It should be noted here that the structure and drafting of bills is a matter for the Parliamentary Counsel Office, in the first instance. It may not always be practicable for minor amendments unrelated to the single broad policy to be shown separately.

The Standing Orders should also provide for the Business Committee to approve the making of minor amendments to the other Act or Acts amended by the bill. This approval could be given before the bill is introduced or during its passage, including when the bill is being considered by a select committee. It would align with a power already held by the Business Committee under Standing Order 267(2).

Amendment 21 Single subject-area rule and omnibus bills

Amend Standing Order 264 so it requires that a bill must relate to a single subject area or, if it is an amendment bill, substantively amend only one principal Act.

Amend Standing Order 267 so an omnibus bill introduced under paragraph (1)(a) can include minor amendments to one of the principal Acts that is to be amended by the bill or, with the approval of the Business Committee, minor amendments to two or more of the principal Acts that are to be amended by the bill.

Provide that the Business Committee has the power to determine that, when such a bill is before a select committee, the committee has the power to adopt minor amendments to the other Act or Acts to be amended by the bill.

Standing Orders 264 and 267

Associated bills

Either the House or the Business Committee can determine that any two or more bills are associated bills (previously known as “cognate bills”). It is fair to say, however, that determinations to this effect have been quite rare, especially in recent years.

We wish to encourage greater use of the practice of associating bills, for the purpose of managing the House’s time and enabling the more effective consideration of the bills concerned. In determining that bills are associated, the Business Committee can extend the time for the debate on any or all of the first, second, and third readings of those bills. It can arrange for speeches to be longer too. In this manner, the Business Committee could allow for members to debate related bills together, while acknowledging when those bills are sufficiently large, complex or important to justify more time than normally accorded for a

²⁹ Or, with approval from the Business Committee, it could include minor amendments to two or more principal Acts that would be amended by the bill.

single debate. In this way, the Business Committee can negotiate arrangements that work for members across the House and enhance the House's consideration.

Regulatory Systems Amendment Bills

The Parliamentary Counsel Office proposed that Regulatory Systems Amendment Bills be recognised in the Standing Orders. It said the lack of such recognition presents challenges such as uncertainty, inconsistency, vulnerability to misuse, and reduced transparency. Providing for Regulatory Systems Amendment Bills as an accepted category of omnibus bill would protect against the inclusion of significant or controversial policy changes that could undermine the use of this model.

We agree that it would be useful to recognise Regulatory Systems Amendment Bills in the Standing Orders. This category of bill has been used regularly in recent years, with about 20 bills of this nature dealt with by the House since 2016.

We note the Parliamentary Counsel Office's point that earlier approval of these bills would be desirable, so departments and Ministers are more inclined to develop legislative proposals for inclusion in them. The Business Committee approves the introduction of other omnibus bills without meeting criteria (under Standing Order 267(1)(c))—we consider that it would be sufficient for the Standing Orders to provide that Regulatory Systems Amendment Bills may be permitted by the Business Committee without needing criteria specified. Instead, we state our expectation that Regulatory Systems Amendment Bills consist entirely of amendments to Acts that are capable of broad parliamentary support, and are not of sufficient importance to warrant a separate bill.

A practice has developed whereby a Regulatory Systems Amendment Bill may be amended in a way that is more than minor if the amendment has been approved by the Business Committee. We recommend that this practice be incorporated in the Standing Orders.

Amendment 22 Types of omnibus bills that may be introduced

Include Regulatory Systems Amendment Bills as a category of permitted omnibus bills, provided that they require Business Committee approval for their introduction.

Provide that a Regulatory Systems Amendment Bill may be amended in a way that is more than minor only if that amendment has been approved by the Business Committee.

Standing Orders 266, 300 and 310

Grouping of amendments

Standing Order 315(3) provides for the Chairperson in a committee of the whole House to group amendments when putting the question. Three criteria are that:

- the amendments stand in the name of the same member
- the amendments lend themselves to being grouped on account of their content or subject matter, or because they form a single alternative proposition
- grouping of the amendments is necessary to enable the committee's effective consideration of the bill.

The text of Standing Order 315(3) does not require all three factors to be present—it follows the legislative style that is ambiguous about whether the items listed are alternatives or are all required to be present.

This ambiguity was deliberate, and was intended to allow flexibility for the chairperson to manage proceedings judiciously as circumstances arise. Although the idea was that grouping would be exercised for amendments that comprise an alternative proposition made by a single member, it was anticipated that members could circumvent the rule simply by lodging amendments in the names of different members.³⁰ The ambiguity of the text enables a chairperson to respond accordingly where such a tactical approach is apparent. It should be noted, though, that chairpersons have not often exercised the discretion to group amendments.

Standing Order 315 was adopted in 2011, in anticipation of how the procedure might work. It is timely to consider the wording in light of more recent experience, especially following the Speaker's recent ruling that may increase the prospect of grouping taking place.³¹

We believe that the text of Standing Order 315(3) is unclear, on account of the intended flexibility for the chairperson to exercise discretion, as set out above. We propose that Standing Order 315(3) be adjusted so it is clear that all three factors must be present before grouping can occur.

To retain the practical effect of Standing Order 315(3), while making it clearer, we propose that paragraph (a) be amended so it reads as follows:

the amendments stand in the name of the same member, or members of the same party, and

Many of the House's procedures recognise that members of the same party tend to co-ordinate their parliamentary contributions and proposals. The focus of Standing Order 315(3) is on alternative propositions put forward by a single member, but the chairperson can group amendments from members of the same party if this is warranted. We consider that grouping of amendments of members of the same party is not a suitable approach in the case of conscience issues.

We encourage presiding officers to explain why they have decided to group amendments when putting the question. This would assist transparency and the order of the House.

Amendment 23 Grouping of amendments

Amend Standing Order 315(3) as follows:

- in subparagraph (a), add the words “or members of the same party, and”
- in subparagraph (b), adding “, and”.

Standing Order 315

³⁰ Standing Orders Committee, *Review of Standing Orders*, (September 2011) [2008–2011] AJHR I.18B, p 45.

³¹ *Hansard*, (30 June 2026), at 15:08.

Order of considering bill

Preliminary provisions refer to the title and commencement clauses of a bill and, if applicable, a principal Act clause and a temporary law clause. The preliminary provisions of a bill that is drafted in parts are debated last in the committee of the whole House. By comparison, for a bill that is not drafted in parts, the default debate structure is a clause-by-clause debate, with the preliminary provisions debated first.

The advantage of debating preliminary provisions last is that it allows the committee to consider whether these clauses are still fit for purpose in light of amendments made during the consideration of the bill's substantive provisions. If an amendment is adopted by a committee of the whole House that will take time to implement, it may require an adjustment to the bill's commencement. Similarly, if the committee adopts an amendment that substantively alters the effect of the bill, it may require a change to the title.

For these reasons, we recommend that the default debate structure for a bill that is not drafted in parts should be for preliminary clauses to be considered together after other clauses have been dealt with.

Amendment 24 Order of considering bill

Provide that where a bill is not drafted in parts, preliminary clauses are considered together for the purposes of debate, and the questions on them are put separately without further debate after other provisions have been dealt with.

Standing Order 311

Lodging of amendments

Standing Order 314(1)(b) requires members to deliver six copies of a tabled amendment. We recommend that this be reduced to three copies. This will reduce waste and potential confusion (such as when a large number of amendments are lodged at the same time).

Amendment 25 Lodging of amendments

Reduce the number of copies required when lodging a tabled amendment from six to three.

Standing Order 314(1)(b)

Notice of amendment to bill or change to Vote

Standing Order 338 requires members to give notice of certain amendments "at least 24 hours before the House meets". At times there has been confusion about whether the deadline to give notice refers to 24 hours before an amendment is voted on, or to 24 hours before the start of the relevant sitting day. Specifying that it is the latter would clarify this point.

Amendment 26 Notice of amendment to bill or change to Vote

Provide that a member intending to move a change to a Vote or propose an amendment which may have an impact on the Government's fiscal aggregates must give notice by lodging the proposed amendment or change with the Clerk by 2 pm on the day before the question is to be put.

Standing Order 338

Truncated select committee consideration

Select committee consideration of bills is widely acknowledged as a highly effective feature of New Zealand's legislative system. It is a complex process, which involves direct engagement of the public through submissions, followed by progression of stages through which members obtain advice and consider provisions and amendments in detail, and arrive at a report.

The Standing Orders Committee in 2011 set out concerns around truncating the select committee process:

[The provision for instructions to select committees to be moved without debate] is often used to shorten significantly the time available for select committees to consider bills. The truncation of the select committee process can have serious implications for legislative quality and confidence in the legislative process. As we heard in submissions, it also affects the public perception of Parliament, especially when submitters are required to prepare submissions in a short time and hearings are compressed.

A shortened deadline for select committee consideration of bills may be justified occasionally, but such instructions have become common. Governments use the procedural mechanisms available to them to progress their legislative programme, and in doing so weigh up political factors and costs in procedural terms, along with the public interest. Since instructions to select committees are not subject to debate, there is no meaningful procedural deterrent to governments' moving to truncate the select committee process—sometimes severely.³²

In recent times, reduced report-back deadlines have become even more prevalent than they were in 2011. The reasons behind these shortened report-back dates have not always been clear. We recommend that a member in charge of a bill be required to inform the House with some particularity of the circumstances that warrant the proposal for a shortened time for the committee's report. We recommend retaining the current situation where there is no debate on the question to instruct a select committee to consider a bill within a timeframe of more than four months.

Amendment 27 Instruction to shorten time for report on bill

Require a member in charge of a bill to inform the House with some particularity of the circumstances that warrant a proposal for a shortened time for the committee's report.

Standing Order 298

³² *Standing Orders Committee, Review of Standing Orders*, (September 2011) [2008–2011] AJHR I.18B, pp 40–41.

Local bills and private bills

Promoters of local and private bills must follow certain procedures before such bills may be introduced to the House. These are set out in Appendix C of the Standing Orders. We recommend some changes to the preliminary procedures for local and private bills.

We also note that private bills and local bills are often technical and non-partisan in nature. We encourage members in charge of such bills to request that the Business Committee arrange streamlined procedures for the bills' progression. For example, the Business Committee can grant approval for local and private bills to progress through multiple stages in the House on the same sitting day.

Requirement to gain approval from the Business Committee

We are concerned that some private bills and local bills can consume a substantial amount of the time and resources of the House and its committees, in proportion to the objects they are trying to achieve. We understand that select committees have expressed this view during their consideration of private bills and local bills.

Upon deliberating on the Auckland Harbour Board and Takapuna Borough Council Empowering Act Amendment Bill in 2025, the Governance and Administration Committee reached the conclusion that the "consideration of local bills is time- and resource-intensive, both for select committees and the promoter of the bill".³³ The committee advocated a higher threshold for the introduction of local bills, and said that local bills "should be considered more as a last resort when what is intended would be impossible or impractical to achieve without primary legislation".

In 2022, the Social Services and Community Committee reported on its consideration of the Girl Guides Association (New Zealand Branch) Incorporation Amendment Bill.³⁴ The committee stated that a private bill "should not be a mechanism to bypass court processes when they are available". The committee concluded that Parliament should be "reluctant to grant special legislative rights to private persons unless there is a proven necessity", and that necessity had not been met in the case of that bill.

We recommend that a promoter of a private bill or local bill should have to gain permission from the Business Committee before being able to bring the bill to the House.

Before commencing the preliminary procedures required under Appendix C for a proposed bill, the promoter would need to write to the Speaker, as Chairperson of the Business Committee, to seek the committee's approval. The promoter would need to provide relevant information, such as the objects of the bill and evidence about how, in the promoter's view, the objects can be attained.

The Business Committee should take into account whether:

- the objects of the bill can only be attained through legislation, or

³³ Governance and Administration Committee, *Auckland Harbour Board and Takapuna Borough Council Empowering Act Amendment Bill*, (24 February 2025), p 2.

³⁴ Social Services and Community Committee, *Girl Guides Association (New Zealand Branch) Incorporation Amendment Bill*, (10 March 2022), p 9.

- it is not reasonable or practicable to use means other than legislation to attain the objects of the proposed bill, or
- it would be appropriate to use means other than legislation to attain those objects.

The Business Committee would also have broad discretion to gauge overall political support for the proposed bill and arrangements in the House in its consideration.

A sessional order may be needed, at the start of the next term of Parliament, to provide for bills that have already commenced their preliminary procedures.

Amendment 28 Approval to propose private bill or local bill

Require the promoter of a private bill or local bill to obtain approval from the Business Committee before commencing the preliminary procedures for the bill.

Standing Order 278A, 278B, and Standing Orders Appendix C

Declaration to the House and preamble

The promoter of a local bill or private bill must make a declaration to the House relating to the bill. The declaration must set out the reasons why the objects of the bill cannot be achieved other than by legislation, or the reasons why legislation is warranted even if the objects can be achieved in another way. A private bill must also contain a preamble that sets out facts relating to the bill, whether its objects can be attained only through legislation, and if other means are available, why legislation is warranted.

We recommend that the promoter of a private bill or local bill should be required to set out in the declaration, and in the preamble for a private bill, whether the objects of the bill can be achieved without legislation. A specific provision is also to be added to require that the preamble to a private bill set out the bill's objects. If the objects can be otherwise achieved, the declaration and preamble must state the reasons why it would not be reasonable or practicable to use other means. This is a higher test than is presently the case.

We consider that a declaration for a private or local bill should also identify whether advice or assistance on the drafting of the bill has been sought from the Parliamentary Counsel Office. We recommend amending clause 14 of Appendix C to require that a promoter of a private or local bill must include this information in a declaration to the House.

Amendment 29 Declaration to the House and preamble

Require that a declaration for a private bill or local bill, and preamble for a private bill, must set out the reasons the objects of the bill can only be attained by legislation, or the reasons why it would not be reasonable or practicable to use other means.

Amend clause 14 of Appendix C to require that a declaration for a private or local bill must identify whether advice on, or assistance with, the drafting of the bill has been sought from the Parliamentary Counsel Office.

Standing Order 262, 278A, and Standing Orders Appendix C

Notice to persons with direct interest

Clause 4(2) of Appendix C requires a promoter of a private or local bill to give notice, if the bill proposes to modify, restrict, repeal, or amend the provisions of an Act, to the chief executive of the government department or agency charged with the administration of the Act.

However, no government department or agency administers a local Act or private Act, in the normal sense of being the entity responsible for administering the legislation. That responsibility includes the stewardship of legislation and the provision of policy support for updating, improving, and amending it. Government departments and agencies do not have such responsibility for local Acts and private Acts. We therefore recommend amending clause 4(2)(b) of Appendix C to replace “an Act” with “a public Act”.

Amendment 30 Notice to persons with direct interest

Amend clause 4(2)(b) of Appendix C to replace the words “an Act” with “a public Act”.

Standing Orders Appendix C

Repeal of spent local legislation

The Parliamentary Counsel Office drew attention to a significant amount of local legislation that no longer serves a practical purpose, increases complexity, and undermines certainty of the law. However, there is little incentive for local authorities to initiate bills to repeal local Acts.

We recommend that clause 17 of Appendix C to the Standing Orders be amended to allow the Attorney-General (in addition to the Minister of Local Government) to initiate and introduce a Local Legislation (Repeal) Bill that would repeal any spent local Act, any spent Local Legislation Act, or any spent provisions in a Local Legislation Act. The bill could also make consequential amendments to other legislation affected by the repeal.

Amendment 31 Repeal of spent local legislation

Provide that the Attorney-General may initiate and introduce a Local Legislation (Repeal) Bill.

Standing Orders Appendix C, clause 17

Legislative statements

At second reading

The purpose of legislative statements is to set out substantial background material on what legislation does, or is intended to do, so that Ministers do not have to read from pre-prepared notes when moving a particular reading. There is value in these statements as supplements to explanatory notes on the introduction copies of bills, and as a way to explain technical changes following the committee of the whole House stage (further to explanatory notes to ministerial Amendment Papers, for example). In essence, the legislative statement for the first reading of a bill may provide detail about why and how the bill was introduced; for the third reading, a legislative statement sheds light on the bill in its final form.

The second reading debate is an opportunity for the House to consider the report of a select committee. Although a sponsoring Minister will likely have a view on a committee's amendments, they are not responsible for explaining them nor for setting out the process that a committee followed—the committee speaks on its own behalf through the report. Nonetheless, legislative statements presented for second reading debates often summarise committee amendments and paraphrase or even repeat reports. In some cases, statements presented for second readings are almost identical to those presented for first readings, other than incorporating modest changes to reflect amendments.

We recommend that the Standing Orders be amended so legislative statements may be presented for the first or third reading of a bill, but not the second reading. In theory, a Minister still could present a legislative statement for the second reading of a bill, because Ministers have broad discretion to present papers under Standing Order 381 relating to matters for which they are responsible. However, select committee reports are intended to inform second reading debates.

Amendment 32 Legislative statements

Specify that legislative statements may be presented for the first reading or the third reading of a bill (but not the second reading).

Standing Order 272

Process for presenting legislative statements

Requirements for the presentation of legislative statements under Standing Order 272 have resulted in recurring procedural difficulties. These appear to arise primarily because the statements are subject to presentation requirements that differ from those applying to other parliamentary papers. In particular, they must be circulated to parties by a prescribed deadline and presented directly by the Minister on the floor of the House.

Ministers' offices have shown ongoing uncertainty about when legislative statements are required, the steps necessary for their presentation, and how those requirements apply in less standard circumstances, such as during urgency when bills are progressed through multiple stages or where secrecy prevents prior circulation. This uncertainty has persisted since legislative statements were introduced in 2020.

We recommend that the Standing Orders be amended to align the presentation of legislative statements with the procedure for ordinary parliamentary papers. This would simplify the procedure without degrading the purpose of the statements.

If presented in the normal way for parliamentary papers, legislative statements would be subject to the deadline of 1 pm on a sitting day. This would provide an opportunity for members to examine them before debates. Ministers could present them on any working day beforehand if they wished—something the current settings appear to discourage.

For bills accorded urgency, we recommend an additional change be made to allow legislative statements to be presented in the House at any time on the sitting day. This would align the process with that available for the Attorney-General to present a report, under section 7 of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, relating to a bill being considered under urgency.

Amendment 33 Legislative statements

Align the presentation of legislative statements with the procedure for parliamentary papers.

Retain provision for legislative statements to be presented in the House in respect of bills to which urgency has been accorded.

Standing Order 272

Recommendations in reports on bills

The Government is required to respond to recommendations made by committees on petitions, briefings, inquiries, treaty examinations, and parliamentary papers referred under Appendix E of the Standing Orders. This requirement does not apply to recommendations in reports on bills and other items of business, although the Government may choose to respond where not required by Standing Orders.

In the legislative context, there may be value in Government responses to recommendations that go beyond amendments to the legislation before the House. An example is if the committee recommends that the Government review and consider developing legislation in a related area, or if the committee recommends that the Government undertake certain activities as part of its implementation of the legislation.

To some extent, members of the committee already have an opportunity to follow up on the issues through legislative debate in the House and committee of the whole House, or even through select committee inquiries. However, there may be benefit in ensuring a formal response to recommendations in reports on bills.

Amendment 34 Government responses to select committee reports

Require the Government to respond to recommendations addressed to it in a select committee report on a bill.

Standing Order 256

New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990

As part of our review, we considered how the House examines the consistency of proposed legislation with the rights and freedoms set out in the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 (NZBORA). We wrote to the Attorney-General to seek his views on certain matters related to this topic. Overall, the Attorney-General told us that he does not consider changes to the current practices to be “necessary or appropriate”.

The Attorney-General is required to bring any bill that appears to be inconsistent with the rights and freedoms set out in NZBORA to the attention of the House.³⁵ We received a submission suggesting that advice provided to the Attorney-General on the consistency of a bill with NZBORA should be made publicly available at the time a bill is introduced to the House.³⁶ A practice has emerged where the Attorney-General generally waives privilege on advice received, and it is published on the Ministry of Justice website. The Attorney-General

³⁵ This requirement is set out in section 7 of the Act and in Standing Order 269(1).

³⁶ Advice is prepared by the Ministry of Justice, or the Crown Law Office for bills that the ministry is responsible for administering.

told us that the Ministry of Justice now receives notifications once a bill has been introduced to the House, to support the prompt publishing of advice.

As in previous reviews of the Standing Orders, submitters proposed that there should be a formal procedure or required process for identifying and addressing apparent NZBORA inconsistencies that may arise from amendments to bills made during the legislative process. It is up to the Attorney-General's discretion whether to present a report to the House in cases where an amendment to a bill appears to be inconsistent with NZBORA. In 2023, the Standing Orders Committee stated an expectation that the Attorney-General should report to the House in these situations. The committee set out guidance about circumstances that may warrant assessment of a proposed amendment to a bill.³⁷

The Attorney-General told us that the guidance is sufficient to address potential inconsistencies arising from amendments to bills, and that it would be unnecessary to introduce a prescriptive process. He noted that successive Attorneys-General have followed this guidance and that he expects all future Attorneys-General to do so.

Functions of the Regulations Review Committee

The Regulatory Standards Act 2025 established an independent Regulatory Standards Board responsible for considering the consistency of legislation with specified principles of responsible regulation.

Before the bill was passed, the Regulations Review Committee conducted a briefing to consider how the bill's proposals would affect the committee's work and functions, as a parliamentary committee dedicated to the scrutiny of secondary legislation.³⁸ The committee wrote to us to convey its findings.

The Regulations Review Committee highlighted that one of the proposed functions of the Regulatory Standards Board could create competing and conflicting mechanisms for overseeing secondary legislation and regulation-making powers in Acts. Section 28(1) of the Act provides that one of the functions of the board is to carry out inquiries into whether Acts or secondary legislation are inconsistent with the principles of responsible regulation. Section 32 states that the Ministry for Regulation must set up a system for receiving complaints on legislation, to support the board's inquiry functions.

This function is similar to the Regulations Review Committee's function of investigating complaints about the operation of secondary legislation, provided for under Standing Order 326(5).

There is potential for overlap in which both the board and the Regulations Review Committee could investigate the same, or a similar, complaint about a piece of secondary legislation. In its report on its briefing into regulatory reform, the Regulations Review Committee stated that it considers that, for any complaints or other matters where overlap may occur, the board should defer to the committee.

³⁷ *Standing Orders Committee, Review of Standing Orders 2023*, (30 August 2023), [2020–2023] AJHR I.18A, pp 33–34.

³⁸ *Regulations Review Committee, Briefing on regulatory reform*, (6 November 2025).

We agree with this finding. We expect the Regulatory Standards Board to work in good faith with the Regulations Review Committee, with deference to the committee's exercise of its important functions on behalf of the House.

Drawing attention to secondary legislation

The Parliamentary Counsel Office proposed a change to support recent changes made to the Legislation Act 2019. The Act imposes new publication and presentation obligations on agencies making secondary legislation. Section 77 of the Act provides that secondary legislation will not commence until the date that it is first published (unless exempt from this requirement). However, incentives to comply with other publication and presentation requirements are weaker, as the Act provides that a failure to comply with these requirements does not invalidate secondary legislation.

The Regulations Review Committee can bring secondary legislation to the special attention of the House on specific grounds set out in Standing Order 327(2). The Parliamentary Counsel Office proposed expanding the grounds for the committee to draw secondary legislation to the special attention of the House to include cases where secondary legislation was not published or presented to the House as required by any legislation, including the Legislation Act 2019.

We support this proposal. The publication and presentation of secondary legislation is important for the accessibility of the law, a principle that underpins the Legislation Act 2019. The Act is clear that a failure to comply does not invalidate the secondary legislation concerned, as noted above. The Regulations Review Committee could form the view that a particular failure to comply with publication and presentation requirements might justify being drawn to the House's attention. Potentially, a member of the committee could lodge a notice of motion for disallowance. Such oversight could support the objective of making the law more accessible.

Amendment 35 Drawing attention to secondary legislation

Expand the grounds for the Regulations Review Committee to draw the special attention of the House to secondary legislation to include where secondary legislation was not published, or was not presented to the House, as required under any legislation.

Standing Order 327(2)(ha)

6 Financial procedures

Substantial changes from 2023

The Review of Standing Orders 2023 recommended substantial changes to financial scrutiny procedures. Overall, committees have viewed these changes positively, as set out in their first scrutiny activities reports. It is particularly encouraging that some committees said the changes have improved scrutiny of the executive, given that this is a fundamental constitutional function of the House.

The previous Standing Orders Committee acknowledged that its proposed changes were a limited departure from the House generally not prescribing how committees must conduct their business. We consider the changes have been sufficiently flexible for committees to implement them in the precise manner they prefer, while also ensuring a minimum standard of rigorous scrutiny across committees.

For the most part, we do not think that the Standing Orders governing financial scrutiny procedures need to be altered further. Nonetheless, there are several areas in which we think small changes and more guidance would help with the continued development of a more vigorous culture of scrutiny. We address each of these areas below.

Scrutiny weeks

The Review of Standing Orders 2023 recommended the designation of two scrutiny weeks each year. These are weeks in which the House does not meet, and committees conduct hearings on Estimates and annual reviews. Scrutiny weeks have rapidly established themselves as an important feature of the parliamentary calendar in the minds of members, officials, the media, and the wider public. We support their continuation.

Early notice of business

Some members reported scheduling difficulties when they wanted to attend hearings occurring at the same time at different committees. There will always be some scheduling conflicts, irrespective of whether hearings occur in scrutiny weeks or regular sitting weeks. This problem is primarily for individual members to manage but could be lessened by committees giving early notice about what business they will consider and when. We encourage committees to circulate their scrutiny week agendas as early as possible, even in a draft format that simply shows what hearings have been indicatively scheduled.

What business should be conducted in scrutiny weeks?

Committees may wish to prioritise hearings with key departments in the annual review scrutiny week and leave Crown entities for later. Departments carry out important functions that warrant timely scrutiny and tend to present their annual reports to Parliament earlier than Crown entities. Indeed, the previous Standing Orders Committee clearly stated it did not expect all annual reviews hearings to occur in scrutiny week, either because an annual report is not available, or due to a lack of time.

However, committees retain the flexibility to schedule hearings as they see fit. Some Crown entities have large budgets and important functions that warrant an exception to our suggestion that their hearings be held later. Committees are also best placed to manage their overall workload. If a committee is very busy, it may choose to do more financial scrutiny hearings in a scrutiny week than it otherwise would. Busy scrutiny weeks are preferable to longer hearings not occurring at all.

We wish to reiterate the requirement, as set out in Standing Order 338C(1)(b), that during scrutiny weeks committees should meet primarily for the purpose of conducting scrutiny activities. It is undesirable for committees to consider business unrelated to financial scrutiny during scrutiny weeks. However, it may be necessary if urgent business arises or the House has given a committee a deadline that necessitates consideration of that work.

If a committee determines that it needs to consider business unrelated to financial scrutiny during scrutiny week, this business should be in addition to—and never instead of—financial scrutiny. Hearings with Ministers and government entities should not be shortened to create time for other business. This other business should be signalled as far in advance as possible. It should also be short, in keeping with the requirement for committees to meet in these weeks primarily for scrutiny activities.

In-depth annual reviews

Standing Order 353A(3)(b) currently states that an in-depth annual review involves “three hours or more hearing evidence, which may be split over two meetings”. There is no reason to cap the number of meetings at which an in-depth hearing can occur at only two. We recommend an amendment to enable in-depth annual review hearings to take place over multiple meetings.

Amendment 36 Conduct of annual reviews

Enable in-depth annual review hearings to occur over more than one meeting.

Standing Order 353A

Requirement to attend in person

Standing Order 338C(2) states that “a member may not participate remotely in a committee meeting during a scrutiny week, unless their remote participation is approved by the leader or whip of their party on account of illness or other family cause of a personal nature”. In 2023, the previous Standing Orders Committee said that such family cause for attending remotely should be limited to “extraordinary circumstances, such as a family emergency”.

On one hand, Standing Order 338C(2) is intended to be a high threshold similar to Standing Order 39, which deals with obtaining permission from the Speaker to be absent from the House. Scrutiny weeks are essentially in lieu of sitting weeks and should be treated as such in respect of leave or remote participation. Whips should not grant permission to attend scrutiny week remotely simply because a member has an event in their constituency, for example.

However, there have been instances of members attending scrutiny week in person despite clearly being unwell, because they have been unable to obtain permission to attend

remotely. Illness should be treated as a clear exception to the otherwise high threshold for remote participation, in the way that was envisaged by the Standing Orders Committee in 2023. Furthermore, we consider that it would be acceptable to attend a meeting remotely on a Monday in scrutiny week, if that meeting is exclusively to hear from the Audit Office, and not to conduct hearings.

Longer hearings

In its report on the Review of Standing Orders 2023, the previous committee saw longer hearings as essential for better financial scrutiny, describing scrutiny at the time as “often cursory, particularly when viewed against the magnitude and complexity of government activity and spending under review”. It expressed an expectation that the amount of time each committee spends hearing evidence on both annual reviews and Estimates should at least double.

There has indeed been a substantial increase in the length of hearings during this term of Parliament. The total time allocated to Estimates hearings in the 53rd Parliament was 141 hours, compared with 255 hours and 46 minutes spent on hearings in the current Parliament. This represents an 81 percent increase. The total time allocated to annual review hearings in the 53rd Parliament was 242 hours and 25 minutes, compared with 486 hours and 23 minutes spent on hearings in the current Parliament. This represents a 100.6 percent increase.

Although longer hearings do not automatically improve the quality of scrutiny, there cannot be effective scrutiny without sufficient time for members to develop sustained lines of questioning. Longer hearings enable members to deal with the issues that are politically important to them while still having the opportunity to carry out more detailed scrutiny of how agencies are operating and spending public money. A gradual reversion to the previous, shorter lengths of hearings would be undesirable and close off the possibility of better scrutiny. We expect committees to keep this in mind when deciding the length of their hearings. Hearings must be long enough to enable sustained questioning of witnesses.

We expect that scrutiny plans and activities reports will continue to contain statistics about the length of hearings, and reflections on whether these lengths are sufficient.

Broader scope for annual reviews

The Review of Standing Orders 2023 broadened the scope of the annual review procedure to allow for the examination of strategic intentions and future-focused questioning of organisations. Three committees raised concerns about this change along the lines that it has made the annual review procedure too forward-focused.

Committees have long been able to ask about current operations at annual review hearings. Therefore, it is clearly in scope for a committee to ask an entity what it is currently doing to achieve its strategic intentions, and to question how it is proactively promoting its long-term capability. That work is central to the performance, administration, and expenditure of government entities.

However, the scope of annual reviews does not extend to questions that are wholly future-focused and speculative. The purpose of the annual review procedure is to examine the performance and capability of an organisation, not to ask policy questions that are tangential to an entity's performance, administration, or expenditure.

Any examination of strategic intentions must be grounded in scrutinising the work that entities are currently doing to achieve those intentions. Examining progress towards strategic intentions is not permission to ask speculative and future-focused questions.

Ministers at hearings

The report on the Review of Standing Orders 2020 encouraged select committees to make overall sector reports when reporting annual reviews to the House, in addition to reports on individual agencies. As part of this sectoral approach, committees were encouraged to consider inviting Ministers to participate in sector-focused hearings. The goal of encouraging a sectoral approach was for committees to produce reports that include commentary on committees' findings across a range of agencies, or themes that encompass entire sectors under review. It was envisaged that reports on individual agencies would remain focused on the scrutiny of the particular agency's work.

It is fair to say the sectoral approach envisaged by the Standing Orders Committee in 2020 has never been fully realised. There are few examples of sector reports, and they are all essentially reports on individual agencies that are compiled into a single document. They tend not to articulate committees' findings about sectors as a whole.

Committees are always free to invite anyone to give evidence, and there is nothing to prevent them including Ministers in annual review hearings. However, Ministers are not required to attend, and involving Ministers in these hearings could diminish the focus on departmental performance.

On the other hand, we believe that Ministers should be required to attend Estimates hearings if requested by the relevant committee. An explicit requirement for Ministers to attend Estimates hearings would send a clear signal about the importance of Ministers answering to the legislative branch for the spending of public money, a central constitutional principle. Such a requirement would mirror the requirement for the Minister of Finance to attend the Finance and Expenditure Committee for consideration of the Budget Policy Statement, if requested.³⁹

This proposal would be limited so Ministers are required to attend only when committees are examining appropriations for which they are responsible. It should not extend to the Prime Minister in respect of Vote Prime Minister and Cabinet. It has long been the practice that the leadership of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet attends Estimates hearings without the Prime Minister appearing in person.

Amendment 37 Ministers at Estimates hearings

Provide that Ministers are required to attend Estimates hearings on appropriations for which they are responsible if requested by the committee.

Standing Order 346

³⁹ Standing Order 340(3).

Opening remarks

Committees may wish to ask witnesses to provide their opening remarks in writing ahead of the hearing. Members would then be able to read the opening remarks and prepare questions accordingly. Witnesses would also be able to get their full remarks on the record, in the event that they are unable to fully read them aloud in the time allocated to them in the hearing. If an opening statement exceeds the time limits established by the Review of Standing Orders 2023, a chairperson could more readily interrupt the witness in the knowledge that the full opening remarks are available in writing.

Scrutiny plans and activities reports

Committees are required to prepare scrutiny plans that set out their intentions for conducting scrutiny activities. Committees are also required to report about their implementation of their scrutiny plans. These are called scrutiny activities reports.

We recommend that the deadline for scrutiny activities reports should be 30 September, rather than shortly before Budget Day. The status quo (where committees are required to complete their final scrutiny activities reports before they complete their final round of Estimates hearings) means that committees are unable to reflect on the entire term of Parliament.

We also wish to remind committees of their ability under Standing Order 358A(2) to designate the period covered by a review briefing. We are not aware of any committee designating a period for review. These designations could be made in committees' scrutiny plans.

Amendment 38 Scrutiny plans and scrutiny activities reports

Provide that the deadline for scrutiny activities reports is 30 September in the second and third years of the Parliament.

Standing Order 338B

Presenting annual reports to the House

Presenting an annual report to the House late is a serious matter. Aside from the fact that there are statutory deadlines for the presentation of annual reports, late or delayed reports could have the effect of obstructing parliamentary proceedings by preventing the formal initiation of an annual review. Moreover, the failure to present an annual report until shortly before the relevant hearing could inhibit members' preparation for that hearing, as well as hindering the Audit Office in finalising its advice to the committee. The overall effect would be undermining scrutiny of the executive.

We wish to emphasise the importance of presenting annual reports to the House promptly. Agencies must endeavour to furnish their reports as far as possible in advance of hearings, especially when those hearings are scheduled to take place in a scrutiny week, the timing of which is known well in advance. Ministers are responsible for presenting annual reports without delay, once they have received them.

Statutory reporting deadlines reflect the House's right to be informed and underpin its ability to hold the Government to account. As well as being unlawful, failure to meet a deadline clearly obstructs the House from carrying out an essential function and could be treated as a contempt. We encourage all committees to monitor this and note any late responses in their reports.

Written questions

Parliament previously had a Standard Annual Review Questionnaire. However, it was discontinued in 1997 on the understanding that departments would provide the information previously sought in the questionnaire (key result areas, measurable milestones, expenditure variances, and so on) in their annual reports.

We received a letter from the Finance and Expenditure Committee in October 2025 about reinstating the Standard Annual Review Questionnaire. The letter noted that select committees typically send a large number of written questions to government entities at the start of the annual review process. These questions had built up over many Parliaments, were sent to entities almost reflexively, and had never been systematically reviewed. The Finance and Expenditure Committee reworked the roughly 150 written questions that had been sent in previous years down to a list of only 39 questions. It reported this questionnaire to the House and encouraged other committees to adopt the questionnaire.⁴⁰

We welcome the return of the Standard Annual Review Questionnaire. We hope that it will improve the baseline level of scrutiny of the executive by having a common set of fewer, higher-quality questions. The questionnaire can support select committee scrutiny of government agencies by providing targeted information about an agency's strategic direction, performance, and organisational context.

The reintroduction of a Standard Annual Review Questionnaire leaves other committees free to adopt additional written questions that target specific areas of interest. Committees should actively turn their minds to the written questions that they send, rather than adopting lists of questions simply because they have always been sent. If there are generic questions that members want all entities or Ministers to answer, these could be incorporated into the standard questionnaires that are prepared by the Finance and Expenditure Committee. Select committees should mostly adopt questions that are specific to each Vote and entity that they scrutinise.

We anticipate that the Standard Annual Review Questionnaire and the Standard Estimates Questionnaire will be reported to the House roughly two months before the relevant scrutiny week. This would give the Government a sufficient amount of time to prepare answers, and signal to other committees that they should begin to prepare their own written questions.

Finance and Expenditure Committee's functions

The Standing Orders specify the functions of subject select committees as well as those of specialist committees. We believe the Standing Orders should also set out the functions of the Finance and Expenditure Committee in recognition of the committee's leading role in the

⁴⁰ Finance and Expenditure Committee, *Standard Annual Review Questionnaire 2024/25*, (16 September 2025).

House's financial procedures. Its functions are comparable to those of specialist committees, so should be recognised in Standing Orders in the same manner.

In addition to those of subject select committees, the functions of the Finance and Expenditure Committee are to:

- oversee financial scrutiny procedures
- oversee systems for performance reporting and public accountability
- examine economic and fiscal reports
- allocate, or retain for itself, Estimates examinations and annual reviews
- develop standard questionnaires for Estimates and annual reviews
- examine or refer to select committees reports of the Controller and Auditor-General
- examine monetary policy and financial stability reports issued by the Reserve Bank of New Zealand.

The committee would also be able to initiate inquiries or receive briefings about, and report to the House on, any matters related to its functions.

Most of the functions described above are long-standing and well established. One new function would be for the committee to oversee the system for performance reporting and public accountability. In 2026, the Finance and Expenditure Committee completed an inquiry related to this topic and made detailed recommendations for change. The committee noted that it intended to monitor progress on the implementation of any reforms that arise from its inquiry, and planned on suggesting that the Finance and Expenditure Committee of the 55th Parliament do the same.⁴¹

We believe the Finance and Expenditure Committee should continue to steward the systems for performance reporting and public accountability. It has been a positive development for a committee to focus on these systems. We consider that this function complements the Finance and Expenditure Committee's remit as the leader of financial scrutiny procedures.

Amendment 39 Functions of Finance and Expenditure Committee

List the functions of the Finance and Expenditure Committee in Standing Orders.

Amend the subject area of the Finance and Expenditure Committee to include performance reporting.

Standing Order 189 and 338AB

Performance reporting and public accountability

As referenced above, the Finance and Expenditure Committee completed an inquiry into performance reporting and public accountability in 2026 and made detailed recommendations for change. In its response to the inquiry, the Government said it "supports the direction of travel" in the committee's report and indicated it "agrees to all

⁴¹ Finance and Expenditure Committee, *Inquiry into performance reporting and public accountability*, (22 May 2026), p 25.

recommendations, either in full or in-principle”.⁴² The Government also said it “is committed to continuing the collaborative approach that was taken in the inquiry”. We welcome this commitment. If implemented, these reforms would have significant implications for Parliament’s procedures for financial scrutiny. These procedures should be developed in tandem with any legislation and considered as part of the next Review of Standing Orders.

Expressing views in reports

Few committees explicitly “express views about the executive’s strategy, policy, expenditure, administration, performance, and results” in their annual review reports, despite it being part of the purpose statement for select committee scrutiny.⁴³ Most reports simply narrate the exchanges committees had with entities and Ministers at hearings without containing critical reflection on those exchanges.

We wish to see a greater focus in annual review reports on expressing views about the performance of the entity under review, including by identifying matters of ongoing interest and commenting on the quality of performance information. These could perhaps be set out in a short report with a transcript of the hearing attached.

Annual review debate

Standing Order 357 provides that the annual review debate is structured according to sectors, as they appear in the Estimates, with provision in Standing Order 357(4) for the Business Committee to determine alternative arrangements if it sees fit.

In April 2026, the Business Committee wrote to request that the annual review debate be automatically structured by portfolio rather than by sector. It said, when it has determined this arrangement in the past, debates have been more focused, with clearer lines of ministerial accountability.

We agree that the annual review debate should be automatically structured by portfolio, rather than by sector. The last time the House conducted an annual review debate using the default sector-based arrangements was in 2020, for the 2018/19 financial year.

Amendment 40 Annual review debate

Provide that the annual review debate is structured by portfolio areas, rather than by sectors.

Standing Order 357

Economic and fiscal reports

The long-term fiscal statement and the investment statement stand referred to the Finance and Expenditure Committee for consideration under Standing Order 344. A debate on the long-term fiscal statement, or on the investment statement, is held in place of the first general debate after the committee’s report is presented.

⁴² *Government response to the Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on the Inquiry into performance reporting and public accountability*, presented to the House of Representatives in accordance with Standing Order 256 J.1, 18 August 2026.

⁴³ Standing Order 338A(2).

We recommend amending Standing Order 344 to provide for a small delay between the Finance and Expenditure Committee's report and the House's debate. This would ensure that the House has adequate notice that the debate will occur and that members will have time to prepare. We also recommend clarifying how the statements should be debated if the Finance and Expenditure Committee reports on them jointly.

The Public Finance Amendment Act 2026 introduced a requirement for the Minister of Finance to present a tax expenditure statement to the House.⁴⁴ We recommend adding the tax expenditure statement to the list of reports that stand referred to the Finance and Expenditure Committee for scrutiny. The statement should be reported on within 10 weeks, consistent with the deadline for reporting on the Estimates and other Budget documents.

Amendment 41 Economic and fiscal reports

Provide that the long-term fiscal statement and investment statement are debated in place of the next general debate that is at least one day after the Finance and Expenditure Committee reports back.

Clarify that, if the long-term fiscal statement and investment statement are reported on individually, they are debated individually for an hour, and if they are reported on jointly, they are debated jointly for two hours.

Add the tax expenditure statement to the list of economic and fiscal reports that stand referred to the Finance and Expenditure Committee, and require the committee to report on the statement within 10 weeks.

Standing Order 344, Standing Orders Appendix A

Contributions from chairperson of a committee

Where a debate relates to the work of a select committee, the chairperson of that committee will often take the first call on the debate. We wish to make clear our expectation that, whenever a member is allocated a call in their capacity as chairperson of a select committee, they should refrain from making partisan statements and instead focus on providing a non-political summary of the committee's work. This applies to all debates, not just the annual review debate.

Funding for the parliamentary agencies

On 12 November 2025, the Parliament Act 2025 and the Parliament (Repeals and Amendments) Act 2025 received Royal assent. This legislation consolidates and modernises law about Parliament.

Part 1 of the Parliament (Repeals and Amendments) Act amended the Public Finance Act to set out a new funding model for the parliamentary agencies (the Parliamentary Service and the Office of the Clerk) so their appropriations are commended by the House, rather than determined by the executive. This is based on the model used for the Offices of Parliament.

⁴⁴ Public Finance Amendment Act 2026, section 20, which inserts section 26MA into the Public Finance Act.

The objective of this change is to ensure parliamentary funding is determined in a way that upholds the House's right to control its own affairs. It is constitutionally appropriate for the legislature to determine its funding levels and allocations for itself, rather than leaving it to the executive. In its commentary, the Parliament Bill Committee requested that we amend the Standing Orders to establish a process for a select committee to consider and recommend draft appropriations for the parliamentary agencies.⁴⁵

On 17 December 2025, the House adopted a sessional order to support implementation of these amendments to the Public Finance Act. The sessional order sets out the functions of the Officers of Parliament Committee in respect of each parliamentary agency and provides that each parliamentary agency is subject to an annual review. As provided for by the sessional order, the Officers of Parliament Committee is responsible for considering and recommending to the House:

- an estimate of appropriations to be included in a Vote, and capital injection (if any) to be authorised, in an Appropriation bill, in respect of each parliamentary agency
- any alteration to such a Vote or capital injection.

We recommend incorporating these provisions into the Standing Orders. We also recommend renaming the Officers of Parliament Committee as the Agencies and Officers of Parliament Committee, in acknowledgement of its new functions.

Financial veto

The Parliament Bill Committee also recommended that we clarify the applicability of the Government's financial veto to the parliamentary agencies. Standing Order 334 provides that the Government may exercise a financial veto in respect of a bill, amendment, or motion that the Government does not concur with if it would have more than a minor impact on the Government's fiscal aggregates if it became law. The sessional order of 17 December 2025 provides that the financial veto can be exercised in respect of appropriations for the parliamentary agencies.

However, we consider that application of the financial veto to the parliamentary agencies is neither necessary nor constitutionally appropriate. In practical terms, if the Government opposed the proposed appropriations, then they would not be recommended by the Officers of Parliament Committee in the first place.

Amendment 42 Parliamentary agencies

Set out the functions of the Officers of Parliament Committee in respect of each parliamentary agency.

Provide that each parliamentary agency is subject to an annual review.

Rename the Officers of Parliament Committee to the Agencies and Officers of Parliament Committee in acknowledgement of the committee's new functions.

Standing Orders 353 and 403

⁴⁵ Parliament Bill Committee, *Parliament Bill*, (21 March 2025).

7 Non-legislative procedures

Lodging of oral questions

A notice of an oral question must be lodged in writing and signed by a member and either delivered by hand to the Clerk of the House, or received by the Clerk in electronic form. We recommend that the ability to lodge an oral question electronically must be with the agreement of the Clerk. This would clarify expectation that the default position is that questions are lodged in person, but give flexibility for electronic lodgement when necessary.

Amendment 43 Lodging of oral questions

Add the words “with the agreement of the Clerk” to the beginning of Standing Order 391(1)(b).

Standing Order 391

International treaties

Background

The Crown has the inherent legal power to conduct foreign affairs, including making international treaties. The conduct of New Zealand’s relations with foreign States, including making treaties and providing for the defence of New Zealand, are regarded as functions of the executive branch. Although the Government takes the initiative in representing New Zealand’s interests internationally, it is accountable to the House for how it does so.

International treaties are agreements between States or international organisations, where they consent to being bound by specified obligations. A treaty entered into by the Government does not need to be ratified or endorsed by the House. However, all multilateral and some bilateral treaties are presented to the House and referred to select committees for examination. At the same time, a national interest analysis is also presented to the House for the purpose of informing the House about specified matters related to the treaty. The Government observes a convention of not taking binding action on a treaty until the select committee has reported on it, or 15 sitting days have elapsed, whichever is sooner.

It has now been 28 years since this procedure to examine international treaties was introduced, and the process has remained largely unchanged since then. In 1997, the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee published its report on an inquiry into Parliament’s role in the international treaty process.⁴⁶ The committee recommended establishing a procedure for treaties to be referred to select committees for consideration. The House adopted a sessional order to introduce such a procedure in 1998. It was incorporated into the Standing Orders in 1999.

⁴⁶ Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, *Inquiry into Parliament’s Role in the International Treaty Process*, (18 November 1997), [1996–1999] 68 AJHR I.4A, pp 3–5.

In 2023, the Standing Orders Committee expressed a view that it was time for the international treaty examination process to be reviewed.⁴⁷ It recommended that the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee conduct an inquiry on the matter. In May 2024, the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee reported on its briefing on the international treaty process.⁴⁸

Our approach

We sought comments and information from the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade related to the treaty examination procedure in May 2026. The Minister told us that he considers New Zealand's treaty-making process, including the parliamentary treaty examination procedure, to be "fundamentally sound and fit for purpose". The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade provided us with more information about its work related to the international treaty-making procedures.

We are conscious that the nature and complexity of international agreements have evolved significantly since the procedure was established. We have sought to consider whether there are ways to improve the procedure for how the House considers international treaties. In our consideration, we have given full respect to the Crown's prerogative to make treaties and the Government's initiative in representing New Zealand's interests internationally. Our consideration has not extended to these aspects of the international treaty process. Rather, we have sought to examine whether existing parliamentary scrutiny mechanisms provide an appropriate degree of transparency and accountability in light of contemporary practice related to international treaties.

We set out our recommendations to improve the House's examination of international treaties below.

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee's functions

In 2003, the Standing Orders Committee considered a proposal to establish a separate select committee to examine international treaties. The committee decided against recommending that such a committee be established. It concluded that:

the current size and number of select committees leave little spare capacity for members to be freed up to serve on a new permanent committee. It is also preferable for international treaty examinations to be part of the mainstream work of subject select committees, which should be given the opportunity to consider the policy and national interest implications of treaties.⁴⁹

The Government established an independent advisory board in 2018 to consider New Zealand's trade policy approach. In 2019, the Trade for All Advisory Board released a report with 53 recommendations to the Government, including a recommendation to establish a

⁴⁷ *Standing Orders Committee, Review of Standing Orders 2023*, (30 August 2023), [2020–2023] AJHR I.18A, pp 59–60.

⁴⁸ *Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Briefing on the international treaty examination process*, (30 May 2024).

⁴⁹ *Standing Orders Committee, Review of Standing Orders 2003*, (11 December 2003), [2002–2005] AJHR I.18B, p 26.

dedicated committee to examine international treaties, with a similar mandate to that of the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties at the Parliament of Australia.⁵⁰

We consider that, in principle, the examination of international treaties should be undertaken by subject select committees that can engage with relevant policy matters, as well as conducting technical scrutiny. We note that the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee has specialist functions in regard to the examination of international treaties. Treaties and their accompanying national interest statements that are presented to the House stand referred to the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee. Under Standing Order 407, the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee retains and considers the treaty if it is primarily related to the committee's subject area, or can refer the treaty to another select committee if the treaty more appropriately relates to its subject area.

We consider that, in addition to being responsible for referring treaties to select committees, the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee should be set up with additional specialist functions related to the examination of international treaties. We recommend that the Standing Orders set out the following additional specialist functions for the committee:

- overseeing the international treaty examination procedure
- monitoring the Government's actions in respect of international treaties
- providing guidance for the scrutiny of international treaties
- drawing the attention of a committee examining a treaty to any matters relating to that treaty
- recommending the theme for a special debate on foreign affairs
- monitoring the implementation of international treaties.

The committee would also be able to initiate inquiries or receive briefings about, and may report to the House on, any matters related to its functions.

In our view, expanding the committee's specialist functions would improve the robustness with which the House scrutinises the Government's exercise of its treaty-making powers. It would also more prominently recognise the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee's role related to examining international treaties.

To carry out these specialist functions, we would expect the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee to communicate proactively with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and seek regular updates on work negotiating, concluding, ratifying, amending, or withdrawing from multilateral or bilateral treaties. We understand that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade also publishes an International Treaties List on treaties New Zealand is involved in negotiating, concluding, ratifying or amending.⁵¹ However, we consider that the committee should receive more frequent and direct communication from the ministry to inform its work plan.

In terms of providing guidance for the scrutiny of international treaties, we suggest that the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee in the next Parliament consider initiating an

⁵⁰ [Web archive, *Trade for All Advisory Board report*, \(November 2019\).](#)

⁵¹ [New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Treaties*.](#)

inquiry through which it may develop and express such guidance, to inform treaty work by all committees.

We note that the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee may also wish to make regular use of its ability to appoint independent advisers to assist with its examination of international treaties. Independent advisers could assist the committee to review national interest analyses and support the technical scrutiny of treaties.

Amendment 44 Functions of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee

Set out the functions of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee as described in this report.

Standing Order 405AA

Presentation of international treaties

All multilateral treaties are presented to the House. Bilateral agreements are presented to the House if they are subject to a process of ratification or post-signature acceptance. Major bilateral treaties that are considered to be of particular significance are also presented to the House. It is the discretion of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to determine whether a treaty is a major bilateral treaty of particular significance and decide whether to present it.

Criteria have been set out to guide the Minister in determining which bilateral treaties are appropriate to be presented to the House.⁵² For example, the criteria includes if the subject matter is likely to be of major public interest or if the treaty represents a major development in the bilateral relationship. The criteria also includes that a bilateral treaty should be subject to parliamentary examination if the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee has indicated its interest in examining the treaty.

In our view, bilateral treaties that the Government intends to implement through primary or secondary legislation should be considered to be major bilateral treaties of particular significance. We consider that it would be appropriate for bilateral treaties that are intended to be implemented through primary or secondary legislation to be subject to parliamentary examination.

We recommend that the Government update the criteria to guide the Minister to determine which bilateral treaties should be presented to the House to include bilateral treaties that the Government intends to implement through legislation. We do not recommend any changes to the Standing Orders to reflect this change. Rather, we consider that the guidance criteria would be an appropriate place to include this update.

As stated above, we have recommended that a specialist function be set out for the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee to monitor the Government's actions in respect of international treaties. As part of carrying out its specialist functions, we expect the committee to proactively seek updates from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade on work related to both multilateral and bilateral treaties, including information about any bilateral treaties that are expected to be presented to the House.

⁵² Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, *International Treaties Bill*, (25 November 2002).

Recommendation to the Government

We recommend that the Government update the guidance that the Minister of Foreign Affairs uses to decide which bilateral treaties are presented to the House, to state that bilateral treaties that the Government intends to implement through legislation should be presented.

Debates on international treaties

A select committee must report to the House on any international treaty that has been referred to it. In its report to the House on the treaty, the committee must draw it to the House's attention if the Government intends the treaty to be implemented through a bill. If the treaty is intended to be implemented through a bill, the committee's report on an international treaty examination is set down as a Government order of the day. In such a case, if the international treaty examination is debated, then the first reading of a bill to implement the treaty would consequently occur without debate.

This procedure was established in 2017 on the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee.⁵³ The committee drew a distinction between overall scrutiny of international treaties and the more focused process of examining the text of the bill to implement it. On that basis, the committee proposed that the process of considering treaties would be improved if the House debated the select committee's report on the treaty before debating the implementing bill. The committee thus recommended that such select committee reports be treated as Government orders of the day, to be debated in exchange for there being no debate on the first readings of the bills concerned.

It is optional for this procedure to be followed. Bills to implement an international treaty can be debated at their first reading without the relevant treaty being debated first.

In 2023, the Standing Orders were amended to shorten the length of first reading debates on Government bills. The debate on the first reading of a Government bill now consists of a 10-minute speech for the Minister in charge of the bill and ten 5-minute speeches by other members.⁵⁴ They consequently last a maximum of 60 minutes. The maximum length of the debate on the international treaty examination is 2 hours.

We consider that a select committee report on an international treaty, in the case of a treaty that the Government intends to implement through primary legislation, should be debated before a bill to implement that treaty is available for its first reading. We consider that the length of the debate on a report on an international treaty examination should be adjusted to be the same as for a first reading debate. The existing procedure to enable first readings of a bill to implement a treaty to be taken without debate if a report on that treaty has been debated should remain.

⁵³ Standing Orders Committee, *Review of Standing Orders and Petition 2014/107 of Malcolm Harbrow*, (26 July 2017), [2014–2017] AJHR I.18A, p 14, pp 39–40.

⁵⁴ Standing Orders Committee, *Review of Standing Orders 2023*, (30 August 2023), [2020–2023] AJHR I.18A, p 31.

There is an existing convention that the Government shall not take binding action on an international treaty until 15 sitting days after a treaty's presentation to the House.⁵⁵ There is currently no requirement under the Standing Orders for select committees that have been referred international treaties to report back in a designated amount of time. We propose that the period that must be observed before the first reading of a bill to implement a treaty should align with that convention.

In effect, this would mean the first reading of a bill to implement a treaty could proceed, if the committee had not reported on the treaty concerned within 15 sitting days. This would ensure that the time it takes for a committee to report back on a treaty could not cause undue delays to the legislative process. Flexibility would remain for the select committee to agree with the Minister what an appropriate time frame would be for considering the treaty before the first reading may take place.

Amendment 45 Debate on international treaties

Provide that a bill to implement a treaty is not available for first reading until the day after the select committee report on the international treaty has been debated, or the expiry of 15 sitting days from when the international treaty was first presented to the House, whichever date is earlier.

Provide that the debate on an international treaty examination should consist of a 10-minute speech from the member who moved the motion for a debate, a 10-minute speech from the Minister responsible for the treaty, and 5-minute speeches from other members up to a total length of 1 hour.

Provide that there be no amendment or debate on the first reading of a bill to implement an international treaty, if a select committee's report on that treaty has been debated.

Standing Order 293 and Standing Orders Appendix A

Electronic petitions with highly discriminatory content

On 9 February 2024, the Human Rights Commission wrote to us to request that we review the Standing Orders relating to the admissibility of petitions and their publication on the Parliament website. On 30 July 2024, the petition of Kath McDonald was presented to the House. It requested:

That the House of Representatives change Standing Orders to allow the removal of petitions that would hurt groups protected from discrimination under the Human Rights Act 1993 from the Parliament website.⁵⁶

The Petitions Committee published its report on its consideration of this petition in March 2025.⁵⁷ The committee proposed that the Clerk of the House of Representatives should bring potentially objectionable petitions to the attention of the Petitions Committee. The

⁵⁵ *Cabinet Office, Cabinet Manual 2023*, chapter 7.133.

⁵⁶ *Petition of Kath McDonald: Change Standing Orders to allow removal of discriminatory petitions*, presented to the House by Hon Priyanca Radhakrishnan on 30 July 2024.

⁵⁷ *Petitions Committee, Petition of Kath McDonald*, (18 March 2025).

committee would then decide whether the subject matter is so objectionable that it should not be hosted on Parliament's website.

In its report, the Petitions Committee expressed that it considers "petitioners should be able to raise a wide range of issues and concerns with parliamentarians, reflecting the broad spectrum of views held by New Zealanders". However, it acknowledged that petitioning online and petitioning in hard copy are not the same. The committee concluded that:

Hosting a petition on the website may give the impression that Parliament, or a member of Parliament, has considered the petition and supports it. In fact, however, the vast majority of petitions that are started on the website are never presented to the House by a member or considered by a select committee. We are reassured to know that a member is required to agree to present a petition before it is considered by the House and its select committees. However, the current practice risks Parliament's website becoming a platform for views that no member would ever be willing to present to the House.

The Petitions Committee wrote to us on 30 July 2025 to request that we consider its proposal. We met with the committee to discuss this matter on 20 August 2025. We agreed that the Clerk should be able to consult the Petitions Committee about any petitions that could be considered highly discriminatory before determining whether such petitions be hosted on the Parliament website.

On 9 October 2025, the House adopted a sessional order that reflected this approach. The sessional order enables the Clerk to refuse to host an electronic petition on the Parliament website if satisfied that the petition is highly discriminatory. Before refusing to host a petition, the Clerk would be required to consider whether the content of a petition is threatening, abusive, or insulting to a group of people by reason of any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Human Rights Act 1993. The Clerk is also required to consult the Petitions Committee.

Petitioners are still able to collect signatures on paper petitions, and their petitions can be presented to the House by a member of Parliament. The sessional order means that a petition considered by the Clerk to be highly discriminatory cannot be hosted on the Parliament website in advance of being presented to the House by a member. This rule does not apply to paper petitions. The sessional order applied to electronic petitions that were already hosted on the Parliament website when the order was adopted.

Initially, the sessional order was adopted for a period of six months. It was amended in March 2026 to take effect for the remainder of the parliamentary term. Since the sessional order was adopted, five petitions have been refused from being hosted on the Parliament website.

We consider that the approach taken this Parliament has achieved a good balance between the right to petition the House and the risk that Parliament could be perceived as endorsing views hosted on the Parliament website. We consider that the new approach has worked as intended. We recommend that the sessional order should be incorporated into the Standing Orders, to make these provisions permanent.

Amendment 46 Electronic petitions with highly discriminatory content

Enable the Clerk of the House of Representatives to refuse to host an electronic petition on the Parliament website if they are satisfied that the petition is highly discriminatory.

Provide that before refusing to host an electronic petition on the Parliament website, the Clerk must consult the Petitions Committee and take account of whether the content of the petition is threatening, abusive, or insulting to a group of people by reason of any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Human Rights Act 1993.

Provide that the functions of the Petitions Committee include responding to consultation by the Clerk relating to highly discriminatory petitions.

Standing Order 371A and 378

Country of residence of petitioners

The Petitions Committee wrote to us on 20 August 2026. The committee proposed amending the Standing Orders to require that a petitioner be a New Zealand citizen, a person who is ordinarily resident in New Zealand, or an organisation represented by a person ordinarily resident in New Zealand.

Currently, there is no requirement for petitioners to provide information on their citizenship or country of residence. Petitioners who create an electronic petition on the Parliament website are asked to provide their postal address, but this information is not required. Consequently, we have no reliable data on how many petitioners are from overseas.

Overall, we do not support introducing a requirement for petitioners to be New Zealand citizens or residents. The onus of determining whether the House should devote time to examining a petition should sit with the Members of Parliament who decide whether to present a petition to the House.

Petitioners are required to inform the Clerk of their name and contact details. We consider that it would be useful to require petitioners to also provide the country of which they are ordinarily resident. This would enable the Clerk to collect data on the number of petitions created by people overseas, and provide this information to the Petitions Committee. The Clerk would also be able to publish the name and country of residence of a petitioner alongside a petition hosted or published on the Parliament website.

Amendment 47 Country of residence of petitioners

Require petitioners to inform the Clerk of their country of residence or, if the petitioner is an organisation, the country in which the organisation has its principal place of operation and the country of residence of a person who is authorised to represent the petition on its behalf.

Standing Order 374

Requirement to provide an email address to sign an electronic petition

Standing Order 375 provides that any person may sign a petition to indicate their approval of the petition's request. People must provide their full name to sign a petition. To sign an electronic petition, people must also provide their email address. In practice, to sign an electronic petition presented to Parliament, a person would go to the Parliament website, and select the petition they are interested in signing.⁵⁸ They would then be prompted to provide their first name, last name, and email address.

On 20 March 2026, we received correspondence from Arthur Anae related to the requirements to sign a petition. Mr Anae requested that we consider enabling people to provide either a mobile phone number or an email address to sign an electronic petition. He told us that many Pacific people do not have an email address and indicated that the current requirements present a barrier to participation for people in the Pacific.

We note that there is no requirement for people signing a petition in hard-copy form to provide an email address. Petitioners are able to create hybrid petitions, enabling them to collect signatures both in hard-copy form and electronically through the Parliament website. We consider that these arrangements are sufficient to ensure that people who do not have an email address can still sign parliamentary petitions.

We do not recommend any changes to the Standing Orders related to this request.

Petition of Hakepa H: Review the New Zealand parliamentary petitions process

The Petitions Committee referred the petition of Hakepa H to our committee, and we resolved to consider it as part of this review. The petition requests:

That the House of Representatives review the parliamentary petition process to enable petitioners to connect with other petitioners on similar issues and implement a minimum number of signatures required to support a petition.⁵⁹

Alongside referring the petition to us, the Petitions Committee wrote to us to express its views on the petitioner's request. The Petitions Committee suggested that we consider requiring that a petition must receive a minimum of 50 signatures before it can be presented to the House, prohibiting petitioners from having multiple petitions on the Parliament website at the same time, and allowing petitioners to choose to have their email addresses published alongside their petition.

We do not recommend any changes to the Standing Orders in line with the petitioner's proposals.

⁵⁸ [New Zealand Parliament, *Petitions*](#).

⁵⁹ [Petition of Hakepa H: Review the New Zealand parliamentary petitions process](#), presented to the House by Rt Hon Chris Hipkins on 8 April 2025.

8 Parliamentary privilege

Historically it has been very rare for the Privileges Committee to recommend that a member be suspended from the service of the House. There are only two known examples prior to this term of Parliament, for one day and for three days respectively.⁶⁰ The Privileges Committee has more commonly recommended that members be censured or required to apologise.

The recent suspension of members from the service of the House for as long as three weeks represents a change in the House's practice. In its May 2025 report, the Privileges Committee did not explain how it had arrived at its proposed penalties.

Ideally, a substantial change in the House's practice would be adopted only with broad support among members (though not necessarily unanimity). This is the approach taken by our committee, for example, when recommending changes to the rules and practice of the House. Our committee also has a general practice of explaining substantial changes, and including information to inform the future interpretation and application of the rules.

The Speaker noted the severity of the recommended penalties and their unprecedented nature when the committee's report was presented to the House. He also drew attention to the fact that the penalties were proposed by a majority of committee members.⁶¹ The Speaker dealt with the situation by signalling that the debate on the committee's report could continue for a long time. Following that debate, the House imposed the Privileges Committee's recommended punishments. They therefore could be regarded as forming a precedent to be followed in future. The Privileges Committee itself signalled as such.⁶²

As the Privileges Committee acknowledged, the suspension of members is a serious step. We consider it would be useful for a framework to be developed for how punishments for contempt may be determined in future. Such a framework or set of expectations would support the Privileges Committee in reaching recommendations that are seen as proportionate and consistent.

There are examples where committees in other jurisdictions have set out factors to consider, while avoiding the prescription of a "hard and fast tariff of sanctions".⁶³ A framework could also indicate steps to ensure a robust and fair process to follow in reaching

⁶⁰ In 1976, a member was suspended for one sitting day after criticising the Speaker repeatedly during a radio interview. In 1987, a member was suspended for three sitting days (including the day of suspension) after issuing a press statement that reflected on the Speaker. In 2025, one member was suspended for 7 days and two members for 21 days for acting in a manner that could have the effect of intimidating a member of the House in the discharge of their duty.

⁶¹ (15 May 2025) 784 NZPD 11087 (Final Report of the Privileges Committee—Question of Privilege on Conduct of Members Causing Disruption During a Vote, Rt Hon Gerry Brownlee).

⁶² *Privileges Committee, Question of privilege concerning the conduct of 4 members during proceedings of the House*, (15 May 2025) [2023–2026] AJHR I.17G, p 8.

⁶³ *UK House of Commons Committee on Standards, Sanctions in respect of the conduct of Members, Seventh Report*, (14 July 2020) [2019–21], p 23.

recommendations. For the public to have confidence in the House's disciplinary procedures, it is important to avoid perceptions that they may be arbitrary in their operation.

We recommend that, immediately after the Standing Orders Committee reports, the Speaker refer a question of privilege relating to the development of such a framework. The question would be for the Privileges Committee to consider in the next term of Parliament. Although the Speaker could refer a question of privilege without a recommendation to do so, we hope that our endorsement provides useful context for why the referral might be made at this time.

The Privileges Committee may wish to consider whether the following factors should inform a framework for reaching recommendations for punishing members:

- the seriousness, impact, and level of culpability involved
- precedents established by previous Privileges Committee findings, Speakers' rulings, and overseas examples
- previous punishment applied in the House in respect of the actions before the committee (this would not prevent further punishment being recommended, but may be considered)
- the extent to which regret or contrition was demonstrated, if at all
- the experience of the member involved
- the expected deterrent effect.

Similar factors were considered by the Privileges Committee in 1987, on the prior occasion when the suspension of a member was recommended.⁶⁴

We invite the Privileges Committee of the next Parliament to recommend any amendments to the Standing Orders that may be desirable.

Recommendation to the Speaker

We recommend that the Speaker refer a question of privilege to the Privileges Committee to about the development of a framework for reaching recommendations for punishing members for contempt, including both a process that may be followed, and factors that may be considered.

⁶⁴ Privileges Committee, *Question of privilege referred on 26 February 1987 concerning Rt Hon Sir Robert Muldoon*, (2 June 1987) [1986–87] 11 AJHR I.15, pp 8–13.

9 Pecuniary and other specified interests

About the register and our consideration

The Register of Pecuniary and Other Specified Interests is provided for by Appendix B of the Standing Orders. The register's purpose is to record members' interests, providing transparency and strengthening public trust and confidence in parliamentary processes and decision making.⁶⁵ By being open about their interests, members can protect themselves from accusations of having a hidden conflict between their private interests and their public role.⁶⁶

There have been various changes to Appendix B since its inception. In 2023, the previous Standing Orders Committee recommended that there be a general examination of Appendix B at the start of 54th Parliament. We undertook this work as part of the review. Our primary aim was to provide greater certainty about what interests must be declared.

Test for declaring indirect interests

Interpretation of Appendix B is guided by commentary set out in previous reports of the Standing Orders Committee and the Privileges Committee. In 2008, the Privileges Committee considered its first complaint relating to a member's failure to declare an interest in their annual declaration.⁶⁷ In that case, the item in question was an indirect gift—a gift that had been received by a third party, but for the benefit of the member. The Privileges Committee found that there had been a contempt of the House. In explaining its outcome, it identified a range of principles.

The Standing Orders Committee in 2010 endorsed these principles, including that all distinct interests must be declared, regardless of whether they are channelled through a trust or third party or covered by some other kind of arrangement.⁶⁸ In 2023, the Registrar of Pecuniary and Other Specified Interests and the Privileges Committee indicated there was a lack of clarity around what was expected of members in declaring “all distinct interests”.

It is not practicable or desirable to set out in the Standing Orders every possible permutation through which interests may arise, or to address every potential way in which members may arrange their affairs. However, we consider some additional guidance would be helpful for members and the public in understanding the obligations under Appendix B—clarifying both what must be declared and what does not need to be declared.

⁶⁵ Standing Orders Appendix B, clause 1(3).

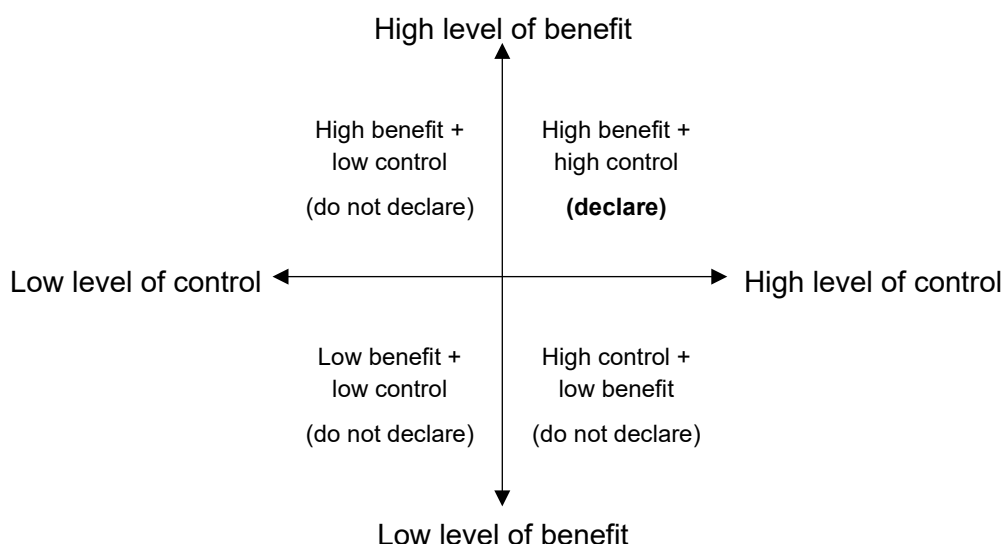
⁶⁶ *Standing Orders Committee, Review of Standing Orders relating to pecuniary interests*, (13 December 2010) [2008–2011] 3 AJHR I.18A, p 7.

⁶⁷ *Privileges Committee, Question of Privilege relating to compliance with a member's obligations under the Standing Orders dealing with pecuniary interests*, (22 September 2008) I.17D, p 20.

⁶⁸ *Standing Orders Committee, Review of Standing Orders relating to pecuniary interests*, (13 December 2010) [2008–2011] 3 AJHR I.18A.

We do not consider that there is value in requiring members to declare all interests emerging from assets of a trust, company, or scheme in which they have an interest. However, there are situations in which the interests of transparency favour declaring indirect interests.

We propose an amendment to require a member to declare an interest held by an entity in which the member has an interest if the member has significant control of the entity, and may significantly benefit from the interest. This standard will be applied across all classes of entities.



We provide further guidance about the application of this proposed test below.

Amendment 48 Declaring indirect interests

Amend Appendix B to provide that an indirect interest only needs to be declared if a member has significant control over the holding entity and may significantly benefit from the indirect interest.

Standing Orders Appendix B

Interests through companies, business entities, managed investment schemes, and retirement schemes

Appendix B of the Standing Orders differentiates between two types of interests in companies—those declared under clause 5(1)(a) reflect a high level of control, through directorship or significant voting rights in the company. Those declared under clause 5(1)(b) reflect much lower levels of control and benefit.

Most managed investment schemes and retirement schemes, particularly those that are open to the public, will be independently managed. In these cases, it will be sufficient to declare the scheme only.

Managed investment schemes and retirement schemes are discussed further later in this report.

Holding entity	Do not declare interests held by—	Declare interests held by—
Companies / business entities	companies declared under clause 5(1)(b)	- companies declared under clause 5(1)(a) - partnerships and sole traders
managed investment schemes / retirement schemes	schemes where investment decisions are made by an independent manager	self-managed schemes, self-select schemes, or schemes where you can direct the scheme manager

Interests through trusts

The extent of a member's control may vary depending on whether the member is a trustee, whether there are other independent trustees, and the extent to which the trustees can be directed by the member.

Low control	Significant control
<i>Trustee</i> trustee, along with several independent trustees	<i>Trustee</i> - sole trustee - trustee, along with their partner or another closely related person - trustee, along with someone they employed to take on the administrative elements of the trust (such as a lawyer)
<i>Not a trustee</i> cannot direct trustees	<i>Not a trustee</i> - assets are held on bare trust - can direct trustees

The extent to which a member may benefit from property held in trust will depend on the number of beneficiaries and the terms of the trust.

Low benefit	Significant benefit
- not a beneficiary (no benefit) - discretionary beneficiary - one of many beneficiaries	- sole beneficiary - beneficiary, along with their partner and/or other closely related people - substantial fixed beneficial interest

Examples of how the test would apply

Scenario	Significant Control	Significant Benefit	Outcome
You invest in a managed investment fund. The fund includes shares in a range of companies. All investment decisions are made by the fund manager.	No	Yes	Declare direct interest in managed investment fund. Do not declare indirect interest in companies.
You invest in a self-select retirement scheme (such as Sharesies KiwiSaver Scheme). The scheme allows you to build your own portfolio, selecting from a range of publicly listed companies and exchange traded funds.	Yes	Yes	Declare direct interest in retirement scheme. Declare indirect interest in any companies and exchange traded funds invested in through the scheme. Note—you would not need to declare shares held within the exchange traded funds (see example above).
You are a majority shareholder and director of a company which has been set up to own and manage rental properties. The company has three rental properties and has mortgages exceeding \$50,000 on all three properties.	Yes	Yes	Declare direct interest in company. Declare indirect interest in the three properties. Declare indirect interest in the three mortgages.
You set up a company for the purpose of owning your own home. You are the sole shareholder and sole director of the company.	Yes	Yes	Declare direct interest in company. Declare indirect interest in the property.
You own a few shares in a company, which has significant real property and share holdings.	No	Yes	Declare direct interest in company. Do not declare indirect interest in the property or companies.
You are the sole beneficiary of a blind trust.	No	Yes	Declare direct interest in trust. Do not declare indirect interest in holdings of blind trust.

Scenario	Significant Control	Significant Benefit	Outcome
You have purchased shares using a share platform (such as Sharesies). Shares are held in trust for your benefit and will be purchased and sold at your direction.	Yes	Yes	Declare direct interest in trust Declare indirect interest in companies.
You are the sole trustee of a trust that owns real property and shares. You may direct the sale and purchase of shares and real property. You are not a beneficiary of the trust.	Yes	No	Declare direct interest in trust. Do not declare indirect interest in the real property or companies.
You, your partner, and a lawyer are trustees of a family trust, for which you and your partner are the primary beneficiaries. The trust holds shares. The lawyer actively manages the assets in the trust but will act at your direction.	Yes	Yes	Declare direct interest in trust. Declare indirect interest in companies.
You are one of six independent trustees for a trust that manages a scholarship, which can be given to a range of individuals including yourself (you are a discretionary beneficiary). The trust holds shares in companies.	No	No	Declare direct interest in trust. Do not declare indirect interest in companies.
You are the sole executor of an estate. You are also a named beneficiary and stand to inherit real property held in the estate.	N/A		Under clause 8A, an indirect interest need only be declared if it is held by an entity that itself must be declared. There is no requirement to declare an interest in an estate. Consequently, there is no requirement to declare an indirect interest held through an estate. Do not declare.

Scenario	Significant Control	Significant Benefit	Outcome
Your partner owns real property.		N/A	Under clause 8A, an indirect interest need only be declared if it is held by an entity that itself must be declared. Your partner is not an entity that must be declared. Members do not need to declare interests of family members. Do not declare.

Interests that are not required to be declared

From time to time, a member may wish to declare interests or provide a level of detail that the Registrar has advised is not required. Such a practice, if it became widespread, could risk broadening the scope of interests that members are expected to declare, with pressure coming to bear on other members to declare matters to a similar level.

It is preferable for the scope of interests that are declared to be consciously determined by the House and not by gradual, informal changes in practice. For this reason, we wish to make it clear that the Registrar can decline to publish an item included in a declaration if the item is not required to be declared and its publication would not promote the purpose of the register.

If, after consulting the Registrar, a member wished to disclose an interest over and above the requirements of Appendix B, they could do so through a personal explanation in the House or a declaration in a select committee. This would be required, at any rate, if the interest was relevant to business under consideration at the time. Moreover, members are free to disclose their own pecuniary interests to the public through other channels.

Declaration of financial interest

We wish to remind members that they have obligations under Standing Orders 165 and 166 to declare direct financial interests that are not already declared through the register. Members should be particularly conscious of these obligations when some time has elapsed since they last declared their pecuniary interests through the register.

Initial returns

Members elected on or before 1 July make an initial return—a return of their interests as at the day that is 90 days after the date they take the oath or affirmation. Members elected after 1 July are exempt from making an initial return and can make their first return as an annual return. This approach is based on the idea that, by the time their initial return is published, they will soon need to make an annual return.

Annual returns typically are published in May. For a member elected in early July of the previous year (who would be exempt from making an initial return), this could mean up to 10 months would elapse before their interests were publicly known.

We propose an alternative model, with newly elected members being required to make initial returns as at one of four specified dates in each year. These dates are set out in the following table. For each of these dates, members would make initial returns if they came into office during the three-month period that ended a month earlier. In addition to addressing the issues raised above, this would reduce the complexity in clause 3 of Appendix B.

One of the specified dates would be 31 January, which would mean members who come into office after 1 October would make their first return as part of the annual returns round in February. For other new members, initial returns would be published together at regular intervals, along with any corrected information that members have provided since the last publication.

Dates at which newly elected members are required to make initial returns

Period in which member comes into office	Effective date of return	Due date
1 October to 31 December	31 January	Last day of February (same as for annual returns)
1 January to 31 March	30 April	30 May
1 April to 30 June	31 July	31 August
1 July to 30 September	31 October	30 November

We note that this arrangement would apply only for newly elected members. We recommend that the rules be amended so an initial return would not be required for members who were re-elected and who had previously completed a return in the calendar year in which the election was held.

Currently, re-elected members are not exempt unless elected after 1 July.⁶⁹ In practice, that exemption always applies following a general election, as no general election has been held before 1 July since 1876, and we consider the rule should be more clearly expressed. It would still theoretically be possible for re-elected members to be required to make initial returns if, for example, a general election were held early in a calendar year. In that unusual case, we consider that a requirement for all members to complete initial returns would be justified, because of the length of time since the previous round of annual returns at the start of the year before. By-elections sometimes occur in the first months of the year, and in the infrequent case of a member being re-elected at such a by-election, the same justification would apply.

The above proposals would require consequential changes to clause 9 of Appendix B, which sets out the period covered by returns. This period is applicable for the declaration of

⁶⁹ Standing Orders Appendix B, clause 3(2).

activities that give rise to interests (such as contributions to travel, gifts, debts, and payments). In principle, the following should apply:

- Members should not be required to include information about activities where that information has been declared in a previous return.
- For members who have made a previous return, the period begins on the day after the effective date for that previous return.
- For members making an initial return after being elected at a general election or by-election, the period begins on the polling day for that election.
- For members making an initial return after being declared elected to fill a list-seat vacancy, the period begins on the date of the Gazette notice in which they were declared elected.

Publishing initial returns

Initial returns are published online as soon as practicable after being received and processed and included in a summary of initial returns (alongside a summary of amendments) later in the year. This practice is not reflected in Appendix B. While Appendix B does set out publication requirements for initial returns, these apply only for initial returns made immediately following a general election.

We recommend that Appendix B specify the process for publishing and presenting initial returns.

Amendment 49 Initial returns

Provide for new members to make their initial returns on fixed effective dates and due dates.

Clarify that a member who is re-elected is not required to make an initial return if they have previously made a return in the calendar year in which the general election or by-election is held.

Specify the process for publishing and presenting initial returns.

Standing Orders Appendix B

Legal interests in real property

Under clause 5(1)(f) of Appendix B, members must declare the location and nature of any real property in which the member has a legal interest. The term “legal interest” is significantly broader than freehold ownership and, on its ordinary meaning, captures leasehold interests, easements, covenants, and leases.

The register is not a register of wealth, and not every interest declared under the register is pecuniary in nature. In its 2010 report on a review of Standing Orders relating to pecuniary interests, the committee noted that the purpose of declaring an interest in land is to “make public a member’s interest in a particular geographical location or community”.

Despite this broad purpose, certain non-pecuniary interests in land are excluded from declaration—for example, there is no requirement to declare land in which a member has an interest as a trustee only. The Standing Orders were amended in 2023 to ensure that leases

in electorate and community offices were not required to be declared. Some non-pecuniary interests are declared, such as interests in Māori land.

Leasehold and lease interests are not identical. Although both refer to a lease of land, in a leasehold, the leaseholder has ownership of the buildings. Leasehold interests can generally be on-sold. Leasehold interests must be registered against a property's title; leases may be registered. These interests may widely differ in duration and purpose. Commercial and rural leases are likely to have a pecuniary element beyond the ability for resale.

Members have historically declared some long-term leases or leasehold interests. As members are not required to declare the nature of their interest—only the nature of the property—it is difficult to assess this.

From 2010 to 2014, the Standing Orders specified the types of legal interests that should be declared—a legal interest in the fee simple or leasehold or stratum estate. This would have included all leasehold interests and no leases. In 2014, the wording was changed to the current wording: “the location of real property in which the member has a legal interest”. This change was not discussed in the committee's 2014 report.

Leasehold interests should be declared

The case for declaring leasehold interests in real property is clear. These interests are generally pecuniary in nature, and members have declared these under the existing rules. We wish to make clear our expectation that this should occur.

Leases should also be declared, except electorate or community offices

A lease may indicate a member's interest in a particular geographical location or community location. People with leased property in an area may be directly affected by legislation or government policy targeted towards those areas, as well as by the actions of local bodies in those areas. Our expectation is that all leases should be declared, while retaining the existing exemption for members' electorate and community offices.⁷⁰

Estates

Estates operate analogously to trusts, with executors holding estate assets for the benefit of the beneficiaries of the estate. Executors may need to hold an estate asset for an extended period. For example, the executors may be required to hold real property for the remainder of the life of the deceased's spouse, when the spouse has been given a life interest in that property.

The Standing Orders are silent on how the interests of executors and beneficiaries of an estate should be dealt with, unless there is an underlying trust. It is our view that interests in estates do not need to be declared—this would be an unnecessary encroachment.

⁷⁰ Standing Orders Appendix B, clause 5(3A).

Retirement schemes

Members are required to declare the name of each retirement scheme and the manager of each retirement scheme in which the member has a pecuniary interest. The definition of retirement scheme in clause 2(1) of Appendix B includes:

- (a) a retirement scheme within the meaning of section 6(1) of the Financial Markets Conduct Act 2013, and
- (b) any trust or other arrangement established in New Zealand or any other country with a purpose of providing retirement benefits to individuals; for example, a private superannuation scheme.

The term “private superannuation scheme” does not appear to be widely used, and has separately been used to describe a self-managed superannuation fund or a scheme provided by a private sector provider, such as a KiwiSaver scheme, both of which (if domestic) tend to come under subsection (a). A domestic self-managed superannuation scheme may fall outside (a) if it is not approved—it is likely this is what is being referred to in the example. This example does not add to the understanding of (b), so we recommend removing the example from that category. We otherwise retain category (b) unchanged.

Amendment 50 Definition of ‘retirement scheme’

Amend the definition of retirement scheme in clause 2(1) of Appendix B by deleting “; for example, a private superannuation scheme”.

Standing Orders Appendix B, clause 2

Self-managed retirement schemes

Although the wording of Appendix B requires members to declare the manager for each scheme, a practice has emerged of not including the name of the manager where the member is the manager. This is not clear to readers of the register, and there is nothing (other than the absence of a listed manager) to indicate that the fund is self-managed. Many of these funds are also trusts, which would otherwise require the member to declare their role as a trustee.

We suggest it would be helpful to support the purpose of transparency for members to list their own name as manager. This would not require a change to the wording of Appendix B.

Funds and interests within schemes

Members are required to declare the name of each retirement scheme in which they have an interest, along with the manager of the scheme. They also must declare other managed investment schemes that are not retirement schemes.⁷¹

Declaring a retirement scheme or other managed investment scheme in many cases provides more information than disclosing a trust. There often is public information about the types of interests within a scheme. However, members are required to declare schemes but not funds within schemes. For example, a member may declare Simplicity KiwiSaver (the

⁷¹ Standing Orders, Appendix B, clauses 5(1)(h) and (i).

scheme) without specifying whether they are invested in the High Growth, Growth, Balanced, Default, Conservative, or Defensive funds, which all have distinct investments.

We consider that it is sufficient for members to declare the name and manager of a managed investment scheme without including the name of the fund underlying the scheme.

On the other hand, we believe that interests in self-selected retirement schemes should be required to be disclosed, despite being in a managed investment scheme. A member will have direct insight into the actual interests of any self-selected retirement schemes.

Non-retrospectivity and reliance on Registrar's advice

For the avoidance of doubt, we note that where new Standing Orders are adopted, or changes in interpretation are made through this report, these will apply only to returns made after the report is adopted. This is because the amendments to the Standing Orders only have effect from after the dissolution of this term of Parliament, and are not retrospective. Members who have relied on existing rules and interpretations in making previous returns are not expected to update those returns, under clause 20, to reflect these changes.

We also consider that members who engage earnestly with the Registrar around an issue should be able to rely on advice received in order to be confident that they have complied with the requirements. We recommend an amendment to clause 16 of Appendix B, to clarify that the Registrar should act in accordance with advice previously provided to the member when deciding whether to undertake an inquiry.

Amendment 51 Registrar's inquiry

Require the Registrar, when making an assessment of whether an inquiry is warranted, to act in accordance with any advice that is relevant to the matter under inquiry that the Registrar has previously provided to the member who is the subject of the inquiry.

Standing Orders Appendix B, clause 16

Auditor-General's review

Clause 15 of Appendix B requires the Auditor-General to review members' returns of interests. The Audit Office checks all returns to see whether there are any obvious errors, inconsistencies, or omissions. The review does not extend to verifying or certifying the authenticity, correctness, accuracy, or completeness of any detail in particular returns. The Audit Office will not inquire into the interests or activities of members beyond what is contained in returns.

The Audit Office submitted that its review adds little value to the process, but gives the impression that it has provided verification of authenticity, accuracy, or completeness of the details in the returns. The Audit Office therefore suggested removing the requirement for it to review returns.

When the register was first established, the Auditor-General had a broader responsibility: initiating and conducting inquiries into whether the Registrar or a member complied with the requirements in Appendix B.⁷² That power was never exercised, and was disestablished in

⁷² Standing Orders 2005, Appendix B, clause 15(2).

2011, in favour of the Registrar's inquiry function.⁷³ The Auditor-General's remaining function is narrow and largely replicates the checks conducted by the Registrar. We are therefore satisfied that removing the Auditor-General's function would not substantially reduce the effectiveness of the register.

Amendment 52 Auditor-General's review

Delete the requirement for the Auditor-General to review members' returns.

Standing Orders Appendix B, clause 15

⁷³ Standing Orders Committee, *Review of Standing Orders relating to pecuniary interests*, (13 December 2010) [2008–2011] 3 AJHR I.18A.

Appendix A Amendments to the Standing Orders



STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Amendments recommended by the
Standing Orders Committee

September 2026

NOTES: References are to numbered amendments as set out in the narrative section of this report, or to the Parliament Act 2025 if the amendment is consequential to the Act.

Recommended amendments are shown as follows: ~~struck out~~ and inserted text.

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS AND OFFICE HOLDERS

INTRODUCTION

...

3 Definitions

(1) In these Standing Orders, if not inconsistent with the context,—

amendment includes ~~a new clause—~~

- (a) an amendment to a motion;
- (b) an amendment to a bill;
- (c) an amendment to an amendment

...

Government amendment, for the purposes of the Regulatory Standards Act 2025, means an Amendment Paper that—

- (a) contains an amendment or amendments to a Government bill,
and
- (b) is in the name of a Minister

...

parliamentary agency means a parliamentary agency within the meaning of the Parliament Act 2025

parliamentary precincts means the parliamentary precincts within the meaning of the ~~Parliamentary Service Act 2000~~ Parliament Act 2025

...

~~**public organisation** means any organisation, other than a Crown entity or a State enterprise, that the House resolves to be a public organisation~~

public organisation—

- (a) means any organisation, other than a Crown entity or a State enterprise, that the House resolves to be a public organisation,
and
- (b) includes the Reserve Bank of New Zealand

...

revision bill means a revision bill as provided for in Standing Order 276

...

specialist select committee means a select committee established under Standing Order 185(1A)

...

working day means any day of the week other than—

...

- (c) any anniversary or other day observed as a public holiday in a locality to which a particular ~~local bill~~ or private bill or ~~local bill~~ subject to procedures under these Standing Orders relates,
and

Amendment 1
—definition of
Government amendment

Amendment 42
—parliamentary
agencies
—Parliament Act 2025

Parliament Act 2025

...

written or in writing means written by hand, printed, ~~typewritten~~, or otherwise visibly represented, copied, or reproduced, including by email or other electronic means.

...

4 Suspension of Standing Orders

- (1) A Standing Order or other order of the House may be suspended in whole or in part on motion with or without notice.
- (2) A suspension motion may be moved without notice only if ~~at least 60 members are present~~ more than half of all members of the House are present in the Chamber when the motion is moved.
- (2A) The member moving a suspension motion—
 - (a) may not interrupt a debate to do so, and
 - (b) in speaking to the motion, must inform the House with some particularity of the circumstances that warrant the proposed suspension.
- (3) A suspension motion ~~may not interrupt a debate and~~ must state the object of or reason for the proposed suspension.
- (4) An amendment may not be moved to a suspension motion.

...

14 Swearing-in of members

- (1) A member taking the oath or making the affirmation is called to the Table for only this purpose and must do so using only the words required by law.
- (1A) A member who fails to take the oath or make the affirmation in that manner must withdraw immediately, and may not sit or vote in the House or serve on a committee until that member has taken the oath or made the affirmation required by law.

...

14A Swearing-in of member in exceptional circumstances

- (1) This Standing Order applies if—
 - (a) a member has not been able to be sworn in under Standing Order 14 due to exceptional circumstances beyond the member's control, and
 - (b) those circumstances are likely to prevent the member from being sworn in under Standing Order 14 for a significant period of time.
- (2) Despite Standing Order 14, the Speaker may permit the member to be sworn in by taking the oath or making the affirmation required by law—
 - (a) when the House is not sitting;
 - (b) at another location.
- (3) The Speaker reports to the House when a member has been sworn in under this Standing Order.

...

Amendment 2

—suspension of Standing Orders

Amendment 3

—swearing-in of members in exceptional circumstances

CHAPTER 2

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE

38 Attendance

- (1) A member is recorded by the Clerk as being present in the House on a sitting day if, during that sitting day, the member—
 - (a) attends the House, or
 - (b) attends a meeting of a select committee, or
 - (c) attends other official business approved by the Business Committee, or
 - (d) is participating in the official inter-parliamentary relations programme funded by the Office of the Clerk, or
 - (e) is participating in a course offered by the Parliamentary Education Charitable Trust while the House is sitting, or
 - (f) is participating in a meeting at secure facilities in Defence House while the House is sitting.
- (2) At the time that a member is outside the parliamentary precincts attending or participating in business under ~~paragraph (1)(a) to (d)~~ paragraph (1)(a) to (f), that member is regarded as present within the parliamentary precincts for the purposes of the Standing Orders.
- (3) A member is treated as participating in the official inter-parliamentary relations programme under paragraph (d) if, between 10 pm of the previous day and 7 am of the sitting day, they participated remotely in a meeting as part of that programme.

...

39 Permission to be absent from the House

- (1) The Speaker may grant a member of a party consisting of one member, an Independent member, or any other member (following a request from a member's party leader or whip) permission to be absent from the House—
 - (a) on account of illness or other family cause of a personal nature:
 - (b) to enable the member to attend to public business (whether in New Zealand or overseas);
 - (c) to enable the member to return to their home on a Thursday, under Standing Order 39A.
- (2) A leader or whip of a party consisting of more than one member may grant any member of that party permission to be absent from the House.

39A Permission to be absent on Thursday for return home

- (1) A member may be granted permission to be absent from the House on a Thursday if—
 - (a) the absence is for the purpose of enabling the member to return to their home, and

Amendment 5

- attendance
- official business

Amendment 6

- Attendance
- Permission to be absent on Thursday to return home

(b) the location of the member's home means that it is not reasonably practicable for the member to return there, on the Thursday, unless they leave the parliamentary precincts before 5 pm.

(2) Permission may be granted under paragraph (1) by—

(a) the Speaker;

(b) the leader or whip of a party consisting of more than one member.

...

SITTINGS

...

54 Resumption of business

~~Business interrupted by the Speaker or the chairperson for whatever reason is resumed at the point of interruption. A member whose speech was interrupted may speak first on the resumption of the debate. If the member does not exercise the right to speak first when the debate resumes, the member's speech is concluded.~~

(1) Business that has been interrupted for any reason is resumed at the point of interruption.

(2) A member whose speech was interrupted may speak first on the resumption of the debate.

(3) If the member does not exercise the right to speak first when the debate resumes, the member's speech is concluded.

...

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

...

67 Government orders of the day

Government orders of the day consist of—

...

(d) reports on international treaty examinations, if set down under Standing Order 254(2)(a), and

...

70 Arrangement of private and local orders of the day

...

(2) ~~Where the debate on a bill has been interrupted or adjourned, the bill is taken ahead of other bills at the same stage.~~

...

72 Arrangement of members' orders of the day

...

(2) ~~Where the debate on a member's bill has been interrupted or adjourned,—~~

...

...

Amendment 6

–Attendance
–Permission to be absent on Thursday to return home

Amendment 4

–updating parliamentary terminology
–interruption of debate

Amendment 4

–updating parliamentary terminology
–interruption of debate

Amendment 4

–updating parliamentary terminology
–interruption of debate

74 Discharge or postponement of order of the day

...

- (4) Subject to paragraph (5), the order of the day for consideration of the report of a select committee is discharged if not dealt with within 15 sitting days, or within 15 sitting days of the presentation of a Government response that relates to it, as the case may be.
- (5) A select committee report that is selected for debate under Standing Order 254(5) is not discharged under paragraph (4), ~~and bills that subsequently become available for first reading are arranged on the Order Paper after that report unless the Business Committee determines otherwise.~~

...

BUSINESS COMMITTEE**77 Business Committee**

- (1) The Speaker convenes a Business Committee ~~at the commencement on the opening~~ of each Parliament. The Speaker chairs the Business Committee.

...

80 Arrangement of special debates

- (1) The Business Committee may arrange special debates on any of the following:

...

(da) foreign affairs (focusing on themes recommended by the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee):

...

...

Amendment 7
 –special debates
 –foreign affairs

CHAPTER 3

GENERAL PROCEDURES

MAINTENANCE OF ORDER

...

94 ~~Time during which member is suspended~~

~~If any member is suspended under Standing Order 92, the suspension—~~

- ~~(a) on the first occasion is for 24 hours;~~
- ~~(b) on the second occasion during the same Parliament is for seven days, excluding the day of suspension;~~
- ~~(c) on the third or any subsequent occasion during the same Parliament is for 28 days, excluding the day of suspension.~~

94 Period of suspension of member after being named

If a member is suspended under Standing Order 92, the period for which the member is suspended is—

- (a) the day on which the House resolves to suspend the member, and
- (b) the following additional days, depending on the number of occasions in that term of Parliament on which the member has been suspended under Standing Order 92:
 - (i) on the first occasion, the next day on which a sitting commences, or
 - (ii) on the second occasion, 6 days, commencing on the next sitting day, or
 - (iii) on the third or a subsequent occasion, 27 days, commencing on the next sitting day.

...

MOTIONS

...

99 Giving of notice of motion

...

- (2) Notice of a motion relating to a particular ~~Supplementary Order Paper~~ Amendment Paper cannot be given unless that ~~Supplementary Order Paper~~ Amendment Paper has been ~~circulated to members~~ published.

...

Amendment 8

—time during which member is suspended

Amendment 4

—updating parliamentary terminology
—Amendment Paper

INTERRUPTION OF DEBATE

...

133 Interruption of debate

...

ADJOURNMENT OF DEBATE

~~134 Adjournment of debate~~

~~(1) After a question has been proposed, any member, on being called to speak to that question, may move "That this debate be now adjourned" either to a later hour on the same day or to any other day. There is no amendment or debate on this question.~~

~~(2) On the adjournment of the House, any debate in progress is adjourned and set down for resumption on the next sitting day.~~

~~135 Member entitled to speak first on resumption~~

~~The member upon whose motion a debate is adjourned or who was speaking when the House adjourned may speak first on the resumption of the debate if the member claims that right.~~

~~136 If adjournment motion not agreed, mover may speak~~

~~If a motion for the adjournment of the debate is not agreed, the member moving the motion for the adjournment may speak, otherwise the member's speech lapses.~~

134 Motion to interrupt debate

(1) Subject to paragraph (6), after a question has been proposed, any member, on being called to speak to that question, may move "That this debate be now interrupted".

(2) The motion may specify when the interrupted debate is to resume, if the member intends that the debate be resumed later on the same sitting day.

(3) When a motion is moved under this Standing Order, the question is put on the motion without amendment or debate.

(4) If the House agrees to the motion, the debate is interrupted and set down for resumption,—

(a) at the time specified in the motion (if any), or

(b) next sitting day.

(5) The member who moved the motion retains the call and,—

(a) if the motion is agreed, may speak first on the resumption of the debate, or

(b) if the motion is not agreed, may continue to speak.

(6) A motion may not be moved to interrupt a debate in a committee of the whole House (see Standing Order 181).

...

Amendment 4

—updating
parliamentary
terminology
—interruption of
debate
—See new SO 134

Amendment 4

—updating
parliamentary
terminology
—interruption of
debate

VOTING

...

144 How votes are cast by parties during party votes

...

- (6) When this paragraph applies, as set out in paragraph (7), the following can have votes cast on their behalf by the leader or whip of another party, if not present in the Chamber:

- (a) a party that consists of five or fewer members, and
- (b) an Independent member.

- (7) Paragraph (6) applies—

- (a) at any time that at least one of the members of the party whose votes are being cast, or that Independent member, is—
 - (i) present within the parliamentary precincts at the time, including being regarded as present under Standing Order 38(2), or

- (ii) absent from the House with the permission of the Speaker granted under Standing Order 39(1); or

- (iii) absent from the House with permission under Standing Order 39A (which relates to permission to be absent on Thursday to return home):

- ~~(b) on a Thursday, from 5 pm until that sitting adjourns, except when the sitting has been extended under Standing Order 56 or business is transacted under urgency after 5 pm on that day.~~

- (b) on a Thursday, from 5 pm until that sitting adjourns, except when—

- (i) the sitting has been extended under Standing Order 56, or
 - (ii) business is being transacted under urgency after 5 pm on that day.

...

146 Proxy votes cast during party vote

- (1) During a party vote, the leader or whip of a party may cast proxy votes for members of that party who are not present within the parliamentary precincts, but a party's proxy votes must not exceed the limit set out in paragraph (2).

- (2) Except as provided in paragraphs (3) and (4), the limit on proxy votes for each party is the number equal to 25 percent of that party's membership in the House, or another limit determined by the Business Committee, rounded upwards where applicable.

- ~~(3) A member's proxy vote is not counted towards the limit on proxy votes under paragraph (2) if, at the time the proxy vote is cast, the member is absent from the House with the permission of the Speaker granted under Standing Order 39(1).~~

- (3) A member's proxy vote is not counted towards the limit on proxy votes under paragraph (2) if, at the time the proxy vote is cast, the member is absent from the House with—

Amendment 6

—attendance
—permission to be absent on Thursday to return home

Amendment 6

—attendance
—permission to be absent on Thursday to return home

- (a) the permission of the Speaker granted under Standing Order 39(1), or
- (b) permission under Standing Order 39A (which relates to permission to be absent on Thursday to return home).
- (4) The limit on proxy votes under paragraph (2) does not apply—
 - (a) at any time determined by the Business Committee for this purpose, or
 - ~~(ab) on a Thursday, from 5 pm until that sitting adjourns, except when the sitting has been extended under Standing Order 56 or business is transacted under urgency after 5 pm on that day, or~~
 - (ab) on a Thursday, from 5 pm until that sitting adjourns, except when—
 - (i) the sitting has been extended under Standing Order 56, or
 - (ii) business is being transacted under urgency after 5 pm on that day, or
 - (b) in the period from the declaration of a state of national emergency until that state of national emergency is terminated or expires.
- (5) Despite paragraph (3)(b), the proxy vote of a member with permission to be absent under Standing Order 39A is counted towards the limit on proxy votes under paragraph (2) when—
 - (a) the sitting has been extended under Standing Order 56, or
 - (b) business is being transacted under urgency after 5 pm on that day.

...

149 Ringing of bells for vote

- (1) During a personal vote, the bells are rung under Standing Order 148(1)(a) for the following period:
 - (a) for a single personal vote or for the first personal vote in a series of personal votes, 7 minutes:
 - (b) for the second and each subsequent personal vote in a series of personal votes, 1 minute.

...

154 ~~Minimum attendance~~ number of members present for personal vote

~~Where fewer than 20 members attend the House to vote or abstain on a personal vote, that vote is of no effect.~~

If fewer than 20 members are present in person to vote or abstain on a personal vote, that vote is of no effect.

...

Amendment 6

–attendance
 –permission to be absent on Thursday to return home

COMMITTEES OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

...

177 Instruction to committee of the whole House

...

- (3) An instruction relating to ~~a Supplementary Order Paper~~ an Amendment Paper or amendment may not be moved unless the ~~Supplementary Order Paper printed and circulated to members~~ Amendment Paper has been published, or the amendment has been delivered to the Clerk at the Table.

Amendment 4

–updating
parliamentary
terminology
–Amendment Paper

...

181 Committee may not interrupt debate or adjourn

~~A committee of the whole House may not adjourn its own sitting or the consideration of any matter to a future sitting.~~

A committee of the whole House may not—

- (a) interrupt a debate under Standing Order 134, or
- (b) adjourn its own sitting.

Amendment 4

–updating
parliamentary
terminology
–interruption of
debate

...

CHAPTER 4

SELECT COMMITTEES

ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES

185 Establishment and life of select committees

~~(1) The following select committees are established at the commencement of each Parliament:~~

~~(a) the subject select committees, and~~

~~(b) the Officers of Parliament Committee, the Petitions Committee, the Privileges Committee, the Regulations Review Committee, and the Standing Orders Committee.~~

(1) The subject select committees listed in Standing Order 189 are established at the opening of each term of Parliament.

(1A) The following specialist select committees are established at the opening of each term of Parliament:

(a) Agencies and Officers of Parliament Committee:

(b) Legislative Scrutiny Committee:

(c) Petitions Committee:

(d) Privileges Committee:

(e) Regulations Review Committee:

(f) Standing Orders Committee.

(2) The House may establish other select committees.

(3) A select committee continues in existence for the duration of the Parliament unless the House provides otherwise or, in the case of a committee established for a particular purpose, until the committee makes its final report.

...

SUBJECT SELECT COMMITTEES

189 Subject select committees

The subject select committees and their subject areas are—

...

Finance and Expenditure Committee: economic and fiscal policy, taxation, revenue, banking and finance, superannuation, insurance, Government expenditure and financial performance, performance reporting, public audit

...

MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

192 Time for meetings

...

(3) If there is no chairperson or deputy chairperson or if they are both ~~absent from New Zealand~~ absent from duty, the Speaker may exercise the chairperson's power to decide when the committee should meet.

...

Amendment 42

—renaming Officers of Parliament Committee

Amendment 19

—establishment of Legislative Scrutiny Committee

Amendment 39

—functions of Finance and Expenditure Committee

Amendment 13

—powers of chairperson

193 Meetings on Fridays

Except by leave of the committee, a select committee may not meet on a Friday in a week in which there has been a sitting of the House.

194 Venue of meeting

...

~~(2) A committee may meet with some or all members participating remotely, subject to any rules issued under Standing Order 208.~~

(2) A committee may meet with some or all members participating remotely, subject to—

(a) Standing Orders 212A(2), 223(3) and 338C(2):

(b) any rules issued under Standing Order 212A(4).

...

196 Meetings within Wellington area on sitting days

(1) When meeting within the Wellington area, a select committee may not meet—

(a) during oral questions:

(b) during a sitting of the House except by leave of the committee:

(c) during an evening (after 6 pm) on a day on which there has been a sitting of the House.

~~(2) The Officers of Parliament Committee, the Petitions Committee, the Privileges Committee, the Regulations Review Committee, and the Standing Orders Committee may meet during a sitting of the House, despite paragraph (1)(b).~~

(2) Despite paragraph (1)(b), the following committees may meet during a sitting of the House:

(a) Agencies and Officers of Parliament Committee:

(b) Petitions Committee:

(c) Privileges Committee:

(d) Regulations Review Committee:

(e) Standing Orders Committee.

~~(3) When—Despite paragraph (1)(c), when a meeting within the Wellington area is in progress at 6 pm on a day on which there has been a sitting of the House, it may be continued while the leave of the committee is forthcoming in order to conclude business before the committee.~~

196A Meeting times of Legislative Scrutiny Committee

Despite Standing Orders 193 and 196(1)(b) and (c), the Legislative Scrutiny Committee, and any committee while meeting jointly with the Legislative Scrutiny Committee, may meet—

(a) during a sitting of the House:

(b) during an evening (after 6 pm) on a day on which there has been a sitting of the House:

(c) on a Friday in a week in which there has been a sitting of the House.

...

Amendment 19
—establishment of
Legislative Scrutiny
Committee

POWERS OF COMMITTEES

~~198 Seeking evidence~~

- (1) ~~The chairperson of a select committee may, on behalf of the committee, request any person to attend and give evidence before the committee.~~
- (2) ~~The chairperson may, on behalf of the committee, request that papers and records that are relevant to its proceedings be produced.~~

198 Seeking evidence

A select committee, or a chairperson on behalf of a committee, may—

- (a) request any person to attend and give evidence before the committee;
- (b) request that papers and records that are relevant to the committee's proceedings be produced;
- (c) call for evidence and set a closing date for receiving evidence under Standing Order 218A.

...

CHAIRPERSON AND DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON

204 Chairperson and deputy chairperson

...

- (4) ~~The Deputy Speaker or an Assistant Speaker is the chairperson of the Petitions Committee.~~
- (4) The Deputy Speaker is the chairperson of the Legislative Scrutiny Committee.
- (5) An Assistant Speaker is the chairperson of the Petitions Committee.

205 Absence of chairperson

- (1) ~~In the absence of the chairperson—~~
- ~~(a) during a meeting, or~~
 - ~~(b) from New Zealand,~~
- ~~and during a vacancy in the office, the deputy chairperson may perform the duties and exercise the authority of the chairperson.~~
- (2) ~~If the chairperson and the deputy chairperson are not present at the commencement of a meeting, the committee may elect a member of the committee to chair that meeting and perform the duties and exercise the authority of the chairperson in respect of the meeting.~~
- (3) ~~The chairperson or the deputy chairperson may, while chairing a meeting, ask any member of the committee to chair the meeting while the chairperson or deputy chairperson is absent. Any such member performs the duties and exercises the authority of the chairperson while chairing the meeting.~~

206 Transfer of powers of chairperson during meeting

- (1) ~~The chairperson of a select committee may invite the committee to authorise the deputy chairperson or, in the absence of the deputy chairperson, any other member of the committee to chair meetings while a particular item of business is considered.~~

Amendments 10 and 11

—calling for evidence
—chairperson's call for evidence

Amendment 19

—establishment of
Legislative Scrutiny
Committee

Amendment 13

—powers of chairperson
—see new SO 205

Amendment 13

—powers of chairperson
—see new SO 206

- ~~(2) The chairperson may participate as a committee member when the deputy chairperson or another member is authorised to chair a meeting under this Standing Order.~~
- ~~(3) A member who chairs a meeting under this Standing Order performs the duties and exercises the authority of the chairperson while chairing the meeting.~~

205 Authority to act as chairperson

- (1) The deputy chairperson acts as chairperson while—
 - (a) the office of chairperson is vacant, or
 - (b) the chairperson is absent from duty.
- (2) A select committee may appoint a member of the committee to act as deputy chairperson while the deputy chairperson is—
 - (a) acting as chairperson, or
 - (b) absent from duty.
- (3) If the chairperson and the deputy chairperson are not present at the commencement of a meeting, the committee may elect a member of the committee to act as chairperson in respect of that meeting.
- (4) The chairperson or the deputy chairperson may, while chairing a meeting, ask any member of the committee to act as chairperson while the chairperson or deputy chairperson is absent from the meeting.
- (5) A member acting as chairperson under this Standing Order performs the duties and exercises the authority of the chairperson.
- (6) In this Standing Order and Standing Orders 192(3) and 206, a chairperson or deputy chairperson is **absent from duty** if they are—
 - (a) not present during a meeting, or
 - (b) absent with the permission of the Speaker granted under Standing Order 39(1), or
 - (c) otherwise unavailable when the duties or authority of the chairperson need to be performed or exercised without delay.

Amendment 13

—powers of chairperson

206 Transfer of authority of chairperson

- (1) The chairperson of a select committee may invite the committee to transfer the authority of the chairperson while the committee deals with a particular item of business.
- (2) The authority of the chairperson is transferred under paragraph (1) to the deputy chairperson or, if the deputy chairperson is absent from duty, to any other member of the committee.
- (3) If the authority of the chairperson is transferred under this Standing Order, paragraph (4) applies—
 - (a) while the committee is dealing with the particular item of business during a meeting, and
 - (b) at any other time when the duties or authority of the chairperson need to be performed or exercised in respect of that item.
- (4) If this paragraph applies,—
 - (a) the member to whom authority is transferred performs the duties and exercises the authority of the chairperson, and
 - (b) the chairperson may participate as a committee member.

Amendment 13

—powers of chairperson

CONDUCT OF PROCEEDINGS

207 Conduct of proceedings

Subject to the express provisions of the Standing Orders or any practice of the House to the contrary, the same rules for the conduct of proceedings are followed by select committees as apply to the conduct of proceedings in a committee of the whole House.

~~208 Rules for conduct of proceedings with remote participation~~

- ~~(1) The Business Committee may determine rules regarding the conduct of select committee proceedings with members participating remotely.~~
- ~~(2) Rules determined under paragraph (1) have effect despite any other Standing Order to the contrary.~~

Amendment 16

–remote participation
by members
–see new SO 212A

~~209 Notice of meeting~~

- ~~(1) A written notice informing members of the committee of a meeting of the committee is to be circulated by the clerk of the committee no later than the day before the meeting. The notice must contain a summary of the items of business proposed to be dealt with at the meeting.~~
- ~~(2) The requirement for a written notice to be circulated may be waived if all members of the committee, or the leaders or whips of their respective parties, agree. When a meeting has lapsed or been adjourned for lack of a quorum, agreement is required under this paragraph only from those members who were expected to attend that meeting. Agreement from non-voting members is not required under this paragraph.~~

Amendment 15

–notice of meeting
–see new SO 209

209 Notice of meeting

- (1) A written notice informing members of a committee of a meeting of the committee must be circulated by the clerk of the committee no later than the day before the meeting.
- (2) The notice must contain—
 - (a) the date, time and venue of the meeting, and
 - (b) a summary of the items of business proposed to be dealt with at the meeting.
- (3) The requirement for a written notice to be circulated may be waived with the agreement of all members of the committee, or the leaders or whips of their respective parties.
- (4) When a meeting has lapsed or been adjourned for lack of a quorum, agreement under paragraph (3) is—
 - (a) required only from those members who were expected to attend that meeting, and
 - (b) not required from non-voting members.

Amendment 15

–notice of meeting

...

~~212 Presence of committee members~~

- ~~(1) The names of the members of a select committee present at a meeting are recorded in the committee's minutes.~~
- ~~(2) A member may participate remotely in proceedings.~~

- ~~(3) A member participating remotely—~~
~~(a) is recorded as present under paragraph (1),~~
~~(b) is regarded as present for the conduct of the committee's proceedings, and~~
~~(c) is regarded as attending the meeting for the purpose of Standing Order 38(1)(b).~~

212 Presence of members at meeting

~~The minutes of each select committee meeting record the names of—~~

- ~~(a) the committee members present for proceedings, including—~~
~~(i) members involved in temporary changes in the membership of the committee, and~~
~~(ii) non-voting members, and~~
~~(b) members who are present, or participate in proceedings, under Standing Order 214.~~

212A Remote participation by members

- ~~(1) Subject to paragraph (2), members may participate remotely in the proceedings of a select committee.~~
~~(2) A member who is present within the parliamentary precincts on a sitting day may not participate remotely in committee proceedings, unless their remote participation is approved by the Speaker, or by the leader or whip of their party, on account of illness.~~
~~(3) A member participating remotely is regarded as—~~
~~(a) present for the committee's proceedings, and~~
~~(b) attending the meeting, for the purpose of Standing Order 38(1)(b).~~
~~(4) The Business Committee may determine rules regarding the conduct of select committee proceedings with members participating remotely.~~
~~(5) Rules determined under paragraph (4) have effect despite any other Standing Order to the contrary.~~

...

GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR EVIDENCE

218A Call for evidence

- ~~(1) A select committee may—~~
~~(a) call for evidence on an item of business before the committee, and~~
~~(b) set a closing date for receiving evidence.~~
~~(2) Subject to paragraph (3), if it is not practicable for the committee to call for evidence and set a closing date under paragraph (1), the chairperson may do so on the committee's behalf.~~
~~(3) When a chairperson has set a closing date on a committee's behalf, notice of the closing date must be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the committee.~~

Amendment 16

—remote participation by members

Amendment 10

—calling for evidence

Amendment 11

—chairperson's call for evidence

219 Written submissions

A witness will be given the opportunity to make a submission in writing before appearing to give oral evidence.

220 Return of evidence

A select committee may return or expunge any evidence or statement, for example, evidence that it considers to be irrelevant to its proceedings, offensive, possibly defamatory, or suppressed by an order of a New Zealand court.

Amendment 12
–return of evidence

223 Secret evidence

...

- (3) Secret evidence may be received and heard only in person, despite Standing Orders 194(2) ~~and 212(2) and (3)~~ and 212A.

...

REPORTS

...

249 Differing views

- (1) Subject to paragraph (2), a select committee must, in its report, include differing views when one or more members indicate a wish to do so.
- (2) Differing views must—
- be relevant and succinct,
 - not include an allegation against a person that may seriously damage the reputation of that person, if no reasonable opportunity has been provided for that person to respond,
 - not include any attachment or appendix unless the committee agrees, ~~and~~
 - comply with the Standing Orders and practices of the House, and
 - be provided to the committee in a timely manner.

Amendment 14
–differing views

...

254 Reports set down

- (1) Following their presentation, reports of select committees are set down as follows:

...

- (c) reports on the Budget policy statement, the fiscal strategy report, the economic and fiscal update, the tax expenditure statement, the statement on the long-term fiscal position, the investment statement, the financial statements of the Government, Estimates, Supplementary Estimates, and annual reviews are considered as set out in Standing Orders 340, 344, 348, 349, 356, and 357:

Amendment 41
–economic and fiscal reports

...

256 Government responses to select committee reports

- (1) The Government must, not more than 60 working days after a select committee report has been presented, present a paper to the House responding to any recommendations of the committee which are addressed to it.

- (2) No response under this Standing Order is required in respect of select committee reports on ~~bills, Supplementary Order Papers~~ Amendment Papers, questions of privilege, declarations of inconsistency, Estimates, Supplementary Estimates, and annual reviews and review briefings of departments, parliamentary agencies, Offices of Parliament, Crown entities, public organisations, or State enterprises.

Amendment 34

–Government response to reports on bills

Amendment 4

–updating parliamentary terminology

–Amendment Paper

–Parliament Act 2025

CHAPTER 5

LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES

FORM OF BILLS

...

262 Preambles in private bills

Every private bill must contain a preamble, which must—

- (a) set out the facts on which the bill is founded and the circumstances giving rise to the necessity for it, and
- (ab) express the objects of the bill, and
- (b) state whether ~~or not~~ the objects of the bill can be attained only by legislation, and
- ~~(c) if the objects of the bill can be attained other than by legislation, give the particular reasons why legislation is warranted.~~
- (c) if the objects of the bill can be attained other than by legislation, give the particular reasons why it is not reasonable or practicable to use other means.

Amendment 29
—preamble

...

263 Temporary law

...

- (3) This Standing Order does not apply in relation to a provision of a bill that is to be incorporated into ~~another enactment~~ other legislation, for example, a new section inserted into a principal Act.

263A Speaker to scrutinise bills

- (1) The Speaker scrutinises the form of each bill on its introduction to ensure that it complies with the Standing Orders.
- (2) Any bill that does not comply with the Standing Orders is—
 - (a) discharged, or
 - (b) allowed to proceed with such amendments as the Speaker directs.

SINGLE-SUBJECT RULE AND OMNIBUS BILLS

~~264 Bills to relate to one subject area~~

- ~~(1) Except as otherwise permitted by the Standing Orders, a bill must relate to one subject area only.~~
- ~~(2) A bill may make consequential amendments to a number of Acts affected by its provisions.~~

264 Single subject for each bill

- (1) A bill must relate to a single subject area or, if it is an amendment bill, substantively amend only one principal Act.
- (2) Despite paragraph (1), a bill may be introduced as an omnibus bill under Standing Order 266 or 267.

Amendment 21
—single-subject rule
and omnibus bills

- (3) A bill introduced in accordance with paragraph (1) may make consequential amendments to one or more Acts affected by its provisions.

~~265 Speaker to scrutinise bills~~

~~The Speaker scrutinises each bill on its introduction to ensure that it complies with Standing Order 264. Any bill that does not comply is discharged or allowed to proceed with such amendments as the Speaker directs.~~

See SO 263A

OMNIBUS BILLS

266 Types of omnibus bills that may be introduced

- (1) The following types of bills may be introduced although they are omnibus in nature:

...

- ~~(c) Local Legislation bills that contain provisions affecting particular localities, which otherwise would have been introduced as local bills:~~

- (c) Local Legislation Bills that—

- (i) contain provisions affecting particular localities, which otherwise would require the introduction of local bills, and

- (ii) are endorsed as complying with Appendix C:

...

- (g) Regulatory Systems Amendment Bills approved by the Business Committee.

...

267 Other omnibus bills

- (1) An omnibus bill to amend more than one Act may be introduced if—

- (a) the amendments deal with an interrelated topic that can be regarded as implementing a single broad policy, or
- (b) the amendments to be effected to each Act are of a similar nature in each case, or
- (c) the Business Committee has agreed to the bill's introduction as an omnibus bill.

- ~~(2) The Business Committee may determine that a committee has the power to amend a bill in a manner that causes it to become an omnibus bill, if the bill, as amended, meets one or both of the criteria in paragraph (1)(a) and (b).~~

- (2) An omnibus bill introduced under paragraph (1)(a) may include, in addition to the amendments regarded as implementing the single broad policy, minor amendments to—

- (a) one of the principal Acts that is to be amended by the bill, or
- (b) with the approval of the Business Committee, two or more of the principal Acts that are to be amended by the bill.

Amendment 21

—single-subject rule and omnibus bills

Amendment 22

—Regulatory Systems Amendment Bills

Amendment 21

—single-subject rule and omnibus bills

- (3) The Business Committee may determine that a committee, in considering a bill, has the power—
- (a) to adopt amendments that cause the bill to become an omnibus bill, if the bill, as amended, meets one or both of the criteria in paragraph (1)(a) and (b), or
 - (b) if the bill is an omnibus bill under paragraph (1)(a), to adopt minor amendments to 1 or more of the principal Acts that are to be amended by the bill, in addition to the amendments regarded as implementing the single broad policy.

Amendment 21
 –single-subject rule
 and omnibus bills

GENERAL PROVISIONS

...

272—Legislative statements

- (1) ~~A **legislative statement** is a paper, presented by a Minister in charge of a bill, which includes information that the Minister considers important to inform the House about that bill.~~
- (2) ~~Subject to paragraph (3), a Minister may present a legislative statement in the House immediately before moving the first, second, or third reading of the bill.~~
- (3) ~~A legislative statement may be presented under paragraph (2) only if the statement has been circulated to the Clerk, and to the leader, whip, or relevant spokesperson of each party, no later than 11 am on the sitting day on which the first, second, or third reading of the bill (as the case may be) is to be moved, unless paragraph (4) applies.~~
- (4) ~~If urgency has been accorded to a bill, a legislative statement for that bill may be presented only if it has first been circulated to the Clerk, and to the leader, whip, or relevant spokesperson of each party.~~
- (5) ~~A legislative statement is published under the authority of the House.~~

272 Legislative statements

- (1) A **legislative statement** is a paper that a Minister in charge of a bill may present to provide the House with information that the Minister considers important to inform the House’s consideration of the bill at its first or third reading.
- (2) Subject to paragraph (3), a legislative statement is presented under Standing Order 381(1).
- (3) Where the House has accorded urgency to a bill, a legislative statement relating to that bill may be presented in the House.
- (4) A legislative statement is published under the authority of the House.

Amendments 32 and 33
 –legislative
 statements
 –first and third reading
 –procedure for
 presentation

...

276—Revision bills

- (1) ~~A **revision bill** is a bill that is certified under section 98 of the Legislation Act 2019. When a certificate given under that section is presented to the House on the introduction of a bill, the procedures set out in this Standing Order apply to the bill.~~
- (2) ~~There is no amendment or debate on the question for the first reading.~~

Amendment 20
 –revision bills

- ~~(3) Following the bill's first reading, the question is put, without amendment or debate, that the bill be considered by a subject select committee nominated in the explanatory note to the bill.~~
- ~~(4) Following the presentation of the committee's final report on the bill, the Business Committee determines arrangements for the passage of the bill.~~
- ~~(5) Following the bill's second reading, the House proceeds to the third reading immediately, unless—~~
 - ~~(a) the Business Committee determines otherwise;~~
 - ~~(b) the Minister in charge requires the House to go into committee to consider an amendment;~~
 - ~~(c) an amendment has been circulated on a Supplementary Order Paper, or has been lodged with the Clerk, at least 24 hours before the House meets on the day on which the bill is read a second time, and the amendment is in order, in which case the House goes into committee to consider that amendment.~~
- ~~(6) There is no amendment or debate on the question for the third reading.~~

276 Revision bills

- (1) If a certificate given under section 98 of the Legislation Act 2019 is presented to the House on the introduction of a bill, the bill is a revision bill for the purposes of the Standing Orders.
- (2) There is no amendment or debate on the question for the first reading of a revision bill.
- (3) See Standing Order 296(3) for the referral of a revision bill for select committee consideration following its first reading.
- (4) Unless the Business Committee determines otherwise, after the second reading of a revision bill,—
 - (a) the bill is referred to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee for consideration in detail, and
 - (b) the order of the day for the consideration of the bill in a committee of the whole House is postponed, and
 - (c) Standing Order 318A(5) and (6) applies.

...

PRIVATE BILLS AND LOCAL BILLS

278A Approval to commence preliminary procedures for private bills and local bills

- (1) A promoter of a proposed private bill or local bill may give notice, under Appendix C, of the intention to introduce the bill, only with the approval of the Business Committee under this Standing Order.
- (2) The promoter must seek approval by writing to the Speaker, as the chairperson of the Business Committee,—
 - (a) requesting that the committee give approval, and
 - (b) providing information to support the Business Committee's consideration of the request, including—
 - (i) a description of the objects of the proposed bill, and

Amendment 20
—revision bills

Amendment 28
—approval to propose
private bill or
local bill

- (ii) evidence regarding the matters set out in paragraph (3).
- (3) On receiving a request under paragraph (2), the Business Committee considers whether—
- (a) the objects of the proposed bill can be attained only by legislation, or
 - (b) it is not reasonable or practicable to use means other than legislation to attain the objects of the proposed bill, or
 - (c) it would be appropriate to use means other than legislation to attain those objects.
- (4) The Business Committee may determine that the promoter has approval to commence the preliminary procedures for the proposed bill and, if so, the promoter may give notice of the bill under Appendix C.

278B Requirements for private bills and local bills

- (1) A private bill or a local bill may be introduced only if—
- (a) the Business Committee has made a determination under Standing Order 278A(4), and
 - (b) the bill is endorsed as complying with the Standing Orders as provided in Appendix C.
- (2) See Standing Order 262 for the requirement for a private bill to contain a preamble.
- (3) See also Standing Order 266(1)(c) for Local Legislation Bills that contain provisions affecting particular localities.

Amendment 28

–approval to propose private bill or local bill

279 Withdrawal of ~~local bills and private bills and local bills~~

- (1) The promoter of a ~~local bill or~~ a private bill ~~or a local bill~~ may notify the Speaker in writing that the promoter withdraws the bill. The Speaker informs the House of any such notification.
- (2) A bill that has been withdrawn is discharged from further consideration by the House

LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

279A Purpose and functions of Legislative Scrutiny Committee

- (1) The purpose of the Legislative Scrutiny Committee is to assist the House to make high-quality legislation.
- (2) For this purpose, the committee undertakes the following functions:
- (a) select committee consideration of bills:
 - (b) consideration in detail of bills:
 - (c) scrutiny of legislative quality matters arising from bills and amendments to bills:
 - (d) any other matters referred by the House or under the Standing Orders.
- (3) The committee may initiate inquiries or receive briefings about, and may report to the House on, any matters related to the committee's purpose or functions.
- (4) In respect of a bill before another committee, the committee may consider, and draw to the attention of that committee, any legislative quality matters arising from the bill.

Amendment 19

–establishment of Legislative Scrutiny Committee

279B Legislative Scrutiny Committee chairing, membership and participation

- (1) As the chairperson of the Legislative Scrutiny Committee, the Deputy Speaker may delegate their duties and authority—
 - (a) to the deputy chairperson;
 - (b) when the committee is undertaking consideration in detail of a bill, to an Assistant Speaker (including if the Assistant Speaker is not a member of the committee).
- (2) The committee's membership must not include a majority of members who belong to parties that are in Government or in a coalition or support agreement with a Government party.
- (3) Despite Standing Order 214(2), any member may attend and participate in a meeting of the committee.
- (4) When the committee is undertaking consideration in detail of a bill, the member in charge of the bill must attend to give evidence in public.
- (5) A member participating under paragraph (3) or (4) may not vote on any question put to the committee or participate in any decision taken by leave of the committee.

...

PRE-LEGISLATIVE ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

...

282—Private bills

~~Before a private bill is introduced it must be endorsed as complying with the Standing Orders as provided in Appendix C.~~

283—Local bills and Local Legislation bills

- (1) ~~Legislation that would otherwise require to be introduced by means of a local bill may be included in a Local Legislation bill.~~
- (2) ~~Before a local bill or a Local Legislation bill is introduced it must be endorsed as complying with the Standing Orders as provided in Appendix C.~~

INTRODUCTION

...

290—Introduction of local bills and private bills

~~A local bill or a private bill is introduced when notice of intention to introduce it is given by any member by delivering a signed copy to the Clerk on any working day or by 1 pm on any sitting day.~~

290 Introduction of private bills and local bills

- (1) Subject to paragraph (2), a private bill or a local bill is introduced when the member in charge of the bill informs the Clerk of their intention to introduce the bill.
- (2) A private bill or a local bill may be introduced—
 - (a) on any working day, and
 - (b) if on a sitting day, by 1 pm on that day.

...

Amendment 19

—establishment of
Legislative Scrutiny
Committee

FIRST READING**293 Bills set down for first reading**

- (1) A bill is set down for first reading on the third working day following its introduction.
- (1A) Despite paragraph (1), a bill to implement an international treaty is not available for first reading until the earlier of the following:
- (a) the day after the debate on the report on that international treaty, as set down under Standing Order 254(2)(a), is completed:
 - (b) the expiry of 15 sitting days from the day on which the international treaty was presented to the House.
- (2) Urgency may be accorded to the first reading of a bill despite the bill not being available to be set down for first reading under paragraph (1) or (1A).
- (3) There is no amendment or debate on the question for the first reading of a bill in the following cases:
- (a) an Appropriation bill:
 - (b) an Imprest Supply bill:
 - (c) a bill to implement an international treaty, if the debate has been completed on the report on an international treaty examination of that treaty—has already been separately debated by the House under Standing Order 254(2)(a), as set down under Standing Order 254(2)(a):
 - (d) a revision bill:
 - (e) a confirmation bill under Standing Order 333.

...

295 Speech of member moving first reading

- (1) The member moving the bill's first reading must, on the commencement of that member's speech,—
- (a) nominate the select committee to consider the bill, and
 - (b) if it is proposed to move for any special powers or instruction in respect of the committee's consideration of the bill, indicate the terms of that proposed motion.
- (2) Following the member's speech, written notice of any special powers or instruction to be moved must be delivered to the Clerk at the Table.
- ~~(3) This Standing Order does not apply in respect of a bill that is not to stand referred to a select committee under Standing Order 296.~~
- (3) This Standing Order does not apply in respect of a bill if—
- (a) Standing Order 296(2) applies to the bill, or
 - (b) urgency has been accorded to the bill's first and second readings.

~~296 Referral to select committee~~

- ~~(1) A bill stands referred to a select committee for consideration after its first reading unless the House has otherwise accorded urgency to it.~~

Amendment 45

—debate on
international treaties

- (2) ~~An Appropriation bill and an Imprest Supply bill do not stand referred to a committee.~~

296 Referral to select committee

- (1) Subject to paragraph (2) and Standing Order 296A, after each bill is read a first time, the bill stands referred to a select committee for consideration.
- (2) The bill does not stand referred to a select committee if it is an—
- (a) Appropriation Bill;
 - (b) Imprest Supply Bill.
- (3) Unless the Business Committee determines otherwise, the bill stands referred to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee for select committee consideration if it is a—
- (a) local bill;
 - (b) Local Legislation Bill;
 - (c) private bill;
 - (d) Regulatory Systems Amendment Bill;
 - (e) revision bill;
 - (f) Statutes Amendment Bill.
- (4) The Business Committee may determine that any other bill, after it is read a first time, stands referred to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee for select committee consideration.
- (5) Standing Orders 295(1)(a) and 297 do not apply in respect of a bill that stands referred to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee under paragraph (3) or (4).

296A Motion to omit select committee consideration of bill under urgency

- (1) After a bill's first reading, if the House has accorded urgency to the bill's second reading, the member in charge of the bill may move "That the bill be set down for second reading immediately, without being considered by a select committee".
- (2) The question is put on a motion moved under paragraph (1)—
- (a) only if the member, on moving the motion, informs the House with some particularity of the circumstances that warrant the passing of the bill without being considered by a select committee, and
 - (b) without amendment or debate.
- (3) If the House agrees to a motion moved under paragraph (1), the bill is set down for second reading immediately.
- (4) If the House does not agree to a motion moved under paragraph (1), or if no such motion is moved,—
- (a) the bill stands referred to a select committee, and
 - (b) the member in charge of the bill—
 - (i) must, if they have not already done so, nominate a select committee to consider the bill, which is treated as a nomination made under Standing Order 295(1)(a), and

Amendment 18

—bill read first time under urgency
—omission of select committee consideration

Amendment 19

—establishment of Legislative Scrutiny Committee

Amendment 20

—revision bills

Amendment 18

—bill read first time under urgency
—omission of select committee consideration

- (ii) may indicate the terms of any special powers or instruction in respect of the committee's consideration of the bill, which is treated as an indication made under Standing Order 295(1)(b), and
- (c) a member may nominate another committee to consider the bill, which is treated as a nomination made under Standing Order 297(1), and
- (d) a nomination under subparagraph (b)(i) or (c) does not require written notice.

297 Determination of committee to consider bill

- (1) At any time before the question is put on a bill's first reading, a member may deliver to the Clerk at the Table a nomination of a select committee, other than the committee nominated under Standing Order 295(1)(a), to consider the bill.

...

298 Instruction to select committee

- (1) When the House has determined the committee to consider the bill, and if the terms of a motion for any special powers or instruction in respect of the committee's consideration of the bill have been indicated under Standing Order 295(1)(b), the member in charge may move that motion.
- ~~(2) If an instruction relates only to the time for report on the bill, and provides for the time for report on the bill to be more than four months, there is no debate on the question or on any amendment to the question.~~
- (2) If an instruction relates only to the time for report on the bill, and provides for the time for report on the bill to be more than four months,—
 - (a) the member must, on moving the motion, inform the House with some particularity of the circumstances that warrant the proposed time for report on the bill, and
 - (b) there is no debate on the question or on any amendment to the question.

...

SELECT COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

~~299 Select committee consideration of bills~~

- ~~(1) Each select committee to which a bill is referred examines the bill and may—~~
 - ~~(a) determine whether to recommend that the bill be passed, and~~
 - ~~(b) recommend amendments in accordance with Standing Order 300.~~
- ~~(2) In the case of a private bill, the committee also determines whether or not the statements in the preamble have been proved to the satisfaction of the committee.~~
- ~~(3) In the case of a Local Legislation bill, the committee also determines whether, in the committee's opinion, any clause or clauses should more properly be the subject of a local bill.~~

Amendment 27
—instruction to
shorten time
for report on bill

- ~~(4) A report by a select committee on a bill indicates the committee's determinations on the matters set out in this Standing Order.~~

299 Select committee consideration of bills

- (1) When a bill is referred to a select committee, the committee's primary purpose in considering the bill is to ensure that, if the bill is passed, it will result in high-quality legislation.
- (2) Another purpose is for the committee to be informed, to the extent practicable, of public views on the bill.
- (3) The committee receives evidence and advice as necessary or desirable for the purposes set out in paragraphs (1) and (2).
- (4) In considering and adopting its report on the bill, the committee may—
- (a) determine whether to recommend that the bill be passed, and
 - (b) recommend amendments in accordance with Standing Order 300.
- (5) In the case of a private bill, the committee also determines whether the statements in the preamble have been proved to the satisfaction of the committee.

Amendment 9

—purpose of select committee consideration of bills

300 Recommendation of amendments

- (1) Except as otherwise provided in this Standing Order, a select committee may recommend only amendments that are relevant to the subject matter of the bill, are consistent with the principles and objects of the bill, and otherwise conform to the Standing Orders and the practices of the House.
- (1A) Further to paragraph (1),—
- (a) in the case of a private bill or a local bill, the committee must not recommend an amendment that is outside the scope of the notices advertising the intention to introduce or promote the bill;
 - (b) in the case of a Regulatory Systems Amendment Bill, the committee may recommend an amendment that is more than minor only if that amendment has been approved by the Business Committee.
- (2) The Business Committee may determine that a select committee's powers are to be extended or restricted in respect of its recommendation of amendments to a bill.
- (3) A determination under paragraph (2) may be made in respect of a bill before or after its introduction.
- ~~(4) Further to paragraph (1), a committee may not recommend an amendment to a local bill or a private bill that is outside the scope of the notices advertising the intention to introduce or promote the bill.~~

Amendment 22

—Regulatory Systems Amendment Bills

...

SECOND READING

...

307 ~~Next stage of bill~~

~~A bill that has been read a second time is set down for consideration in committee next sitting day. The Business Committee may determine that the bill does not require consideration in committee, in which case the order of the day is altered and the bill is set down for third reading.~~

307 Next stage of bill

- (1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), a bill that has been read a second time is set down for consideration in committee next sitting day.
- (2) The Business Committee may determine that the bill does not require consideration in committee, in which case the order of the day is altered and the bill is set down for third reading.
- (3) If the bill is referred to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee for consideration in detail under Standing Order 318A, the order of the day for consideration in committee is postponed as set out in that Standing Order.

...

COMMITTEE STAGE

...

310 Consideration in committee

...

- (3) No amendment may be made to a local bill or a private bill or a local bill that is outside the scope of the notices advertising the intention to introduce or promote the bill.
- (4) No amendment that is more than minor may be made to a Regulatory Systems Amendment Bill unless that amendment has been approved by the Business Committee.

Amendment 19

—establishment of
Legislative Scrutiny
Committee

311 Order of considering bill

...

- (3) Where a bill is not drafted in parts,—
 - (a) subject to subparagraph (d), the committee considers its provisions in sequence, and
 - (b) for the purposes of debate, any schedules are considered along with the clauses to which they relate, and
 - (c) questions on any schedules are put separately without further debate, and
 - (d) after the other provisions have been dealt with, preliminary clauses are considered together for the purposes of debate, and the questions on them are put separately without further debate.

Amendment 22

—Regulatory Systems
Amendment Bills

Amendment 24

—order of
considering bill

...

314 Lodging of amendments

- (1) An amendment to a bill is lodged by a member by either:
 - (a) providing a written copy of the amendment to the Clerk in time for the amendment to be ~~printed on a Supplementary Order Paper and circulated to members~~ published on an Amendment Paper, or
 - (b) signing the amendment and delivering ~~six~~ three hard copies of the signed amendment to the Clerk at the Table.
- (2) An amendment may be lodged no later than the conclusion of the debate on the provision to which the amendment relates.

Amendment 4

–updating parliamentary terminology
–Amendment Paper

Amendment 25

–lodging of amendments

315 Consideration of amendments

- (1) Any relevant amendment that is ~~on a Supplementary Order Paper that has been circulated to members~~ an Amendment Paper that has been published, or that is delivered to the Clerk at the Table, can be referred to in the course of the debate on the provision proposed to be amended.
- (2) At the conclusion of the debate on a provision, the question on any amendment or motion to change a Vote that is in order is put.
- (3) The chairperson, at their discretion, may put a single question on a group of amendments if—
 - (a) the amendments stand in the name of the ~~same member~~; same member or members of the same party, and
 - (b) the amendments lend themselves to being grouped on account of their content or subject matter, or because they form a single alternative proposition; and
 - (c) grouping of the amendments is necessary to enable the committee's effective consideration of the bill.

Amendment 4

–updating parliamentary terminology
–Amendment Paper

Amendment 23

–grouping of amendments

...

317 Committee may divide bill

- (1) A committee of the whole House may divide into two or more separate bills any bill that—
 - (a) is drafted in parts, or
 - (b) lends itself to division because it comprises more than one subject matter—
 and in respect of which ~~a Supplementary Order Paper~~ an Amendment Paper notifying the intention to move for division of the bill into separate bills has been ~~circulated~~ published.
- (2) ~~The Supplementary Order Paper~~ Amendment Paper must show how it is proposed to divide the bill, setting out the enacting formula, title, and commencement provision for each new bill. ~~The Supplementary Order Paper~~ Amendment Paper may also set out a principal Act clause and a temporary law clause for any or all of the new bills.
- (3) A motion to divide a bill into separate bills, as set out on the ~~Supplementary Order Paper~~ Amendment Paper, is moved after the bill has been fully considered by the committee.
- (4) On determining that a bill does not require consideration in committee, the Business Committee may also determine that the

Amendment 4

–updating parliamentary terminology
–Amendment Paper

Clerk divide the bill in the manner set out on a ~~Supplementary Order Paper~~ an Amendment Paper under this Standing Order. The bills so divided are set down for third reading.

...

CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL BY LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

318A Referral for consideration in detail

- (1) The Business Committee may determine that a bill is to be referred to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee for consideration in detail.
- (2) A determination under paragraph (1) may be made in respect of a bill before or after its introduction.
- (3) A referral under paragraph (1) may occur when a bill has been set down for—
 - (a) consideration in a committee of the whole House, or
 - (b) third reading.
- (4) If a bill is referred to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee for consideration in detail, the order of the day for which the bill is set down is postponed.
- (5) A postponement under paragraph (4) ends—
 - (a) on a date determined by the Business Committee for the purpose, or
 - (b) if no date is determined by the Business Committee, on a date that is set by the member in charge of the bill informing the Clerk accordingly.
- (6) If the Legislative Scrutiny Committee has not reported on its consideration in detail of the bill before the date on which the postponement ends, the bill is discharged from further consideration by the committee.

Amendment 19

—establishment of
Legislative Scrutiny
Committee

318B Conduct of consideration in detail

- (1) When the Legislative Scrutiny Committee is undertaking consideration in detail of a bill,—
 - (a) Standing Orders 309(1) and (2)(a), 310 to 316, and 317(1) to (3) apply and the committee is treated as a committee of the whole House for the purposes of those Standing Orders, and
 - (b) Standing Orders 222 to 225, 243 to 252, 254 to 256, and 299 to 302 do not apply, and
 - (c) paragraph (2) applies in respect of each question proposed on a provision in the bill or an amendment to the bill, and
 - (d) except as otherwise provided in the Standing Orders, the rules for the conduct of proceedings that apply to the committee are the same as apply to any select committee.
- (2) When this paragraph applies,—
 - (a) the chairperson states the result of the vote on the question, and
 - (b) if two or more committee members disagree with the result of the vote, the decision on the provision or amendment is reserved.

Amendment 19

—establishment of
Legislative Scrutiny
Committee

- (3) See Standing Order 279B(4) for the requirement that the member in charge of the bill must attend to give evidence in public.

318C Report on consideration in detail

- (1) When the Legislative Scrutiny Committee has completed consideration in detail of a bill, the committee reports to the House.
- (2) The report sets out the following:
- (a) whether the committee has amended the bill, and
 - (b) a list of any provisions and amendments for which decisions were reserved, and
 - (c) if any amendments have been agreed by the committee without being reserved, the reprinted bill showing its provisions and those amendments, and
 - (d) any other matters that the committee wishes to include.
- (3) The report may be presented—
- (a) under Standing Order 253, or
 - (b) by the chairperson, or a committee member on behalf of the chairperson, in the House.
- (4) A report presented under paragraph (3)(b) is published under the authority of the House.
- (5) When the report has been presented, the Speaker puts a question that the report be adopted.
- (6) If the report is adopted, the bill, as reprinted under paragraph (2)(c), is set down as follows:
- (a) if provisions or amendments are listed for which decisions were reserved, the bill is set down for consideration of those provisions or amendments in a committee of the whole House, or
 - (b) if no provisions or amendments are listed for which decisions were reserved, the bill is set down for third reading.
- (6) If the report is not adopted, the bill is set down as it was before its referral to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee.

Amendment 19

—establishment of
Legislative Scrutiny
Committee

...

THIRD READING AND PASSING

RECOMMITTAL

319 Recommittal

A motion to recommit a bill to a committee of the whole House may be moved after the order of the day for the third reading of the bill has been called. There is no amendment or debate on the question.

THIRD READING AND PASSING

320 Third reading

- (1) The motion on the order of the day for the third reading of a bill is that the bill be now read a third time.
- (2) At the option of the member in charge, the third readings of each bill divided out of a bill during the committee stage, during consideration in detail by the Legislative Scrutiny Committee, or by determination of the Business Committee, may be taken together.

...

SECONDARY LEGISLATION

...

327 Drawing attention to secondary legislation

- (1) In examining secondary legislation, the committee considers whether it ought to be drawn to the special attention of the House on one or more of the grounds set out in paragraph (2).
- (2) The grounds are, that the secondary legislation—
 - (a) is not in accordance with the general objects and intentions of the ~~enactment~~ legislation under which it is made:
 - (b) trespasses unduly on personal rights and liberties:
 - (c) appears to make some unusual or unexpected use of the powers conferred by the ~~enactment~~ legislation under which it is made:
 - (d) unduly makes the rights and liberties of persons dependent upon administrative decisions which are not subject to review on their merits by a judicial or other independent tribunal:
 - (e) excludes the jurisdiction of the courts without explicit authorisation in the ~~enactment~~ legislation under which it is made:
 - (f) contains matter more appropriate for ~~parliamentary enactment~~ an Act of Parliament:
 - (g) is retrospective where this is not expressly authorised by the ~~enactment~~ legislation under which it is made:
 - (h) was not made in compliance with particular notice and consultation procedures prescribed by applicable ~~enactments~~ legislation:
 - (ha) was not published, or was not presented to the House, as required under any legislation:
 - (i) for any other reason concerning its form or purport, calls for elucidation.

Amendment 35

—drawing attention to secondary legislation
 —publication and presentation requirements

333 Confirmation bills

...

- (3) Following the bill's second reading, the House proceeds to the third reading immediately, unless—
 - (a) the Minister in charge requires the House to go into committee to consider an amendment:
 - (b) an amendment has been ~~circulated on a Supplementary Order Paper~~ published on an Amendment Paper, or has been lodged with the Clerk, at least 24 hours before the House meets on the day on which the bill is read a second time, and the amendment is in order, in which case the House goes into committee to consider that amendment.

Amendment 4

—updating parliamentary terminology
 —Amendment Paper

...

CHAPTER 6

FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

GOVERNMENT'S FINANCIAL VETO

...

338 Notice of amendment to bill or change to Vote

- ~~(1) Any member intending to propose an amendment which may have an impact on the Government's fiscal aggregates, or to move a change to a Vote, must give notice of the amendment or change by lodging it with the Clerk at least 24 hours before the House meets on the day on which the amendment is to be proposed or the change is to be moved. In the case of a motion to change a Vote, 24 hours' notice is not required where the proposed change was recommended in the report of the select committee that examined the Vote.~~
- (1) Any member intending to propose an amendment which may have an impact on the Government's fiscal aggregates, or to move a change to a Vote, must give notice of the amendment or change by lodging it with the Clerk by 2 pm on the day before the day on which the question is to be put on the amendment or change.
- (1A) In the case of a motion to change a Vote, notice is not required under paragraph (1) if the proposed change was recommended in the report of the select committee that examined the Vote.

...

SELECT COMMITTEE SCRUTINY

...

338AB Functions of Finance and Expenditure Committee

- (1) The Finance and Expenditure Committee has all the functions of a subject select committee.
- (2) The committee also—
- (a) oversees financial scrutiny procedures:
 - (b) oversees systems for performance reporting and public accountability:
 - (c) examines economic and fiscal reports:
 - (d) allocates Estimates and annual reviews:
 - (e) develops standard questionnaires for annual reviews and Estimates:
 - (f) examines and may refer reports of the Controller and Auditor-General:
 - (g) examines monetary policy and financial stability reports issued by the Reserve Bank of New Zealand.
- (3) The committee may initiate inquiries or receive briefings about, and may report to the House on, any matters related to the committee's functions.

Amendment 39
—functions of Finance
and Expenditure
Committee

338B Scrutiny plans and scrutiny activities reports

...

- (3) In the first calendar year following the opening of Parliament, before the time set out in ~~paragraph (7)~~ paragraph (3A), each subject select committee must adopt and report to the House a scrutiny plan that addresses the following matters:

...

- (3A) The scrutiny plan must be reported to the House by the end of the week before the delivery of the Budget, as notified to the House by the Government under Standing Order 341(1).

- (3B) Once the scrutiny plan is adopted, the clerk of the committee arranges the committee's business accordingly, subject to any further directions from the committee.

- (4) A **scrutiny activities report** is a report to the House by a select committee that:

- (a) provides information about the committee's implementation of the scrutiny plan and its conduct of scrutiny activities:
- (b) updates the scrutiny plan as necessary.

- (5) Every subject select committee—

- (a) may present a scrutiny activities report at any time after it has adopted its scrutiny plan:
- (b) must present at least one scrutiny activities report before 30 September in each calendar year in the Parliament after the year in which the scrutiny plan was adopted, ~~before the time set out in paragraph (7).~~

- ~~(6) Once the scrutiny plan is adopted, the clerk of the committee arranges the committee's business accordingly, subject to any further directions from the committee.~~

- ~~(7) The time by which the scrutiny plan and scrutiny activities reports, as applicable, must be reported to the House is the end of the week before the delivery of the Budget, as notified to the House by the Government under Standing Order 341(1).~~

Amendment 38

—scrutiny plans and
scrutiny activities
reports

Amendment 38

—scrutiny plans and
scrutiny activities
reports

338C Scrutiny weeks

...

- (2) ~~Despite Standing Order 212~~ Standing Order 212A, a member may not participate remotely in a committee meeting during a scrutiny week, unless their remote participation is approved by the leader or whip of their party on account of illness or other family cause of a personal nature.

...

THE BUDGET

...

341 Delivery of the Budget

...

- (3) A Minister delivers the ~~Budget statement~~ Budget speech in moving the second reading of the main Appropriation bill.

Amendment 4

–updating
parliamentary
terminology
–Budget speech

342 Budget debate

- (1) The debate on the Budget is taken ahead of all other Government orders of the day.

- ~~(2) No motion to adjourn the Budget debate may be moved if the Budget debate has previously been adjourned by motion, apart from any adjournment on the day the Budget statement was delivered.~~

- (2) No motion to interrupt the Budget debate may be moved if the Budget debate has previously been interrupted by motion, apart from a motion to interrupt the debate that was moved on the day the Budget speech was delivered.

Amendment 4

–updating
parliamentary
terminology
–interruption of debate
–Budget speech

...

344 Economic and fiscal reports

- (1) The following reports stand referred to the Finance and Expenditure Committee:

- (a) fiscal strategy report:
- (b) economic and fiscal update:
- ~~(ba) tax expenditure statement:~~
- (c) half-year economic and fiscal update:
- (d) statement on the long-term fiscal position:
- (e) investment statement.

- ~~(2) The committee must, within ten weeks of the delivery of the Budget, report on the fiscal strategy report and the economic and fiscal update presented to the House on the day the Budget was delivered.~~

- (2) The committee must, within ten weeks of the delivery of the Budget, report on the—

- (a) fiscal strategy report, and
- (b) economic and fiscal update presented to the House on the day the Budget was delivered, and
- (c) tax expenditure statement.

- (3) The committee must report on the statement on the long-term fiscal position within six months of the presentation of that statement.

- (4) The committee must report on the investment statement within ten weeks of the presentation of that statement.

- (5) A debate on the statement on the long-term fiscal position, or on the investment statement, or a joint debate on both statements, is held in place of the first general debate that is at least one day after the committee's report on that statement is presented. The chairperson of the Finance and Expenditure Committee (or, in the chairperson's absence, another member of the committee) may move a motion relevant to the report and speak first.

Amendment 41

–economic and
fiscal reports

Amendment 41

–economic and
fiscal reports

Amendment 41

–economic and
fiscal reports

...

ESTIMATES**346 Examination of Estimates**

- (1) Following the delivery of the Budget, the Estimates stand referred to the subject select committees to which they have been allocated by the Finance and Expenditure Committee.
- (2) Every committee examines the Votes or appropriations referred to it and, for each Vote,—
 - (a) determines whether to recommend that the appropriations in respect of the Vote be accepted, and
 - (b) may recommend a change to a Vote.
- (2A) If requested by a committee, a Minister (other than the Prime Minister) must attend the committee for the hearing of evidence on the examination of Estimates of appropriations for which the Minister is responsible.
- (3) All committees must report to the House on their examinations of the Estimates within ten weeks of the delivery of the Budget.

Amendment 37

—Ministers at
Estimates hearings

347 Estimates debate

...

- (4) At the conclusion of the total time for the Estimates debate the remaining Votes and provisions of the main Appropriation bill and any amendments proposed by the Minister in charge of the bill that ~~are notified on a Supplementary Order Paper published on an Amendment Paper~~ are put as one question. There is no amendment or debate on the question.

Amendment 4

—updating parliamentary
terminology
—Amendment Paper

348 Arrangement of Estimates debate

- (1) The Government may select any day, other than a members' day, for the Estimates debate.
- ~~(2) Votes are grouped according to the sectors within which they were presented in the Estimates.~~
- ~~(3) As the debate on each sector is reached, the question is proposed that the Votes within that sector stand part. The chairperson or a member of a select committee that considered Estimates within that sector commences the debate, in order to set out the major findings of the committee. Other speeches are allocated to parties on a proportional basis across the whole Estimates debate.~~
- (2) Votes are grouped for the purposes of debate according to portfolio areas held by the Ministers responsible for them.
- (3) As the debate on the Votes within each portfolio area is reached,—
 - (a) the question is proposed that the Votes within that portfolio area stand part, and
 - (b) the chairperson or a member of a select committee that considered Estimates within that portfolio area commences the debate, in order to set out the major findings of the committee.

(3A) Speaking time is allocated to parties on a proportional basis across the whole Estimates debate, excluding speeches made under paragraph (3)(b).

(4) The Business Committee can determine any additional or alternative arrangements for the Estimates debate.

349 Third reading of main Appropriation bill

(1) The debate on the question for the third reading of the main Appropriation bill must be completed within four months of the delivery of the Budget.

(2) The debate on the third reading of the main Appropriation bill may include reference to the content of the tax expenditure statement, fiscal strategy report, and the economic and fiscal update presented to the House on the day when the Budget was delivered, and to the report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on those documents.

(3) The debate on the third reading of the main Appropriation bill may be taken together with the debate on the second reading of an Imprest Supply bill.

Amendment 41

—economic and fiscal reports

ANNUAL REVIEWS

353 Allocation of annual reviews

(1) Each department, parliamentary agency, Office of Parliament, Crown entity, public organisation and State enterprise is an organisation that is subject to annual review.

...

353A Conduct of annual reviews

...

(3) The committee uses the in-depth review procedure for the annual reviews of organisations as designated by the Finance and Expenditure Committee and by the committee itself (including in its scrutiny plan). For each annual review, the in-depth review procedure involves—

- (a) responses to written questions:
- (b) three hours or more hearing evidence, which may be split over two meetings more than one meeting;
- (c) a thematic structure for questioning witnesses.

Amendment 36

—conduct of annual reviews

...

356 Annual review debate

...

(4) At the conclusion of the total time for the annual review debate, the provisions of the bill and any amendments proposed by the Minister in charge of the bill that are ~~notified on a Supplementary Order Paper~~ published on an Amendment Paper are put as one question. There is no amendment or debate on the question.

Amendment 4

—updating parliamentary terminology
—Amendment Paper

357 Arrangement of annual review debate

- (1) The Government may select any day, other than a members' day, for the annual review debate.
- ~~(2) The reports on annual reviews are grouped according to the sectors within which relevant Votes were presented in the Estimates for the financial year to which the annual reviews relate.~~
- ~~(3) As the debate on each sector is reached, the question is proposed that reports of select committees on the annual reviews within that sector be noted. The chairperson or a member of a select committee that considered annual reviews within that sector commences the debate, in order to set out the major findings of the committee. Other speeches are allocated to parties on a proportional basis across the whole annual review debate.~~
- (2) The reports on annual reviews are grouped for the purposes of debate according to portfolio areas held by the Ministers responsible for the organisations to which the reports relate.
- (3) As the debate on each portfolio area is reached,—
 - (a) the question is proposed that reports of select committees on the annual reviews within that portfolio area be noted, and
 - (b) the chairperson or a member of a select committee that considered annual reviews within that portfolio area commences the debate, in order to set out the major findings of the committee.
- (3A) Speaking time is allocated to parties on a proportional basis across the whole annual review debate, excluding speeches made under paragraph (3)(b).
- (4) The Business Committee can determine any additional or alternative arrangements for the annual review debate.
- (5) The annual review debate must be completed before the date notified to the House by the Government under Standing Order 341(1).

Amendment 40

—annual review debate

CHAPTER 7

NON-LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES

...

PETITIONS

...

371A Electronic petitions with highly discriminatory content

- (1) The Clerk may refuse to host an electronic petition on the Parliament website if they are satisfied that the content of the petition is highly discriminatory.
- (2) Before refusing to host a petition under paragraph (1), the Clerk must—
 - (a) take account of whether the content of the petition is threatening, abusive or insulting to a group of people by reason of any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Human Rights Act 1993, and
 - (b) consult the Petitions Committee.

Amendment 46

—electronic petitions with highly discriminatory content

...

374 Petitioner

- ~~(1) For each petition, the Clerk must be informed of the name and contact details of the person who is the petitioner.~~
- ~~(2) Where the petitioner is an organisation, the Clerk must be informed of the name and contact details of a person who is authorised by the organisation to represent it.~~
- (1) For each petition, the Clerk must be provided with the following information:
 - (a) the name of the petitioner, and
 - (b) if the petitioner is an individual person, their contact details and country of residence, or
 - (c) if the petitioner is an organisation,—
 - (i) the country in which the organisation has its principal place of operation, and
 - (ii) the name, contact details and country of residence of a person who is authorised by the organisation to represent it.
- (2) When a petition is hosted or published on the Parliament website, the Clerk may publish—
 - (a) the name of the petitioner, and
 - (b) the country or countries about which the Clerk was informed under paragraph (1)(b) or (c).
- (3) The petitioner, or the person who represents the petitioner—~~under paragraph (2), must,—~~
 - (a) if the petition is a paper petition, sign a cover page for the petition, or

Amendment 47

—country of residence of petitioners

- (b) if the petition is an electronic petition, submit the petition.
- (4) The petitioner, or the person who represents the petitioner ~~under paragraph (2)~~, must be available to respond, within a reasonable time, to communications about the petition.

...

378 Functions of Petitions Committee

- (1) The Petitions Committee—
- (aa) responds to consultation by the Clerk and Speaker under Standing Orders 371A(2)(b) and 372(2).
- (a) may transfer a petition to another select committee, or between committees, under Standing Order 379:

Amendment 46

—electronic petitions with highly discriminatory content

...

379 Referral and transfer of petition to select committee

- (1) When a petition is presented, it stands referred to the Petitions Committee.
- ~~(2) The Petitions Committee may consider a petition or transfer the petition to another select committee to consider.~~
- (2) The Petitions Committee may—
- (a) consider a petition:
- (b) transfer a petition to another select committee or between committees.

...

PAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS

383 Select committee examination of parliamentary papers

- ~~(1) Parliamentary papers stand referred to select committees to examine and report to the House—~~
- ~~(a) as set out in of Appendix E, or~~
- ~~(b) in accordance with any resolution of the House.~~
- (1) Parliamentary papers stand referred to select committees to examine and report to the House as set out in Part 1 of Appendix E.
- (2) A select committee to which a parliamentary paper stands referred under paragraph (1) may, if the paper relates primarily to the subject area or functions of another committee, refer the paper to that other committee.
- ~~(3) A select committee examining a parliamentary paper to which a parliamentary paper stands referred under paragraph (1) or (2) must report to the House within any time for report specified for that paper—~~
- ~~(a) in Part 1 of Appendix E, or~~
- ~~(b) by the House or the Business Committee.~~
- (b) by the House, or
- (c) by the Business Committee.
- (3A) Parliamentary papers referred to select committees under other Standing Orders are listed in Part 2 of Appendix E.

Amendment 17

—Examination of parliamentary papers

- (4) This Standing Order ~~does~~ and Part 2 of Appendix E do not affect the referral to a select committee of a parliamentary paper, or its consideration and report, under any other Standing Order or rule of the House.

...

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS AND MEMBERS

...

391 Lodging of oral questions

- (1) A notice of an oral question must be lodged in writing and signed by the member or by another member on the member's behalf, and
- (a) delivered by hand to the Clerk between 10 am and 10:30 am on the day the question is to be asked, or
 - (b) with the agreement of the Clerk, received by the Clerk, in electronic form and with an electronic signature, no later than 10:30 am on the day the question is to be asked.

...

Amendment 43

—lodging of oral questions

AGENCIES AND OFFICERS OF PARLIAMENT

403 Functions of Agencies and Officers of Parliament Committee

- (1) The Agencies and Officers of Parliament Committee considers and recommends to the House,—
- ~~(a) in respect of each Office of Parliament, an estimate of appropriations for inclusion as a Vote in an Appropriation bill, and any alteration to such a Vote;~~
 - (a) in respect of each parliamentary agency and Office of Parliament,—
 - (i) an estimate of appropriations to be included in a Vote, and capital injection (if any) to be authorised, in an Appropriation bill, and
 - (ii) any alteration to such a Vote or capital injection;
 - (b) an auditor to be appointed by the House to audit the financial statements of each Office of Parliament;
 - (c) any proposal referred to it by a Minister for the creation of an Officer of Parliament;
 - (d) the appointment of persons as Officers of Parliament.
- (1A) A recommendation under paragraph (1)(a) may not be made in respect of an appropriation to which section 26EA(2) of the Public Finance Act 1989 applies.
- (2) The committee may develop or review a code of practice applicable to any or all Officers of Parliament.

...

Amendment 42

—renaming Officers of Parliament Committee
—functions of Officers of Parliament Committee
—parliamentary agencies
—Parliament Act 2025

INTERNATIONAL TREATIES

405AA Functions of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee

- (1) The Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee has all the functions of a subject select committee.
- (2) The committee also—

Amendment 44

—functions of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee

- (a) refers international treaties to committees under SO 407:
- (b) oversees the international treaty examination procedure:
- (c) monitors the Government's actions in respect of international treaties:
- (d) provides guidance for the scrutiny of international treaties:
- (e) draws the attention of the committee examining a treaty to any matters relating to that treaty:
- (f) recommends themes for special debates on foreign affairs:
- (g) monitors implementation of international treaties.
- (3) The committee may initiate inquiries or receive briefings about, and may report to the House on, any matters related to the committee's functions.

Amendment 7
 –special debates
 –foreign affairs

...

408 Reports by select committees on treaties

- (1) A select committee must report to the House on any treaty that has been referred to it.
- (2) In examining a treaty and the accompanying national interest analysis, the committee considers whether the treaty ought to be drawn to the attention of the House—
 - (a) on any of the grounds covered by the national interest analysis, or
 - (b) for any other reason.
- ~~(3) The committee must include the national interest analysis as an appendix to its report.~~
- (4) If the Government intends for the treaty to be implemented through a bill, the committee must draw this to the House's attention.

APPENDIX A

TIME LIMITS FOR SPEECHES AND DEBATES

Item of business and member speaking

*Times for speeches
or debates*

FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

...

~~Debates on Budget policy statement debate, statement on long-term fiscal position, and investment statement~~

Each member	10 minutes
Whole debate	12 speeches

Debates on statement on long-term fiscal position and investment statement

Each member	<u>10 minutes</u>
Whole debate (on one statement)	<u>6 speeches</u>
Whole debate (joint debate on both statements)	<u>12 speeches</u>

Amendment 41
–economic and
fiscal reports

Budget debate (second reading of main Appropriation bill)

Minister in charge of bill, on first speaking	Unlimited
Specified party leaders	20 minutes each
Other members	10 minutes each
Minister in reply	10 minutes
Whole debate (excluding delivery of the Budget statement speech)	8 hours

Amendment 4
–updating
parliamentary
terminology
–Budget speech

...

NON-LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES

...

Debate on international treaty

Whole debate	Not more than 2 hours
<u>Member moving motion</u>	<u>10 minutes</u>
<u>Minister responsible for treaty</u>	<u>10 minutes</u>
<u>Each other member</u>	<u>5 minutes</u>
<u>Whole debate</u>	<u>1 hour</u>

Amendment 45
–Debate on
international
treaties

APPENDIX B

PECUNIARY AND OTHER SPECIFIED INTERESTS

...

PART 1

2 Definitions

- (1) For the purposes of the return and registration of pecuniary and other specified interests, unless the context otherwise requires,—

...

come into office means to come into office as a member of Parliament under section 54 of the Electoral Act 1993

...

~~**effective date of the return** means the date as at which the return is effective as required by clause 3(1) or clause 4(1) (as the case may be)~~

effective date of the return means the effective date as calculated in accordance with clause 3(5) or as specified in clause 4(3) (as the case may be)

...

~~**general election** means the election that takes place after the dissolution or expiration of Parliament~~

...

pecuniary interest means a matter or activity of financial benefit to the member that is ~~required to must~~ be declared under ~~clause 5 or clause 8~~ clause 5, clause 8 or clause 8A

...

retirement scheme includes—

- (a) a retirement scheme within the meaning of section 6(1) of the Financial Markets Conduct Act 2013, and
- (b) any trust or other arrangement established in New Zealand or any other country with a purpose of providing retirement benefits to individuals; ~~for example, a private superannuation scheme~~

...

~~3~~ **Duty to make initial return**

- ~~(1) Every member must make an initial return as at the day that is 90 days after the date that the member takes the oath or makes the affirmation required by section 11(1) of the Constitution Act 1986.~~

- ~~(2) Subclause (1) does not apply if,—~~

- ~~(a) in the case of a member who is elected at an election, polling day for the election is after 1 July in the year of the election, or~~
- ~~(b) in the case of a member who is declared to be elected under section 137 of the Electoral Act 1993, the date that the~~

Amendment 50
—definition of
retirement scheme

~~member's election is notified in the Gazette is after 1 July in the year that the member is declared to be elected.~~

- ~~(3) An initial return must be transmitted by the member to the Registrar within 30 days of the effective date of the return.~~

~~4 Duty to make annual return~~

- ~~(1) Every member must make an annual return in each year as at 31 January.~~
- ~~(2) The annual return must be transmitted by the member to the Registrar by the last day of February in each year in which an annual return must be made.~~

3 Requirement to make initial return

- (1) Subject to subclause (2), every member must make an initial return after coming into office.
- (2) A member is not required to make an initial return (and instead makes an annual return, as required under clause 4) if,—
- (a) in the same year as the member has made a previous return, the member vacates office and comes into office again, or
- (b) the member comes into office in the period starting on 1 October and ending on 31 December.
- (3) The effective date for a member's initial return is calculated in accordance with subclause (5).
- (4) The member must make their initial return by providing it to the Registrar by the due date, which is calculated in accordance with subclause (5).
- (5) The effective date and due date referred to in subclauses (3) and (4) are calculated according to the following table, in which the effective date is in the month after the end of the three-month period, and the due date is in the month after the effective date:

Three-month period within which the member comes into office	Effective date of return	Due date of return
1 October to 31 December	31 January (annual return)	
1 January to 31 March	30 April	31 May
1 April to 30 June	31 July	31 August
1 July to 30 September	31 October	30 November

4 Requirement to make annual return

- (1) Subject to subclause (2), every member must make an annual return each year.
- (2) A member is not required to make an annual return in a year if the member comes into office in the period starting on 1 January and ending on 31 March, in which case the member must make an initial return with an effective date of 30 April in that year.
- (3) The effective date of an annual return is 31 January in the year in which the annual return is made.

Amendment 49
–initial returns

- (4) Each member must make their annual return by providing it to the Registrar by the due date, which is the last day of February in the year in which the annual return is made.

...

5 Contents of return relating to member's position as at effective date of return

...

- ~~(2) For the purposes of subclause (1)(b), a member does not have a pecuniary interest in a company or business entity (entity A) merely because the member has a pecuniary interest in another company or business entity that has a pecuniary interest in entity A.~~

- (2) An indirect interest that is held, or arises, through an entity may need to be declared under clause 8A.

- (3) For the purposes of subclause (1)(e), a member who is patron or vice-patron of an organisation that receives, or has applied to receive, Government funding, and who is not also a member of its governing body, does not have to name the organisation, unless the member has been actively involved in seeking such funding during ~~the period specified in clause 9~~ period covered by the return.

...

8 Contents of return relating to member's activities ~~for period ending on effective date of return~~ during period covered by return

- (1) Every return must contain the following information ~~for the period specified in clause 9~~ in respect of the period covered by the return (as set out in clause 9):

- (a) for each country (other than New Zealand) that the member travelled to,—

- (i) the name of the country, and
- (ii) the purpose of travelling to the country, and
- (iii) the name of each person who contributed (in whole or in part) to the costs of the travel to and from the country, and
- (iv) the name of each person who contributed (in whole or in part) to the accommodation costs incurred by the member while in the country, and

...

- (d) a description of each payment received, and not previously declared, by the member for activities in which the member was involved, including the source of each payment, except that a description is not required of any payment that is—

- ~~(i) paid as salary or allowances under the Members of Parliament (Remuneration and Services) Act 2013 or the Remuneration Authority Act 1977, or as a funding entitlement for parliamentary purposes under the Parliamentary Service Act 2000:~~

Amendment 48

—declaring indirect interests

(i) paid as salary, allowances, expenses, services, or an annuity, under the Parliament Act 2025 or the Remuneration Authority Act 1977:

–Parliament Act 2025

~~(ii) paid in respect of any activity in which the member concluded their involvement prior to becoming a member (that is, before the commencement of a period set out in clause 9(2)(b) or (d), as applicable).~~

(ii) paid in respect of any activity in which the member concluded their involvement prior to becoming a member (that is, before the start of the period covered by the return of that member, as applicable, under clause 9(3)).

...

(2) The information referred to in subclause (1)(a) does not have to be included in the return if the travel costs or accommodation costs (as the case may be) were paid by the following or any combination of the following:

(a) the member:

(b) a family member of the member, subject to clause 6(1):

(c) the Crown:

(ca) a parliamentary agency, as an expense under the Parliament Act 2025:

–Parliament Act 2025

(d) any entity that paid the travel costs or accommodation costs because the member was participating in the official inter-parliamentary relations programme approved by the Speaker of the House.

...

(5) For the purposes of subclause (1)(d), a description of a payment is required if the terms of the payment have been agreed in the ~~period specified in clause 9~~ period covered by the return, even if the payment has not been received during that period.

...

8A Indirect interests

(1) To avoid doubt, in making a return, a member must also declare an indirect interest, which is a pecuniary interest that is held, or arises, through an entity, if the member—

(a) has significant control of the entity, and

(b) may benefit significantly from the pecuniary interest that is held or arises through that entity.

Amendment 48

–declaring indirect interests

(2) For the purpose of subclause (1), an **entity** is a company, business entity, trust or organisation that itself must be declared by the member under this Appendix.

~~9~~ Period covered by return

(1) ~~The period for which the information specified in clause 8 must be provided is the 12 month period ending on the effective date of the return.~~

~~(2) — However, —~~

- ~~(a) — a member does not have to include any information specified in clause 8 that has been included in a previous return;~~
 - ~~(b) — if the member is elected at an election and the member was not also a member of Parliament immediately before that election and the return is the first return required to be made by the member after that election, the period for which the information specified in clause 8 must be provided is the period beginning on polling day for that election and ending on the effective date of that return;~~
 - ~~(c) — if an initial return is required to be made by a member elected at a general election who was also a member of Parliament immediately before that general election, the period for which the information specified in clause 8 must be provided is the period beginning on 1 February in the year in which the general election is held and ending on the effective date of that return;~~
 - ~~(d) — if the member is declared to be elected under section 137 of the Electoral Act 1993 and the return is the first return required to be made by the member after being elected, the period for which the information specified in clause 8 must be provided is the period beginning on the date that the member's election is notified in the Gazette and ending on the effective date of that return;~~
 - ~~(e) — if the previous return that the member had a duty to make was an initial return, the period for which the information specified in clause 8 must be provided is the period beginning on the day after the effective date of that initial return and ending on the effective date of the return that must be made.~~
- ~~(3) — For the purposes of subclause (2)(b) and (d), the first return required to be made by a member may be either an initial return or an annual return.~~

9 Period covered by return

- (1) Subject to subclause (5), the period covered by the return is the period that—
- (a) starts on the applicable date as set out in subclauses (2) and (3), and
 - (b) ends on the effective date of the return.
- (2) Except as set out in subclause (3), the period starts on the day after the effective date for the member's previous return.
- (3) In the following cases, the period starts on the date specified:
- (a) if the member is elected at an election and was a member of Parliament before that election, but has not made a previous return, the period starts on the date the member previously came into office before that election;
 - (b) if the member is elected at an election and was not a member of Parliament before that election, and the return is the first return required to be made by the member after that election, the period starts on polling day for that election;

- (c) if the member is declared elected under section 137 of the Electoral Act 1993 and the return is the first return required to be made by the member after being elected, the period starts on the date of the return made under section 138 of that Act in respect of the member's election:
- (4) For the purposes of subclause (3), the member was a **member of Parliament before that election** if the member—
 - (a) was a member of Parliament on polling day for that election, or
 - (b) is elected at a by-election that resulted from the member's seat becoming vacant.
- (5) A member does not have to include any information specified in clause 8 that has been included in a previous return.

...

PART 2

12 Register of Pecuniary and Other Specified Interests of Members of Parliament

- (1) A register called the Register of Pecuniary and Other Specified Interests of Members of Parliament is established.
- (2) The register comprises all returns ~~transmitted~~ made by members under this Appendix.

...

~~15 Auditor General's review~~

- ~~(1) The Registrar must supply to the Controller and Auditor General a copy of every return within 21 days of the date by which all returns are due. The Registrar may, as the Registrar thinks fit, supply to the Auditor General any other information relating to a return.~~
- ~~(2) The Auditor General will review the returns provided under subclause (1) as soon as is reasonably practicable, and will advise the Registrar of any matters arising from the review.~~

Amendment 52
—Auditor-General's review

16 Registrar's inquiry

...

- ~~(4) On receiving a request, the Registrar conducts a preliminary review of the request to determine if, in the Registrar's opinion, an inquiry is warranted. In making a determination under this subclause, the Registrar takes account of the degree of importance of the matter under inquiry, and whether the matter—~~
 - ~~(a) may involve a breach of the obligations to make a return:~~
 - ~~(b) is technical or trivial.~~
- (4) On receiving a request, the Registrar conducts a preliminary review of the request to determine if, in the Registrar's opinion, an inquiry is warranted.
- (4A) In making a determination under subclause (4), the Registrar—
 - (a) takes account of the degree of importance of the matter under inquiry, and whether the matter—
 - (i) may involve a breach of the obligations to make a return:

- (ii) is technical or trivial, and
- (b) determines the matter in accordance with any advice that is relevant to the matter under inquiry that the Registrar has previously provided to the member who is the subject of the request for an inquiry.

Amendment 51
 –Registrar’s inquiry

...

~~18 Registrar must publish summary of all returns received in period for transmitting returns~~

- (1) ~~The Registrar must, within 90 days of the due date for transmitting any initial returns that are required to be made following a general election, publish on a website and in booklet form a summary containing a fair and accurate description of the information contained in all returns received during the period for transmitting returns.~~
- (2) ~~The Registrar must, within 90 days of the due date for transmitting annual returns, publish on a website and in booklet form a summary containing a fair and accurate description of the information contained in all returns received during the period for transmitting returns.~~
- (3) ~~The Registrar must promptly provide a copy of the booklet to the Speaker.~~
- (4) ~~The Registrar must ensure that a summary containing a fair and accurate description of the information contained in all returns is—~~
 - ~~(a) maintained on a website;~~
 - ~~(b) available for inspection by any person at Parliament Buildings in Wellington on every working day between the hours of 10 am and 4 pm.~~
- (5) ~~A person may take a copy of any part of the summary referred to in subclause (4)(b) on the payment of a fee (if any) specified by the House.~~

18 Presentation and publication of summary of returns

- (1) The Registrar must, within 90 days of the due date for any returns,—
 - (a) prepare a summary containing a fair and accurate description of the information contained in those returns, and
 - (b) provide the summary to the Speaker in booklet form.
- (2) In preparing the summary, the Registrar may exclude information that a member has included in the member’s return if, in the Registrar’s opinion,—
 - (a) the information is not required to be declared by the member, and
 - (b) publication of the information would not promote the purpose of the register.
- (3) As soon as practicable after receiving a summary from the Registrar under subclause (1)(b), the Speaker must present the summary to the House.
- (4) The summary is published under the authority of the House.

Amendment 49
 –publishing and presenting initial returns

- (5) After the summary is presented, the Registrar must ensure the summary is—
- (a) published and maintained on the Parliament website;
 - (b) available on the parliamentary precincts in booklet form for any person to arrange to inspect on a working day.

~~19 Speaker must present copy of booklet to House of Representatives~~

~~The Speaker must, as soon as practicable after receipt of a copy of a booklet under clause 18(3), present a copy of the booklet to the House.~~

~~20 Errors or omissions~~

- (1) ~~Any member who becomes aware of an error or omission in any return previously made by that member must advise the Registrar of that error or omission as soon as practicable after becoming aware of it.~~
- (2) ~~The Registrar may publish on a website and in booklet form a summary containing a fair and accurate description of all amendments made by members to correct errors and omissions advised under subclause (1).~~
- (3) ~~The Registrar must promptly provide a copy of any booklet prepared under subclause (2) to the Speaker.~~
- (4) ~~The Speaker must, as soon as practicable after receiving a copy of a booklet under subclause (3), present a copy of the booklet to the House.~~
- (5) ~~Nothing in this Appendix requires members to advise the Registrar of changes to their interests that have occurred since the effective date of their last return.~~

20 Errors, omissions and amendments

- (1) As soon as possible after becoming aware of any error or omission in a return they have made, a member must—
 - (a) inform the Registrar of that error or omission, and
 - (b) provide to the Registrar an amendment that corrects the return.
- (2) The Registrar accepts the amendment unless, in the Registrar's opinion,—
 - (a) the amendment includes information that is not required to be declared by the member, and
 - (b) publication of the amendment in that form would not promote the purpose of the register.
- (3) From time to time, the Registrar must prepare a summary providing a fair and accurate description of all amendments submitted by members to correct errors and omissions under subclause (1) that have been accepted by the Registrar since the previous summary.

- (4) A summary of amendments to returns, as prepared under subclause (3), is either—
- (a) combined in the same booklet as a summary of returns prepared and presented under clause 18, or
 - (b) provided separately to the Speaker in booklet form.
- (5) As soon as practicable after receiving a booklet from the Registrar under subclause (4)(b), the Speaker must present the summary to the House, and the summary is published under the authority of the House.
- (6) After a summary is presented under this clause, the Registrar must ensure the summary is—
- (a) published and maintained on the Parliament website:
 - (b) available on the parliamentary precincts in booklet form for any person to arrange to inspect on a working day.
- (7) Nothing in this Appendix requires members to inform the Registrar, before the due date for their next return, of changes to their interests that have occurred since the effective date for their last return.

21 Information about register

- (1) ~~Subject to clauses 15, 16, and 17~~ clauses 16 and 17, all returns and information held by the Registrar ~~or by the Auditor General~~ relating to an individual member are confidential until destroyed under subclause (2).

...

22 Disclosure to party whips or leaders

- (1) The Registrar may disclose to a member's party whip (or party leader where a party does not have a whip) that the member has or has not yet ~~transmitted~~ provided a return to the Registrar.
- (2) This clause applies despite clause 21(1) and is for the purpose of facilitating the timely ~~transmission~~ making of returns.

23 Responsibilities of members and Registrar

- (1) It is the responsibility of each member to ensure that ~~he or she fulfils~~ they fulfil the obligations imposed on the member by this Appendix.
- (2) The Registrar is not required to—
- (a) notify any member of that member's failure to ~~transmit~~ make a return by the due date or of any error or omission in that member's return, or
 - (b) obtain any return from a member.

APPENDIX C

PRELIMINARY PROCEDURES FOR PRIVATE BILLS AND LOCAL BILLS AND LOCAL LEGISLATION BILLS

PRIVATE BILLS AND LOCAL BILLS

1AA Approval to commence preliminary procedures

The promoter of a proposed private bill or local bill must obtain approval from the Business Committee under Standing Order 278A before commencing the preliminary procedures for the bill.

Amendment 28

–approval to propose private bill or local bill

...

4 Notice to persons with direct interest

...

- (2) Without limiting the generality of paragraph (1), notice must be given to all of the following:

...

- (b) if the bill proposes to modify, restrict, repeal, or amend the provisions of ~~an Act~~ a public Act, to the chief executive of the Government department or agency charged with the administration of that Act:

Amendment 30

–notice to persons with direct interest

...

14 Form and content of declaration for private bill or local bill

The declaration must conform, in general, to the following form and contain all matters specified in it, and have attached to it the relevant notices:

DECLARATION FOR A PRIVATE BILL OR LOCAL BILL

To the House of Representatives

I, *[full name of representative, and position]* declare that—

- 1 The *[name of promoter or local authority]* respectfully requests that *[title of bill]* (an exact copy of which is attached, as deposited) be introduced into the House.

- 2 The reasons for the bill are—

[list the reasons].

- 3 The objects of the bill are—

[list the objects, including any in a preamble or purpose clause].

- ~~4 The objects of the bill cannot be attained otherwise than by legislation because *[give reasons]*.~~

~~or~~

~~The objects of the bill can be attained otherwise than by legislation but *[give reasons why legislation is warranted]*.~~

- 4 The objects of the bill can be attained only by legislation because *[give reasons]*.

or

It is not reasonable or practicable to use means other than legislation to attain the objects of the bill because *[give reasons]*.

4A Advice on, or assistance with, the drafting of the bill [has or has not] been sought from the Parliamentary Counsel Office. [Give details of when such advice or assistance was sought and received, if applicable.]

...

Amendment 29
–declaration to
the House

LOCAL LEGISLATION BILLS

...

17 Repeal of spent local legislation

~~(1) The Minister may initiate the preparation of a Local Legislation (Repeal) bill, which is a type of Local Legislation bill that contains only a clause or clauses repealing any spent local Act, any spent Local Legislation Act, or any spent provisions contained in a Local Legislation Act.~~

(1) The Minister of Local Government or the Attorney-General may initiate the preparation of a Local Legislation (Repeal) Bill, which is a type of Local Legislation Bill that contains only—

(a) a clause or clauses repealing any spent local Act, any spent Local Legislation Act, or any spent provisions contained in a Local Legislation Act, and

(b) consequential amendments to other legislation affected by the repeal of provisions or Acts under paragraph (a).

(1A) In this clause and clauses 18 to 21, **Minister** means the Minister in charge of the bill, whether it is the Minister of Local Government or the Attorney-General.

...

20 How further clauses dealt with

If a Local Legislation Bill is already before the House, a further clause or clauses for inclusion in the bill may, after being provisionally approved by the Minister, ~~be placed upon a Supplementary Order Paper~~ be published on an Amendment Paper by the Minister, and may be considered by the select committee that is considering the bill.

...

Amendment 31
–repeal of spent
local legislation

Amendment 4
–updating parliamentary
terminology
–Amendment Paper

APPENDIX E

SELECT COMMITTEE EXAMINATION OF PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS

PART 1: PAPERS REFERRED UNDER STANDING ORDER 383

<i>Relevant legislation</i>	<i>Paper</i>	<i>Select committee</i>	<i>Time for report</i>	<i>Debate</i>
Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002	National Civil Defence Emergency Management Strategy	Governance and Administration Committee	12 sitting days	Consider 60 min debate
Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002	Proposed National Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan	Governance and Administration Committee	60 working days	Consider debate
Climate Change Response Act 2002, <u>ss 5ZD and 5ZE</u>	Emissions budget, and any revised emissions budget	Environment Committee	90 working days	Consider 90 min debate <u>Business Committee may arrange debate</u>
Climate Change Response Act 2002, <u>s 5ZK</u>	Minister's report on Climate Change Commission's annual report on results of monitoring	Environment Committee	60 working days	Consider annual debate about emissions progress <u>Business Committee may arrange debate</u>
Climate Change Response Act 2002, <u>s 5ZL</u>	Minister's report on Climate Change Commission's report at end of emissions budget period	Environment Committee	60 working days	Consider 90 min debate <u>Business Committee may arrange debate</u>
Crown Entities Act 2004, <u>ss 107 to 109</u>	Whole of government direction	Governance and Administration Committee	12 sitting days	Consider debate <u>Business Committee may arrange debate</u>
Emergency Management Act 2026, <u>s 86</u>	National emergency management strategy	Governance and Administration Committee	12 sitting days	<u>Business Committee may arrange debate</u> <u>If notice of motion is on Order Paper for the House to resolve not to approve strategy, report is debated with notice of motion (see SOs 254(1)(d) and 331)</u>

Amendment 17
–Examination of
parliamentary
papers

<i>Relevant legislation</i>	<i>Paper</i>	<i>Select committee</i>	<i>Time for report</i>	<i>Debate</i>	
<u>Emergency Management Act 2026, s 94</u>	<u>Proposal relating to review of national emergency management plan</u>	<u>Governance and Administration Committee</u>	<u>60 working days</u>	<u>Business Committee may arrange debate</u>	Amendment 17 –Examination of parliamentary papers
<u>Emergency Management Act 2026, Sch 4, cl 2</u>	<u>Report on state of national emergency</u>	<u>Governance and Administration Committee</u>	<u>90 working days</u>	<u>Business Committee may arrange debate</u>	
<u>Emergency Management Act 2026, Sch 4, cl 6</u>	<u>Final report on national transition period</u>	<u>Governance and Administration Committee</u>	<u>90 working days</u>	<u>Business Committee may arrange debate</u>	
<u>Legislation Act 2019, s 83A</u>	<u>Annual report on exemptions from presentation and other drafting and publication matters</u> <u>Annual report on legislative practices</u>	<u>Regulations Review Committee</u>	<u>60 working days</u>	<u>Consider debate</u> <u>Business Committee may arrange debate</u>	
<u>Public Service Act 2020, Sch 6, cl 8</u>	<u>Long-term insights briefings briefing</u>	<u>Subject select committees, as referred by Governance and Administration Committee</u>	<u>90 working days</u>	<u>Consider 3 hour 1-hour debate to replace first general debate after report of Governance and Administration Committee on briefing, unless Business Committee determines otherwise</u>	
<u>Public Service Act 2020, Sch 3, cl 16</u>	<u>Briefing on state of the public service</u>	<u>Governance and Administration Committee</u>	<u>90 working days</u>	<u>Consider debate, together with debate on long term insights briefings Business Committee may arrange debate</u>	

PART 2: OTHER PAPERS EXAMINED BY SELECT COMMITTEES

<i>Relevant legislation</i>	<i>Paper</i>	<i>Select committee</i>	<i>Relevant Standing Orders</i>	
<u>Environment Act 1986 or other Acts as applicable</u>	<u>Report of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment</u>	<u>Environment Committee (or other committee as referred)</u>	<u>SO 404(1)(c)</u>	Amendment 17 –Examination of parliamentary papers
<u>New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990</u>	<u>Paper presented by Attorney-General under section 7 relating to inconsistency of a bill with rights and freedoms contained in the Act</u>	<u>Allocated by Clerk</u>	<u>SO 269</u>	

<u>Relevant legislation</u>	<u>Paper</u>	<u>Select committee</u>	<u>Relevant Standing Orders</u>	
<u>New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 or Human Rights Act 1993</u>	<u>Declaration of inconsistency</u>	<u>Allocated by Clerk</u>	<u>SO 269A and Appendix F</u>	Amendment 17 –Examination of parliamentary papers
<u>Ombudsmen Act 1975 or other Acts as applicable</u>	<u>Report of the Ombudsmen or an Ombudsman</u>	<u>Governance and Administration Committee (or other committee as referred)</u>	<u>SO 404(1)(b)</u>	
<u>Public Audit Act 2001 or other Acts as applicable</u>	<u>Report of the Auditor-General</u>	<u>Finance and Expenditure Committee (or other committee as referred)</u>	<u>SO 404(1)(a)</u>	
<u>Public Finance Act 1989</u>	<u>Budget policy statement</u>	<u>Finance and Expenditure Committee</u>	<u>SO 340</u>	Amendment 41 –Economic and fiscal reports
<u>Public Finance Act 1989</u>	<u>Economic and fiscal reports</u> <u>–fiscal strategy report</u> <u>–economic and fiscal update</u> <u>–half-year economic and fiscal update</u> <u>–statement on the long-term fiscal position</u> <u>–investment statement</u> <u>–tax expenditure statement</u>	<u>Finance and Expenditure Committee</u>	<u>SO 344</u>	
<u>Public Finance Act 1989</u>	<u>Estimates</u>	<u>Allocated by Finance and Expenditure Committee</u>	<u>SOs 345 and 346</u>	
<u>Public Finance Act 1989</u>	<u>Supplementary Estimates</u>	<u>Finance and Expenditure Committee (or other committee as referred)</u>	<u>SO 350</u>	
<u>Public Finance Act 1989</u>	<u>Annual financial statements of the Government</u>	<u>Finance and Expenditure Committee</u>	<u>SOs 353(5) and 354(1)</u>	
<u>Public Finance Act 1989, Crown Entities Act 2004, State-Owned Enterprises Act 1986, and other Acts as applicable</u>	<u>Annual report of organisation that is subject to annual review</u>	<u>Allocated by Finance and Expenditure Committee</u>	<u>SOs 353A and 354</u>	
<u>Reserve Bank of New Zealand Act 2021</u>	<u>Monetary policy report</u>	<u>Finance and Expenditure Committee</u>	<u>SO 338AB(2)(g)</u>	

<u>Relevant legislation</u>	<u>Paper</u>	<u>Select committee</u>	<u>Relevant Standing Orders</u>	
<u>Reserve Bank of New Zealand Act 2021</u>	<u>Financial stability report</u>	<u>Finance and Expenditure Committee</u>	<u>SO 338AB(2)(g)</u>	Amendment 17 –Examination of parliamentary papers
—	<u>International treaty</u>	<u>Referred by Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee</u>	<u>SOs 405AA to 408</u>	
—	<u>National interest analysis</u>	<u>Referred with relevant international treaty</u>	<u>SOs 405AA to 408</u>	

Appendix B Statistics about Parliament's workload

Statistic⁷⁴	48	49	50	51	52	53	54⁷⁵
Sitting days of the House	241	226	224	251	251	226	210
Calendar days the House sat	244	255	232	257	262	239	246
Normal sitting hours in the House	528:20	548:38	547:59	1042:20	1039:25	949:22	828:00
Extended sitting hours in the House	0:00	0:00	95:12	68:21	26:46	71:48	59:40
Urgency sitting hours in the House	90:07	171:13	69:40	66:26	113:59	154:45	266:23
Total sitting hours in the House	618:27	719:51	712:51	1177:07	1180:10	1175:55	1154:03
Normal sitting hours in CwH ⁷⁶	205:37	178:01	223:32	307:47	281:56	189:55	247:23
Extended sitting hours in CwH	0:00	0:00	5:44	10:24	29:00	40:21	97:12
Urgency sitting hours in CwH	30:37	84:48	34:45	50:06	54:34	81:57	275:39
Total sitting hours in CwH	236:14	262:49	264:01	368:17	365:30	312:13	619:55
Combined House and CwH hours	854:41	982:40	976:52	1545:24	1545:40	1488:08	1773:58
Papers processed for presentation	3881	3935	3695	3753	3777	5072	4534
Petitions presented	190	151	127	151	397	407	399
Notices of Motion lodged	93	1417	1162	722	805	478	86
Oral questions asked	2820	2867	2694	2948	2912	2642	2666
Government Bills Introduced	182	201	138	158	195	193	231
Members' Bills Introduced	37	42	46	69	55	54	53
Private Bills Introduced	8	5	4	3	1	7	3
Local Bills Introduced	11	7	6	4	3	4	2
Total no of Bills Introduced	238	255	194	234	254	258	289
Assents prepared	362	302	341	285	221	218	210
Written submissions on bills	17,529	41,026	118,867	47,600	95,155	280,416	697,657
Oral submissions on bills	4,230	3,506	3,785	2,344	5,692	5,693	7,614

⁷⁴ Sitting hours are in the format hours:minutes. For example, in the 48th Parliament, the House sat and the committee of the whole House met for a combined total of 854 hours and 41 minutes.

⁷⁵ The statistics in this column are as at 11 September 2026. Therefore, they do not reflect the final two sitting weeks of the Parliament (beginning 15 and 22 September 2026). The number of written and oral submissions capture submissions made on bills that have been reported back to the House as at 11 September 2026.

⁷⁶ CwH = Committee of the whole House.

Appendix C List of submitters

We received written submissions from the following individuals and groups. Their written submissions can be accessed on [the Parliament website](#):

- Aaron Livingston
- Aidan Bright
- Alec van Helsdingen
- Alexsio Nau
- Alice Tzathas
- Prof Andrew Geddis
- Andrew Riddell
- Anna L Muir
- Anne Rainey
- Barbara Kuriger
- Barry Coates
- Billy Leonard
- Brian Webb
- Brook Warner
- Bryce Parker
- Calum MacLeod
- Cantin Consulting
- Carrie Stoddart-Smith
- Civic Trust Auckland
- Clare Stones
- Clerk of the House of Representatives
- Craig Atkinson
- Daniel Botha
- Dave Agnew
- Dr Dean Knight
- Environment and Conservation Organisations of NZ Inc
- Ethan McCormick
- Franks Ogilvie
- Gary Durey
- Gary Wills
- Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Palmer
- Graeme Edgeler
- Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand, Parliamentary Caucus
- Gregor Paetz
- Guy Hollister
- Hāpai Te Hauora Tāpui Ltd
- Hope Rath
- Hon James Meager
- Jamie Arbuckle
- Prof Jane Kelsey
- Janie McCulloch
- John Shand
- Prof Jonathan Boston
- Dr Jonathan Godfrey
- Josiah Tualamali'i
- K L
- Kelly Brough
- Kerry Jane Staples
- Louis Donovan
- Lyn Holland
- Margaret Stuart
- Matekiteara Griffin Toeke
- Materita Akarana
- Melissa Cole
- Miguel Tanongon
- Ministry for Regulation
- New Zealand Council for Civil Liberties
- New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services
- New Zealand Law Society Te Kāhui Ture o Aotearoa
- New Zealand National Party members
- Ngā Toki Whakarururanga
- Office of the Auditor-General
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment
- Parliamentary Counsel Office
- Patrick O'Rourke
- Paul Elwell-Sutton
- Penelope Hansen
- Peter Clark
- Peter Hoare
- Regulations Review Committee

- Robert Ingram
- Robert Valentine
- Ross James Barron
- Rowan Panting
- Rudi Robinson
- Sam Burke
- Sam Spekrijse
- Simon Green
- Stephen Beban
- Teresa Seux
- The New Zealand Labour Party
- Tony Watts
- Trust Democracy
- Ukes Baha
- Wellington Community Justice Project
- Dr Will Dreyer

We heard oral submissions from the following individuals and groups. Recordings of these hearings can be accessed using the weblinks below:

22 October 2025:

- Clerk of the House of Representatives
- Parliamentary Counsel Office
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment

5 November 2025:

- Office of the Auditor-General
- Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Palmer
- Prof Jonathan Boston
- Cantin Consulting
- Dave Agnew
- Anna L Muir
- Dr Will Dreyer
- Environment and Conservation Organisations of NZ Inc

12 November 2025:

- New Zealand Council for Civil Liberties
- Franks Ogilvie
- Graeme Edgeler
- Trust Democracy
- Louis Donovan
- Peter Hoare
- Dr Jonathan Godfrey
- Ethan McCormick
- Craig Atkinson

19 November 2025:

- Hon James Meager
- Wellington Community Justice Project
- Dr Dean Knight
- New Zealand Law Society Te Kāhui Ture o Aotearoa
- Prof Jane Kelsey (first in a personal capacity, and then on behalf of Ngā Toki Whakarururanga)

10 December 2025:

- Regulations Review Committee
- Josiah Tualamali'i

Appendix D Committee membership and procedure

Committee members

Rt Hon Gerry Brownlee (Chairperson)
Jamie Arbuckle
Hon Chris Bishop (until 13 May 2026)
Mariameno Kapa-Kingi
Hon Kieran McAnulty (until 29 April 2026)
Dr Tracey McLellan
Ricardo Menéndez March
Stuart Smith
Todd Stephenson
Hon Louise Upston (from 13 May 2026)
Tangi Utikere (from 29 April 2026)

Dr Lawrence Xu-Nan also participated in the review.

Committee procedure

We initiated this review of the Standing Orders at our meeting on 30 July 2025, as provided for by Standing Order 7(a). On the same day, we resolved to call for public submissions with a deadline of 25 September 2025. The 86 written submissions and 27 oral submissions that we received are listed in Appendix C of this report. On the topic of financial scrutiny, our consideration was informed by the scrutiny activities reports of subject select committees.

As part of this review, we considered the following petitions:

- Petition of Hakepa H: Review the New Zealand parliamentary petitions process
- Petition of Hira: Place date and time watermark stamps into all future Parliament TV videos
- Petition of Raiha McDonald: Amend rules on comments in the House about immigrant New Zealanders

Dr David Wilson, Clerk of the House of Representatives and David Bagnall, Principal Clerk (Procedure) served as our main advisers for this review, with assistance from Bevan Rogers, Chris Cunningham, Gwen Palmer Steeds, and Maggie Donovan. Professor Alberto Costi provided independent specialist advice in respect of international treaty examinations. Naomi Ferguson QSO contributed to the review in her role as Registrar of Pecuniary and Other Specified Interests.

Following consultation with our respective party caucuses, we met to finalise this report and conclude our review on 16 September 2026.

Review of Standing Orders 2026

REPORT OF THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

September 2026