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## Party Whips

### Party Whips

The term 'whip' originated in the Parliament of the United Kingdom and is derived from an English fox-hunting term 'whipper-in'. This was the person who kept the hounds from straying from the pack.

In Parliament a Whip is a member of a political party whose task it is to ensure that members of the party attend the chamber and support their party when a vote is taken.

The Whips, as tellers, also count the members who vote in a division and give the numbers to the President or Speaker.

Historically, whips have been responsible for arranging the order of speakers in the House, but in modern Parliaments, this task is often shared by the Leader of the House and the Manager of Opposition Business in each House. Liaison with the party leaders is also necessary.

The Party Whip has close ties with the respective party leader and is responsible for maintaining party discipline, which is exercised in several forms including suspension from party meetings or denial of responsibilities.

Whips are responsible for arranging 'pairs', a system that allows a member to be absent from the chamber at the same time as a member from the opposite side of the House. This means that the anticipated result of a division will not be disturbed. Although 'pairs' are not officially recognised parliamentary procedure, they are published in *Hansard*.

The tasks of the Whips and Deputy Whips are time-consuming, but are necessary for the efficient running of party and parliamentary affairs. They are addressed as the 'Government Whip' and the 'Opposition Whip'.

The Salaries and Allowances Tribunal provides specific remuneration for the respective Whips, but the allowance differs for the Legislative Council and the numerically greater Legislative Assembly.

### The Leader of the House

The role of the Whips in modern Parliaments is conducted in consultation with the Leader of the House.

The appointment of the Leader of the House is made by the Premier, who has the ultimate authority and responsibility for government business.

An important function of the Leader of the House is to undertake or oversee negotiations, often resulting in the trading of parliamentary time with their Opposition counterpart, the Manager of Opposition Business, on matters relating to the programming of the House.

In the House of Representatives<sup>1</sup> the post of Leader of the House dates back to 1951. In Western Australia, the Leader of the House in the Legislative Assembly was not instituted until 1983, when the role was assigned to a minister who was also in charge of other portfolios.



Parliament House

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<sup>1</sup> The Lower House of the Federal Parliament.

## Government and Opposition Whips from 1974

Legislative Council		Legislative Assembly	
Government	Opposition	Government	Opposition
Victor Jasper Ferry 1974-1977	Desmond Keith Dans 1974-1976	Raymond Laurence Young 1974-1975	James Moiler 1974-1977
		James George Clarko 1975-1977	
Gordon Edgar Masters 1977-1980	Roy Edward Cunningham 1976-1980	Richard Steele Shalders 1977-1982	Thomas Henry Bateman 1977-1983
Margaret McAleer 1980-1983	Fred Evan McKenzie 1980-1983	Michael Nanovich 1982-1983	
Fred Evan McKenzie 1983-1993	Margaret McAleer 1983-1993	Gordon Leslie Hill 1983-1986	Rex Geoffrey Williams 1983-1988
		Pamela Ann Buchanan 1986-1990	Dudley John Maslen 1988-1989
		Jaqueline Patricia Watkins 1990-1993	Barry Roy Blaikie 1989-1992
Muriel Grace Patterson 1993-2001	Thomas Richard Helm 1993-1997	Robert Clyde Bloffwitch 1993-1997	Kevin John Leahy 1993-1996
	Robert John Thomas 1997-2001	Ian Frederick Osborne 1997-2001	Diana Muriel Warnock 1996-1997
Edmund Rupert Joseph Dermer 2001-2008	Bruce Kirwan Donaldson 2001-2008	Margaret Mary Quirk 2001-2005	Edward Joseph Cunningham 1997-2001
		David Alan Templeman 2005-2008	John Leslie Bradshaw 2001-2005
Bruce Kirwan Donaldson 2008-2009	Edmund Rupert Joseph Dermer 2008-still in office	John Edwin McGrath 2008-still in office	Graham Gibson Jacobs 2005-2008
Kenneth Charles Baston 2009 - still in office			



Legislative Council



Legislative Assembly