



## MAKING A SUBMISSION TO A COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

### Introduction to Committees

The Legislative Council is one of the two Houses of the Parliament of Western Australia. Committees of the Council are made up of a number of its members who are appointed by the House to carry out particular investigations or inquiries. The investigations or inquiries are specified in the committee's *terms of reference* which the House determines at the time of establishment of the committee.

### Types of Committees

The Council appoints two main types of committees, namely select committees and standing committees.

*Select committees* are appointed to investigate or inquire into particular issues. When a select committee has concluded its investigations on the issue and has presented its final report to the House it ceases to exist.

*Standing committees* are permanent committees established by the House to inquire into various subjects in accordance with their terms of reference. The Legislative Council currently operates four standing committees. They are:

- the Environment and Public Affairs Committee;
- the Legislation Committee;
- the Public Administration and Finance Committee; and
- the Uniform Legislation and General Purposes Committee.

Additionally the Council supports the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation.

### Parliamentary Privilege

Committee proceedings are "proceedings in Parliament" and as such are protected by parliamentary privilege. This means, among other things, that the evidence of witnesses who appear before a committee of the Parliament generally cannot be used in other legal proceedings.

### Submissions to Committees

Committees generally seek submissions by advertising in the local, State or National newspapers or by selecting specific individuals or interest groups which are known to have a view or opinion on a subject under consideration. Additionally, individuals or organisations may send unsolicited submissions to a committee.

Generally, submissions are treated by a committee as public documents unless the committee orders that they should be kept private (or confidential). Submissions may be placed on the Internet by a committee. If you wish your submission to be treated as private evidence, you may request the committee to do so. It is up to the committee to decide whether or not it will grant your request.

## **What Should I Do Before Preparing My Submission?**

Before preparing your submission you should obtain a copy of the committee's terms of reference so that your submission can address them. If a committee is undertaking a particular inquiry in which you are interested, you should telephone the Committee Clerk who can tell you any specific terms of reference the committee may have in relation to the inquiry. Terms of reference for inquiries are loaded onto the Parliament's Internet site at [www.parliament.wa.gov.au](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au) under Inquiries, or via the Committee conducting the inquiry.

You should also note the closing date for the making of submissions as it is important that you deliver your submission to the committee before that date. Generally, late submissions will not be accepted, but if for some reason you are unable to present your submission by the closing date, you may contact the Committee Clerk to seek an extension. The committee will then decide whether or not it can accept your submission.

## **Content of a Submission**

All submissions should be presented as clearly, concisely and legibly as possible. It would assist the committee to process and consider your submission if it is typewritten on A4 paper. An electronic copy of any material would also be appreciated. The preferred electronic format is Microsoft Word 2003.

Commence your submission with the following information:

- the name of the committee;
- your name and, if appropriate, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you are making the submission (including details of the position you hold within that organisation); and
- details of the address, e-mail and telephone and facsimile numbers at which you or your organisation can be contacted.

The content of your submission will depend upon the nature of the inquiry being undertaken by the committee. You should confine your submission to matters within the committee's terms of reference. A committee may decide not to consider a submission which is not relevant to its terms of reference.

If your submission is large, please include a brief summary listing the main points you wish to make at the beginning of the submission.

Indicate if you wish to appear before the committee to explain or elaborate on your submission.

## **Requesting a Committee to Inquire**

If you are making a submission which requests a committee to investigate a particular matter, your submission should not exceed one A4 page in length. It should state precisely what you wish the committee to inquire into. The main reasons for your request should be concisely listed.

## **What Will Happen After My Submission is Received?**

After your submission is received:

- it will be considered by the members of the committee;
- the committee may ask its staff to contact you to seek further information concerning issues raised by you in the submission;

- the committee may ask you to appear before it to ask you questions about your submission or to offer you an opportunity to make further comments concerning your submission;
- the committee may prepare a report on its inquiry to the Legislative Council;
- if a committee's report is tabled, a copy will be sent to you; and
- it maybe placed onto the Internet via the committee's inquiry page if it is made public.

Once you have sent your submission to a committee, it is subject to parliamentary privilege. This means that you should always determine the status of your submission with the committee before you publish or release your submission after you have given it to the committee.

### **Where Do I Send My Submission?**

Send your submission to:

Committee Clerk  
(Name of Committee)  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
PERTH WA 6000

### **Further Information**

If you want further information about a committee, its terms of reference or its inquiries, telephone (08) 9222 7300 and ask for the Committee Clerk to the committee.