

Second reading speeches and statements of compatibility — delivering to Parliament

When a minister moves that a bill be read a second time, the minister must have copies of the second reading speech and the statement of compatibility ready to circulate in the Chamber.

This document explains how to deliver a second reading speech to Parliament and answers several frequently asked questions about the process.

The document deals only with government bills. [Contact us](#) for information on private members' bills.

Contents

What.....	1
When.....	1
Where.....	1
What happens if you can't deliver it in time?	2
What happens after the speeches are delivered?.....	2
Format.....	2
How should the envelopes be addressed?.....	3
Fixing an error	3
When the bill amended between Houses	4
Contact us.....	4

What

For the Assembly minister

85 hard copies

1 soft copy — in Word

For the Council minister

40 hard copies

1 soft copy — in Word

When

Deliver by **close of business on Tuesday** (in the week your minister is introducing the bill).

Parliament House is open until both Houses stop sitting. This is usually until at least 7.30 pm on sitting Tuesdays.

Where

For the Chamber

Deliver to the 'cupboard' at Parliament House.

The cupboard is outside the Tours Office opposite the Mail and Printing Office (Post Office).

Ask at the front desk if you don't know where that is or if you don't have access to that part of the building.

Keys are held by:

- the Government Whips
- the tour guide in the Mail and Tours Office.

The Mail and Printing Office (Post Office) staff can also help if the Tours Office is not staffed.

For Hansard

Word version to hansard@parliament.vic.gov.au.

Hard copy (x1) to the Hansard Inquiries Office

The Hansard Inquiries Office is in the same corridor as the cupboard.

What happens if you can't deliver it in time?

Tell:

- Your ministerial advisor
- The Whip's staff

Assembly Whip's staff

Victoria Yang

phone: 9651 8791

victoria.yang2@parliament.vic.gov.au

Council Whip's staff

Declan Williams

phone: 0449 003 755

Declan.williams@minstaff.vic.gov.au

What happens after the speeches are delivered?

The Whip's staff collect the speeches and statements from the cupboard and take them to the Chamber ready for the minister to make the second reading speech.

When the minister has moved that the bill be moved a second time:

- the Chamber staff circulate the copies of the bill, speech and statement to members in the Chamber.
- the Procedure Office/Table Office keep the remaining copies for members or the public to take
- Parliament publishes the speech and statement in *Hansard*
- Parliament publishes the bill and links to the speech and statement on the [legislation website](#).

Format

Hard copies

Parliament doesn't require any special format, but your department or minister may have guidelines.

The statement of compatibility and the second reading speech are usually stapled into one document.

Copies are usually A4 (portrait), white paper, one staple in top left hand corner, double sided.

Parliament does not have any preference about font or font size.

Soft copy

Microsoft Word

How should the envelopes be addressed?

For Assembly speeches

Name of the bill
Legislative Assembly
Bronwyn Halfpenny, Whip

For Council speeches

Name of the bill
Legislative Council
Ingrid Stitt, Whip

Fixing an error

If you find a mistake in the statement of compatibility or second reading speech, there may be an opportunity to fix it.

Before the second reading

Advise the Whip's staff and your ministerial adviser.

Replace the hard copies in the cupboard.

Give to Hansard (soft and hard copies). Indicate clearly that it is a replacement version.

After the second reading has happened in only one House

You can correct the documents for the second House.

- Advise the Whip's office and your ministerial adviser.
- Replace the hard copies in the cupboard.
- Give to Hansard (soft and hard copies). Indicate clearly that it is a replacement version for the second House.

We cannot change the *Hansard* record in the first House.

If it is a substantial error, options in the first House include:

- minister makes a personal explanation in the Chamber
- parliamentary secretary or other government member explain it when they speak on the bill
- minister clarifies during consideration in detail/Committee stage.

After the second reading in both Houses

We cannot change the *Hansard* record.

If it is a substantial error options include:

- minister makes a personal explanation in the Chamber
- parliamentary secretary or other government member explain it when they speak on the bill
- minister clarifies during consideration in detail/Committee stage.

Deciding what, if any action, to take is a matter for government, but you or the minister can contact the Procedure Office, Table Office or clerks for advice.

When the bill is amended between Houses

When the Assembly amends the bill before sending it to the Council, you might need to change the Council version of the second reading speech and the statement of compatibility. You need to do this before minister moves the second reading in the Council. What, if any changes you make, will depend on the Assembly's amendments. Whether to change the speech and statement is a matter for the minister.

If you do make changes, you need to:

- Advise the Whip's office and your ministerial adviser.
- Replace the hard copies in the cupboard.
- Give to Hansard (soft and hard copies). Indicate clearly that it is a replacement version for the Council.

Usually, you also need to prepare a short statement for the Council minister explaining what has been changed. If the Council minister plans to move the second reading immediately after the Assembly amends and passes the bill (in the same week), Parliament will not be able to print the bill (the 'amended print') in time. Instead the Council staff will hand alter the bill or circulate the un-amended bill together with the Assembly's amendments. If this happens, you should prepare a statement for the Council minister explaining what has been changed. The minister reads this statement when they incorporate the rest of their speech. This is a courtesy to Council members, which allows that bill to proceed even though the amended print is not yet available.

Contact us

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Remember this process is between your department and the Whips' Offices. However we are happy to help if we can.