



Fact Sheet

Making a Written Submission to a Parliamentary Inquiry

Parliament of Tasmania committees welcome submissions as sources of evidence, information and opinion. The opportunity to make a submission provides members of the Tasmanian community, as well as other interested individuals and stakeholders, the opportunity to put their constructive views on an issue forward.

This Fact Sheet provides a number of suggestions on how you might prepare a submission.

Who may make a submission?

Any person or organisation can make a submission to a committee. Individuals, community groups, private organisations, representatives of government departments and agencies and anyone else interested in an inquiry currently before a parliamentary committee are encouraged to make a submission.

Terms of Reference

Before preparing your submission, it is important that you read the inquiry's terms of reference carefully, as your submission must be relevant to the committee's investigation. Parliamentary committees generally advertise the terms of reference, call for submissions and identify a due date for submissions to be received in daily newspapers and on its website. Committees may also use social media to communicate certain information in relation to an inquiry. If you cannot access a copy of the terms of reference, please contact the Committee Secretary.

Preparing a Submission

It is important that your submission addresses all or part of the terms of reference. You do not have to comment on every aspect of the terms of reference, nor are you confined to just one aspect. Your submission may contain factual information, opinion or both. You may wish to draw the attention of the committee to something relevant to the inquiry. You may choose to emphasise solutions to the matter or issue before the committee. This is entirely your choice. Your submission will be welcomed by the committee provided it is relevant, not frivolous or offensive in nature, and addresses the

terms of reference. If a submission does not address any of the terms of reference, it generally cannot be accepted by the committee.

Submission Format

There is no specific method for organising or presenting a submission. Your contribution can take the form of a letter, a short summary paper or a longer research document. You can include relevant data in appendices or incorporate them in the body of the text. It is important that the structure, argument and conclusions of your submission are clear.

There are certain technical conventions that the committee asks you to observe, where possible:

Hard copy or electronic submissions

You can send your submission in hard copy format although electronic submissions are preferred and are encouraged. If you send your submission in hard copy, a typed document on A4 paper is preferred. If this is not possible, a handwritten submission is acceptable but please ensure that your handwriting is legible.

Verification of your details

Please sign the submission. Sign on behalf of yourself, or on behalf of the organisation you are representing. If you are representing an organisation, please ensure that you have authority to speak on behalf of the organisation and indicate your position within the organisation. If relevant, specify at what level the submission has been authorised ie. branch, executive, president, sub-committee, executive committee, national body, etc. If you are sending your submission electronically, please provide your name, and relevant contact details (such as address or phone number).

Supplementary material

You may wish to support your submission with other forms of evidence, such as a video, photographs or objects. Please contact the Committee Secretary if you plan to do this, so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Although information submitted to a committee is generally taken into evidence, certain items can be on a loan or donation basis. Any material used by the committee on a loan basis will be returned on completion of the inquiry.

Language of submissions

Submissions form part of the committee's proceedings and help inform the committee about matters relevant to the investigation. Submissions are generally made public by the committee following the closing date for submissions by their publication to the inquiry website. Submission are then tabled in the Legislative Council upon the presentation of the committee report. Submissions should be relevant, should not contain offensive, inappropriate

language or remarks, and should not be frivolous or vexatious. It is at the discretion of the committee whether to accept a submission if the committee feels it breaches any of these guidelines.

Sending your submission

Your submission can be forwarded to the email or postal address contained in the advertisement for the inquiry. Contact details for an inquiry may also be found on the inquiry webpage.

Parliamentary Privilege

A submission to a committee becomes a committee document once the committee formally decides to accept it as a submission. A committee may decide not to accept a submission as evidence if it is not relevant to the terms of reference, is offensive, or for another reason determined by the committee in the individual circumstances of the inquiry.

Once the committee has reported to Parliament, any subsequent publication of your submission by the committee is protected by parliamentary privilege. This means that what you say in your submission cannot be used against you or anyone else in any court or place out of Parliament.

Parliamentary privilege only extends to submissions that are received by the committee. If a submission is published in another form or for another purpose without the authorisation of the Committee, that publication will not be protected by parliamentary privilege. This means that you should not reproduce the submission in another format or context.

It is against parliamentary rules for anyone to try to stop an individual or group from making a submission by threats or intimidation. It is also a breach of these rules for anyone to harass or discriminate against a witness because they have made a submission or have given evidence before a committee of the Parliament.

Confidentiality

If you wish to have your written submission kept confidential, please indicate this clearly in a covering letter, explaining why it is requested to be kept confidential. If only part of the submission is requested to be confidential, please detail that part on a separate page. The committee will consider requests for confidentiality, but cannot give undertakings in advance and generally discourages confidential submissions unless there are exceptional circumstances. This is because confidential evidence is of limited use to the committee and cannot be referred to directly in the committee report. It may be, that the committee will want to talk to you about the request in further detail to understand why you are making the request. In the first instance, if you have concerns about confidentiality, please discuss these with the Committee Secretary before you make a submission.

Public Hearings

At its discretion, the committee may invite you to a public hearing to discuss your submission and the terms of reference in further detail. If this occurs, the committee will contact you to discuss appearing at a public hearing.

Please refer to the Fact Sheet – Witness Information for further details on the process involved with appearing before a parliamentary committee at a hearing.

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