

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Speaker

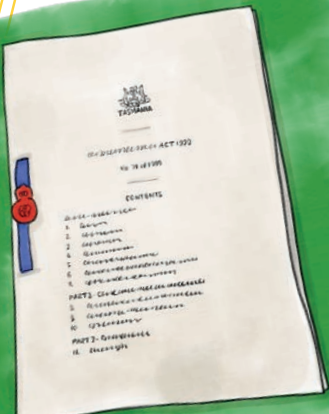
of the House of Assembly

The Speaker is the most important Member of the House of Assembly. The Speaker's work includes:

- Running meetings of the House of Assembly
- Speaking on behalf of the House of Assembly and welcoming visitors to Parliament House
- Representing the people of their electorate

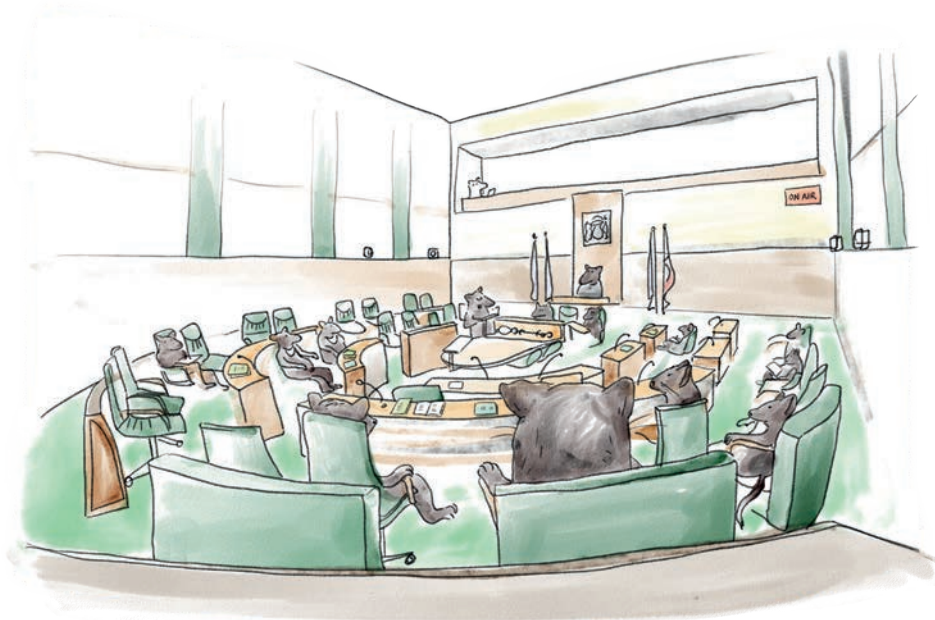
Why is the Speaker's work important?

The Parliament of Tasmania has the enormous responsibility of making laws for Tasmania. As laws apply to all Tasmanians, any proposals for new or updated laws are very carefully considered. When proposed laws are being debated or discussed in the House of Assembly, the Speaker's responsibility is to make sure the debates are fair and follow the House of Assembly rules.



How is the Speaker chosen?

At a House of Assembly (State) election, Tasmanians vote for people to represent them in Parliament. These people are called Members of Parliament (MPs). Once elected, the House of Assembly Members vote amongst themselves for one Member to become the Speaker of the House.



Does the Speaker 'speak' a lot?

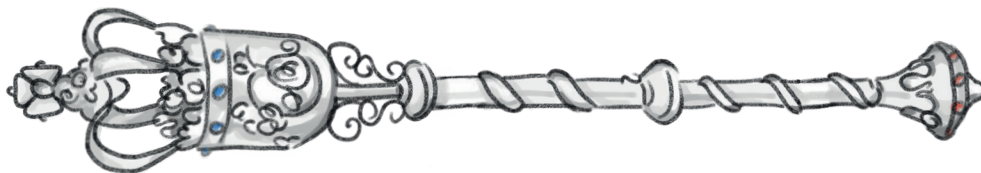
The Speaker has this title because their role is to speak for the House of Assembly. When the House of Assembly is meeting, the Speaker often speaks to give rulings or instructions to the Members. The Speaker does not speak in parliamentary debates.



Is the role of Speaker difficult?

The Speaker has a challenging but rewarding job. They have an enormous amount of parliamentary knowledge to learn, much of which is very complicated.

Most days, debates in the House of Assembly are calm and respectful. However, all Members of the House of Assembly are passionate about improving Tasmania, but they have different views on how to do this. With conflicting ideas, tempers can become short and voices can be raised. It is the Speaker's responsibility to bring order to the House.



Fast fact: The Mace sits in the Chamber when the Speaker is present. It reminds Members to always show respect to the Speaker and follow their instructions.



Why does the Speaker dress like a judge?

Hundreds of years ago in England, the Kings and Queens had all the power to make the law and enforce the law. Over time, this power largely moved to the Parliament and the Courts. As the Parliament and Courts have shared beginnings, their meeting rooms look similar. The Speaker and judges also often wear similar outfits, especially a black gown.

