



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

**REPORT OF THE
STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE
ON**

**Operation of Sessional Orders –
Constituency Questions**

Brought up by the Leader of the House and ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Hon. *Jacquie Petrusma* MP (Chair)
Ms *Helen Burnet* MP
Hon. *Eric Abetz* MP
Mr *Vica Bayley* MP
Ms *Janie Finlay* MP
Ms *Ella Haddad* MP
Ms *Kristie Johnston* MP

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Sessional Order 48C, setting out rules for Constituency Questions, was adopted by the House of Assembly at the commencement of the 51st Parliament, and re-adopted at the commencement of the 52nd Parliament.

1.2 Sessional Order 48C is currently drafted as follows:

48C Constituency Questions.

(1) At the conclusion of Questions without Notice, Members may ask questions to Ministers relating to constituency matters.

(2) The total number of Constituency Questions each sitting day is eight, allocated as follows with the order being at the discretion of the Speaker:

(a) Two Government Members;

(b) Two Opposition Members;

(c) One Green Member;

(d) Three to be allocated at the Speaker's discretion between the Independent Members and the SFF Member; and

(e) Any questions remaining after an allocation has been waived to be allocated to any Member seeking the call.

(3) The time limit for each constituency question is one minute.

(4) Replies to constituency questions must be given in writing by the relevant Minister to the Clerk within 30 days. The Clerk must provide the response to the Member who asked the question and electronically publish the response.

1.3 As Constituency Questions are a relatively new procedure, there is not a significant bank of rulings to guide the Speaker in interpreting the application of the rules.

1.4 On 26 March 2026, a point of order was taken in relation to a question about a specific electorate that was asked by a constituent of another electorate.

1.5 In this instance the Speaker allowed the question and then referred the matter to the Standing Orders Committee for further consideration.

2. ISSUES CONSIDERED

2.1 At its meeting on 7 May 2026 the Committee took into consideration the application of Sessional Order 48C.

2.2 The Committee considered the practice in the Legislative Assembly of Victoria, which is the only other House in Australia with a similar Standing Order.

2.3 The Victorian Legislative Assembly has adopted more restrictive rules as to the admissibility of Constituency Questions.

2.4 The Committee considered two options:

- Make no change to the current practice, under which questions on broad topics are allowed if they are raised by a constituent of the Member asking the question, or

- Adopt stricter practice under which questions must be clearly stated to be from a constituent and specific as to how the issue is relevant to the constituent or the Member's electorate.
- 2.5 The Committee resolved to maintain the status quo and continue with a broad interpretation of this Sessional Order, allowing Constituency Questions if the Member indicates the matter was raised by a constituent. The Committee's reasoning was to ensure maximum flexibility in asking Constituency Questions.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Committee recommends that the House continues with a broad interpretation of Sessional Order 48C, with Constituency Questions allowed if the Member indicates the matter was raised by a constituent.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JP', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Hon. Jacquie Petrusma MP
CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE
11 August 2026