



# Foundations of Stability

A protocol between the Government of Tasmania  
and Members of Parliament to guide our work  
together in the best interests of all Tasmanians

**52<sup>nd</sup> Parliament of Tasmania**

# Message from the Premier

The Tasmanian Liberal Party is paving the way for an enhanced era of collaborative governing.

Tasmanians voted for a minority government at the 2025 State election.

A Minority Liberal Government looks forward to working in good faith with the Parliament that Tasmanians voted for.

The *Foundations of Stability* is a framework to help ensure the parliament works together effectively and collaboratively.

This working protocol has been co-developed with Parliamentarians to ensure the effective functioning of the parliament.

The protocol will be revised through collaboration, when and where needed. It is supported by regular meetings between leaders and representatives of all parties and independents.

It will provide an opportunity for earlier engagement on important legislation and policies.

It improves the workability of the Parliament.

It builds on work undertaken in the past few years of minority government.

It is incumbent on all Members of Parliament to find a new way of governing and all Members to take responsibility for ensuring stability for our State.

My team and I are committed to the *Foundations of Stability* and delivering a collaborative approach to governing in the best interests of all Tasmanians.

**Jeremy Rockliff MP**

Premier

# Stability Framework

The Government of Tasmania will work with all interested Members of Parliament to develop a “Stability Framework”.

The Framework will cover:

- » A recognition of the **diversity of views** in the Parliament as a strength, not a weakness.
- » Principles of **respectful conduct**.
- » Shared **consultation timelines** on new legislation and policies.
- » A commitment to **avoid procedural traps**.
- » The establishment of a **Multi-Partisan Budget Matters Panel**.
- » Ministerial **consultation protocols**.
- » A **Crossbench Liaison Office**.
- » A process for **continual improvement**.
- » Access to **Parliamentary Counsel** for private Members’ Bills and amendments.
- » Regular access to Departmental and Ministerial **briefings**.
- » Development of a **Parliamentary Budget Office**.
- » Legislation and policy discussed and debated **on merit**.
- » Further **reform to the Standing Orders** as expressed by the parliament.

# Multi-Partisan Budget Matters Panel

Tasmanians have elected a diverse Parliament.

We are determined to ensure each voice is heard.

To facilitate this, we have established the Multi-Partisan Budget Matters Panel.

The Tasmanian Minority Government will take a collaborative approach to Budget Repair as we work to ensure the sustainability of Tasmania's finances, while also maintaining a high level of service provision that Tasmanians deserve.

Our approach to the Budget recognises the need for all Parliamentarians of every persuasion to have a seat at the table to contribute considered, measured and

responsible input to help facilitate the long-term prosperity of our State.

This Panel will help ensure that all Members can contribute to, be involved in, and be consulted as part of the development of the State Budget and its associated processes.

The first meeting of the Panel was held on 14 August 2025.

Terms of Reference will be co-developed with Members for the purposes of future meetings of the Panel.



“Together, we have a prime opportunity to continue this good work for the benefit of all Tasmanians.”

**Treasurer, Eric Abetz MP**

# Ministerial Consultation Protocols

Cabinet will adopt a protocol for regular informal consultation with the crossbench, including:

- » Regular **Premier and Ministerial meetings**.
- » Regular **briefings**.
- » Access to **early drafts of significant legislation** or policies; and
- » Scope and **resources to offer amendments** or alternatives.

The Premier and Ministers will regularly engage with the crossbench to enable broad-ranging discussions on issues pertinent to Tasmanians.

This protocol will be set out in Ministerial Statements of Expectations, transparently published.

It is the Government's intention that crossbench Members of Parliament will have an opportunity to provide feedback, advice and direction on policy rather than only briefings on Bills after they have been drafted and tabled in Parliament.

There is a genuine desire to present legislation that reflects the diverse views of the Parliament.

This will not diminish the Parliament's ability to debate legislation and make amendments.

Instead, it is a proactive process to seek views before legislation is tabled in Parliament.



“I've always been willing to listen to the crossbench, as I was in the last Parliament which I've said was working well, everyone got a win in the Parliament.”

**Premier, Jeremy Rockliff,  
ABC, 11 August 2025**

# Legislative Consultation Reforms

We will extend the time for crossbench Members to assess the merits of a proposed Bill, and also consider extending the maturation period for Bills.

Each Bill is to be accompanied by a written statement that answers the following:

- » Is it based on **evidence and good practice**?
- » Have the people affected been **properly consulted**?
- » What is the **impact on vulnerable and rural Tasmanians**; if adverse, what mitigations can be put in place?
- » Does it work for or against tackling climate change and **protecting the environment**?
- » Does it work for or against **growing a stronger economy** and creating employment opportunities?
- » Is it consistent with a **'future generations principle'** – that is, does this compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?

# Crossbench Liaison Office

We will establish a dedicated Crossbench Liaison Office, tasked with:

- » Coordinating **regular briefings** for Members.
- » Providing **access to departmental information** on upcoming legislation.
- » Organising **Ministerial briefings**.
- » Supporting **independent analysis** of major policy and Bills.

We will also ensure timely responses to all correspondence and emails from Independents and single-member parties.

We will work to deliver a process of engagement that is easiest for Independents and single-member parties.

# Continuous Improvement Process

We are committed to continually improving the functioning of the Parliament.

As part of this process, we will introduce periodic reviews of the operations of Parliament in order to:

- » **Understand** what may, and what may not have worked well from the perspective of government and non-government Members alike;
- » **Review** against an agreed, publicly-available criteria; and
- » Make the **results** of each review public.

These additional measures are designed to serve as a starting point, building on matters that were implemented during the previous Parliament.

## **We are committed to continuing and furthering the following items:**

- » Office of Parliamentary Counsel access for private Members' Bills and amendments:
  - This was introduced for the first time in the previous term; and
  - In the 51st Parliament this led to a number of private Members' Bills, as well as Labor and Greens Bills and amendments being supported in the House of Assembly.
- » Regular access to departmental briefings.

- » Regular Premier and Ministerial meetings.
- » Continue to monitor staff resources to allow Members to effectively represent their community, noting increases provided at the start of the previous term.
- » Continuation of autonomy with direct department resources for own office management.
- » Continued development of a Parliamentary Budget Office which will enable all Members to better understand and access budget-related matters and associated briefings.
- » Every piece of legislation is discussed on its merits.
- » Every policy is discussed on its merits.
- » Every policy-related motion is discussed on its merits.
- » Further reform to the Standing Orders if desired, noting the significant improvements made last year (Attachment A).

We are also **committed to discussing any other proposed changes to the Standing Orders that Members feel will benefit the efficient and effective operation of the Parliament.**

It is also proposed that consideration be given to exploring four-year fixed Parliamentary terms in the House of Assembly.

# Private Members Bills

The Government has agreed to expand Private Members time on a Wednesday for Independent members from 60 to 90 mins in line with the time allocated to Labor and the Greens each week. The rotation will still allow for 2 Independent members each week to access Private Members time meaning each member will have one 90 min allocation every 3 sitting weeks.

While we have agreed to the expansion of time detailed above we also acknowledge that there are more complex Bills introduced by individual members that have a higher level of community and stakeholder interest and require more time to be fully debated than 90 mins allows in Private Members time. For this reason we are introducing a protocol that will allow members to write to the Premier to request that the Government cede some of the time

normally dedicated to the Government's legislative agenda on a Tuesday or Thursday for the debate of a Private Members Bill.

These requests will be judged on a case by case basis but importantly members will still retain the right to introduce and debate Bills in Private Members time if they are dissatisfied with the Premier's decision on a particular request or the timeline the Premier offers to debate a particular Bill.

The Government acknowledges it is in everyone's interest that all Parliamentarians are given the opportunity to speak on and contribute to the debate of Bills that are of interest to them. Therefore we are keen to work with all members of parliament to make sure the time allocated for any Bill (government or otherwise) reflects this fundamental tenet.

## ATTACHMENT A

# Standing and Sessional Orders for the 52nd Parliament

The following standing and sessional orders have been negotiated for the start of this Parliamentary term. We will continue to liaise with all members on any further changes or improvements that may be necessary.

### **Standing Order 18 –**

#### **Days and time of meeting**

Revert to past practice and adjourn at 6pm on Tuesday and Thursday but maintain a 7:30pm finish on Wednesday to accommodate Private Members time appropriately.

### **Standing Order 42 –**

#### **Private Members Business**

Increase Independent Members time from 60 to 90 minutes. Independent members to receive 1 opportunity per every 3 weeks of sitting.

Labor and the Greens to receive 90 mins each sitting week as before

Contributions in Private Members time be limited to 20 mins for the Mover, 10 mins for any response and 5 mins at the end of the 90 mins be guaranteed to the mover to sum up the debate.

We have maintained the sessional order from the last parliament that forces a vote at the

end of the 90 minutes and allows for a further 90 mins in Committee at the end of all other Private Members business at the end of the day on Private Members Bills.

### **Standing Order 46 –**

#### **Supplementary Questions**

Supplementary Questions have been maintained.

### **Standing Order 48A and 48B – Minimum number of Questions**

There was an open question as to whether the government would consider reinstating questions from government backbenchers. We haven't.

48B states that questions will be no more than 1 minute in length and answers no more than 4 minutes and this will be maintained. It is up to the Speaker's discretion as to whether time is paused when a point of order is taken.

### **Standing Order 48C –**

#### **Constituency Questions**

This new process is maintained. If Parties or individual members don't use their full number of questions on a particular day the Speaker will make them available to any other member who gets the call.

## **Standing Order 76 - Matter of Public Importance**

<b>Week 1</b>	Opposition	<b>Greens</b>	Johnston
<b>Week 2</b>	Opposition	<b>Greens</b>	Garland
<b>Week 3</b>	Opposition	<b>Opposition</b>	O'Byrne
<b>Week 4</b>	Opposition	<b>Greens</b>	Razay
<b>Week 5</b>	Opposition	<b>Greens</b>	George
<b>Week 6</b>	Opposition	<b>Opposition</b>	Di Falco
<b>Week 7</b>	Opposition	<b>Opposition</b>	Burnet

The rotation above has reduced from 8 weeks to 7 so that a crossbench member has the MPI every Thursday. The Government has given up its place in the rotation altogether.

## **Standing Order 93 – Same Question Rule**

This rule was set aside at the start of the last Parliament. It has never been adjudicated strictly by the Clerks but they would like it reinstated as a fundamental of Westminster parliaments. The Parliament will still be able to set the rule aside with a vote of the House.

## **Standing Order 115 – Time Limits**

At the start of the last parliament all the speaking time limits that were 7 mins were reduced to 5 mins and from 40mins for Ministers and Shadow Ministers and 30 mins for all other members on Bills to 30 and 20 minutes respectively.

The Government has solidified those changes from sessional to standing orders to reflect the permanent move from 25 to 35 members.

## **Sessional Order 183A – Cognate Bills**

During the 51st Parliament a sessional order was adopted to enable 2 related Bills to proceed through all stages as one debate. The procedure was only used once but there was no negative feedback. The ability to use this process has been retained.

## **Standing Order 192 – Maturation of Bills**

In the previous parliament a sessional order extended the maturation from 2 to 3 days. We have amended this again to 6 days so that if a Bill is introduced on a Thursday of one sitting week it can't be debated until the following Thursday in back to back sitting weeks.

## **Standing Order 324 – Standing Orders Committee**

A sessional order changed the make-up of this committee from 3 to 5 members, plus the Speaker and Chair of Committees. We have retained this change.

## **Standing Order 358 – Standing Order not suspended without Notice**

This standing order requires a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority to suspend standing orders without notice. A sessional order was introduced to make this a simple majority. We have retained this sessional order.