

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Received 13/3/08

SUBMISSION No 1

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

10 March 2008

Mr Simon Finn MP
Chair
Broadcast of Parliament Select Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Mr Finn,

I refer to your letter of 29 February 2008 seeking information on the broadcast of proceedings of the Legislative Council. Please find our response to your questions below.

- (1) A summary description of the system (camera type and numbers, positioning of cameras, operation of the system, staffing to operate the system etc.)

Between 2002 and 2004 a two-staged upgrade of the Council camera system was undertaken. The purpose of the upgrade was primarily to improve the quality of the picture being broadcast but also to provide a digital signal to the television stations in the media gallery.

The camera system now includes four remotely controlled cameras with pan/tilt heads and zoom lenses. Two cameras are located at the western end of the chamber facing the President, one fixed as a wide-angle shot, and two located in the corners of the chamber at the eastern end. A control room was built in the chamber's upper gallery to house the equipment, which includes a vision mixer, monitors and a touch screen to control the cameras and to store preset shots. The system also includes a titling system, operated by the Clerks at the Table, for the identification of members speaking and debate titles.

On sitting days, the Council engages an operator to film proceedings from the commencement of the sitting until the dinner adjournment. If the House sits after the dinner adjournment the system reverts to broadcasting from the single fixed camera at the western end of the chamber unless there is a requirement for an operator to be on duty to provide coverage of a particular debate. Under an agreement with the camera operator, certain Council staff are trained in the operation of the camera system.

- (2) The feeds that are supplied to local television media and the use to which they are put by the local television media.

The system provides both digital and analogue signals. The current internal television system in Parliament House is analogue, while the television stations are progressing towards digital and have requested a mix of formats.

The four major television networks receive a direct signal from the commencement of the sitting until the adjournment and can use any footage of the proceedings of the Council so long as they

observe the terms and conditions for the broadcast of proceedings set out in a resolution of the House of 18 October 2007 (attached). Essentially, the resolution of the House requires that footage only be used for the purpose of fair and accurate reports of proceedings; provides a balanced presentation of differing views; and is not used for political party advertising or election campaigns, for the purpose of satire or ridicule, or for commercial sponsorship or commercial advertising. Access to the direct signal is on the basis of an undertaking to observe these conditions, a breach of which may result in a withdrawal of access.

- (3) Whether local television media are permitted to film or photograph the proceedings of the House and, if so, what portion of the proceedings.

There are no restrictions as to the portion of proceedings that may be filmed or photographed.

As noted above, television networks receiving a direct signal may use excerpts from the commencement of proceedings until the adjournment of the House, on the terms and conditions of the resolution of the House of 18 October 2007. Filming by other organisations is by authority of the President.

Still photographers from the print media who are accredited members of the press gallery may, with the approval of the President, take photographs during Question Time and at other times. Other photographers require the approval of the President and must give a signed undertaking to comply with the terms and conditions of the resolution of the House of 18 October 2007.


- (4) Relevant operational and media guidelines.

The resolution of the House of 18 October 2007 setting out the guidelines for the broadcasting of proceedings is attached. The operator of the camera system, under agreement with the Clerk, must also comply with the terms and conditions of the resolution.

I have also attached, as requested, a DVD of proceedings which includes footage of Question Time.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Yours sincerely


Lynn Lovelock
Clerk of the Parliaments



BROADCAST OF PROCEEDINGS

Resolution of the House of 18 October 2007

Sound and audio-visual broadcast of proceedings of the House

1. That this House authorises the sound and audio-visual broadcast of the proceedings of the House:
 - (a) on the broadcast system within the precincts of Parliament House,
 - (b) by direct signal to the media gallery in Parliament House,
 - (c) to persons and organisations outside Parliament House approved by the President, on terms and conditions determined by the President from time to time, and
 - (d) by webcast on the Internet.

Broadcasting

2. The live broadcast or rebroadcast of proceedings of the Legislative Council is authorised on the following conditions, and any other terms and conditions, not inconsistent with this paragraph, determined by the President from time to time:
 - (a) excerpts may be taken from the proceedings of the House from the time of the meeting of the House until the adjournment of the House,
 - (b) recordings and broadcasts must only be made from the sound or audio-visual signal provided by the Legislative Council,
 - (c) broadcasts of excerpts must be used only for the purposes of fair and accurate reports of proceedings and must provide a balanced presentation of differing views,
 - (d) excerpts must not be used for:
 - (i) political party advertising or election campaigns,
 - (ii) the purpose of satire or ridicule,
 - (iii) commercial sponsorship or commercial advertising,
 - (e) excerpts of proceedings which are subsequently withdrawn may be broadcast if the withdrawal is also broadcast,
 - (f) excerpts must be placed in context,
 - (g) where audio excerpts of proceedings are used on radio and television, commentators must identify Members by name,

- (h) where audio excerpts of proceedings are used on television, their use may be that of audio over still frames, or overlay material,
- (i) where excerpts are used on commercial stations, the station must ensure that advertising before and after excerpts is of an appropriate nature,
- (j) events in the Galleries are not part of the proceedings and excerpts of those events must not be used,
- (k) access to proceedings for the purpose of recording is on the basis of an undertaking to observe these conditions. A breach of these conditions by a station may result in the suspension or withdrawal of permission by the President for the station to broadcast excerpts of the proceedings of the House,
- (l) the instructions of the President or delegated representatives, on the use of recorded excerpts, must be observed at all times, and
- (m) the President may approve filming, on request, by persons or organisations, according to the terms and conditions set out in this resolution.

Still photography

3. That this House authorises access to the proceedings of the Legislative Council by still photographers on the following terms and conditions:
 - (a) photographers from the print media who are accredited members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery may, with the approval of the President, take photographs during Question Time and at other times,
 - (b) photographers who are not accredited members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery require the approval of the President and a signed undertaking to comply with the terms and conditions set out in this resolution,
 - (c) accreditation passes are to be worn and clearly visible at all times whilst a photographer is on the Parliamentary premises,
 - (d) photographs must be used only for the purposes of fair and accurate reports of proceedings and must provide a balanced presentation of differing views,
 - (e) photographs must not be used for:
 - (i) political party advertising or election campaigns,
 - (ii) the purpose of satire or ridicule,
 - (iii) commercial sponsorship or commercial advertising,
 - (f) photographs must be placed in context,
 - (g) photographs of individual Members, not speaking in debate, are not permitted,
 - (h) photographs taken with telephoto lenses or zoom lenses must not show any Member closer than at 'head and shoulders' distance,

- (i) telephoto lenses or zoom lenses must not be used to inspect Members' documents or computer screens, and close up photographs of Members' documents or computer screens must not be taken,
- (j) photographs of persons in the galleries must not be taken, with the only exception being photographs of distinguished visitors at the time they are welcomed to the House by the Chair,
- (k) photographs of disturbances by visitors or any other persons is not permitted,
- (l) the use of flash or other sources of additional lighting and motor driven cameras is not permitted,
- (m) photographs are not to be digitally enhanced, touched up or altered in any form,
- (n) cropping from single or group photographs is not permitted,
- (o) as a general rule, photographers should be as unobtrusive as possible and not disturb the view of visitors in the galleries,
- (p) photographers shall observe the instructions of the President, or the President's delegate, at all times, and
- (q) non-compliance with these conditions by a photographer or media organisation may result in the suspension or withdrawal of accreditation.

Sound and audio-visual broadcast of proceedings and still photography of committee proceedings

4. That this House authorises a committee, by a vote of the committee, to:
- (a) authorise the filming and broadcasting and still photography of its public proceedings by accredited members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery,
 - (b) authorise the filming and broadcasting and still photography of its public proceedings by a person or organisation not an accredited member of the Parliamentary Press Gallery on an undertaking by the person or organisation, in writing, to comply with the terms and conditions set out in this resolution and any other terms and conditions determined by the committee,
 - (c) authorise the broadcast and rebroadcast of its public proceedings in the Legislative Council chamber on the terms and conditions set out in paragraph 2,
 - (d) give instructions for the observance of terms and conditions determined not inconsistent with this resolution, and
 - (e) order that part of its proceedings not be recorded or broadcast.

broadcasting or televising of proceedings. The witness may state the grounds of the objection. The Committee must consider an objection having regard to the protection of the witness and the public interest in the proceedings. If the Committee decides to permit the broadcast or rebroadcast of proceedings despite an objection of a witness, the witness must be informed before appearing in the proceedings of the Committee.

Details of organisations and terms and conditions

6. That the President is to report to the House:
 - (a) details of the persons and organisations authorised from time to time to receive the sound and audio-visual broadcast, and
 - (b) details of additional terms and conditions determined under this resolution.