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Submission No. 8

19 March 2008

Mr Simon Finn MP
Chair
Broadcast of Parliament Select Committee
Parliament House
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Finn,

Queensland Broadcast of Parliament Select Committee

Thank you for your letter of 29 February 2008 regarding your Select Committee and its specific video broadcast term of reference.

I advise that at present there is no video broadcast of the proceedings in the Upper House of the Tasmanian Parliament. I can indicate that the Tasmanian Government has approved an amount of \$1.9 million for the installation of cameras into both Chambers and selected Committee Rooms and associated equipment during this calendar year as part of the works project that will see the House of Assembly totally refurbished.

I therefore am not in a position to provide the type of information you are seeking. I do enclose however a copy of the Legislative Council's policy on the televising and radio broadcasting of proceedings by media representatives.

I wish you well with your inquiry.

Yours sincerely,

D.T. PEARCE
Clerk of the Legislative Council





1998

Parliament of Tasmania

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL



— Policy on Televising and Radio Broadcasting of Proceedings —

1.0 Rules for Radio and Television Broadcasting of Proceedings

The Standing Orders Committee of the Council has approved —

1.1 the sound broadcasting of the proceedings of the Council:

- (a) on the audio monitoring system within the precincts of Parliament House; and
- (b) to persons and organisations outside Parliament House approved by the President, on terms and conditions determined by the President from time to time.

1.2 the video broadcasting of the proceedings of the Council to persons and organisations outside Parliament House approved by the President, on terms and conditions determined by the President from time to time.

1.3 the broadcasting and rebroadcasting on radio and television stations of sound recordings of excerpts of proceedings of the Council on the following conditions, and 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) excerpts must be recorded from the audio signal of proceedings transmitted by the House monitoring system in Parliament House;
- (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 by a Member may be broadcast if the withdrawal is also broadcast;

- (f) excerpts must be placed in context. Commentators must identify Members by name;
- (g) where audio excerpts of proceedings are used on television, their use may be that of audio over still frames, or overlay material;
- (h) events in the Gallery are not part of the proceedings and excerpts of those events must not be used;
- (i) 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;
- (j) the instructions of the President or delegated representatives, on the use of recorded excerpts, must be observed at all times.

1.4 the broadcasting and rebroadcasting by television stations of proceedings and excerpts of proceedings in the Council, on the following conditions and other terms and conditions, not inconsistent with this paragraph, determined by the President from time to time:

- (a) the President may approve filming, on request, from the commencement of proceedings to the adjournment of the House;
- (b) 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;
- (c) 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;
- (d) excerpts of proceedings which are subsequently withdrawn may be broadcast if the withdrawal is also broadcast;
- (e) excerpts must be placed in context;
- (f) events in the Gallery are not part of the proceedings and must not be televised;

- (g) access to proceedings for the purpose of televising is on the basis of an undertaking to observe these conditions. A breach of these conditions may result in the suspension or withdrawal of permission by the President to televise or broadcast the proceedings of the House;
- (h) the instructions of the President or delegated representatives, on the use of recorded excerpts, must be observed at all times.

2.0 A Committee may, by a vote of the Committee, authorise the sound broadcasting and television broadcasting of its public proceedings.

2.1 A Committee may:

- (a) determine terms and conditions, not inconsistent with paragraphs 1 (3) and (4), for the sound recording and television broadcasting of its proceedings;
- (b) give instructions for the observance of terms and conditions determined under paragraph (a);
- (c) order that part of its proceedings not be recorded or broadcast;

2.2 If a Committee decides to permit the broadcasting or televising of proceedings, a witness who is to appear before the Committee in those proceedings must be given a reasonable opportunity, before appearing in the proceedings, to object to the 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 broadcasting or televising of proceedings despite an objection of a witness, the witness must be informed before appearing in the proceedings of the Committee.

3.0 The President is to report to the House from time to time:

- (a) details of the persons and organisations authorised to receive the sound and video broadcasting and terms and conditions determined under paragraph 1 (1) and (2); and

- (b) details of additional terms and conditions determined under paragraphs 1 (3) and (4).

4.0 Access for still photographs and television and radio interviews in the Legislative Council, and that approval for the taking of photographs or filming of interviews in the Council rest with the President.

- 4.1 Members of the media are authorized to film in public areas provided neither Members, staff or visitors will be disturbed or inconvenienced. Radio journalists may make tapes on the same terms and conditions.
- 4.2 In the case of a meeting of a Select Committee of the Council, permission to take a still photograph is a matter for the Committee to decide.

5.0 Guidelines for TV Camera Operators and Radio Journalists

Access to the proceedings of the Legislative Council for the broadcast of proceedings is subject to an undertaking to comply with a number of conditions. Non-compliance with the conditions may incur penalties for stations including withdrawal of access for such time as is appropriate. If it appears that the conditions may have been breached, that matter will be considered by the President of the Legislative Council. The guidelines are as follows:—

5.1 Guidelines for camera operators

- As a general principle cameras should focus on the Member with the call. Shots should be no closer than 'head and shoulders'.
- Fine tuning or variations to depths of field at the discretion of the operator is acceptable.
- Wide-angle shots of the Chamber may be used during Divisions and Question Time. Sparing use of the wide-angle shot may be used at other times.
- Reaction shots of a Member are not permitted.
- No close-up shots of Members' papers shall be permitted.

- Instructions from the President in relation to the operation of the sound and vision equipment in the Legislative Council shall be observed.

5.2 Guidelines for Radio Journalists

- **Source of Recording**

Broadcast and rebroadcast may occur and recordings may be made only from the audio monitoring system within the precincts of Parliament House.

- **Fair and Accurate Reporting**

Program material shall be used only for the purposes of fair and accurate reports of proceedings, and shall not be used for:

- (i) political party advertising or election campaigns;
- (ii) satire, ridicule or denigration;
- (iii) commercial sponsorship or commercial advertising.

- **Balanced Reporting**

Reports of proceedings shall be such as to provide a balanced presentation of differing views.

- **Withdrawn Remarks**

Remarks which are subsequently withdrawn may be rebroadcast only if the withdrawal is also rebroadcast.

- **Sale of Program Material**

No program material may be sold to any person or organisation without the written permission of the President.

- **President's Instructions**

The instructions of the President of the Legislative Council, in respect of broadcasting, shall be observed.

5.3 Guidelines for access to video recordings of parliamentary program material

Video recordings of program material may be made subject to the following conditions.

Program material is to be used only for the purposes of:

- (a) providing fair and accurate reports of Legislative Council proceedings; or
- (b) providing information about the proceedings and operation of the Legislative Council,

and shall not be used for:

- (c) political party advertising or election campaigns;
- (d) satire, ridicule or denigration;
- (e) commercial advertising.

6.0 Current Television and Sound Reporting Practices and relevant background

Television coverage of the Council at present is restricted to filming of proceedings in the Chamber, without sound, for the sole purpose of enabling TV Stations to update their file footage for news and current affairs television programming.

Other than the Opening of Parliament Ceremonial, filming at present takes place once or twice a year, depending on changes in the Council's Membership and of its office bearers. The Clerk of the Council and Black Rod oversee the actions of the camera crews representing Tasmania's television stations, after the President has given his approval and advised Members accordingly.

6.1 Radio Journalists have made a practice of conducting interviews outside the Legislative Council Chamber in both the ground floor and first floor foyers. While these interviews continue in their non-intrusive manner, I can see no cogent reason for the practice to be now regulated.

7.0 Chamber layout and camera placement

Concealment of television cameras, cinematographers and sound crew is regarded as an imperative in all other Australian Upper and Lower Houses.

7.1 Legislative Council Chamber's dimensions overall of 15 metres in length and 10 metres in width render concealment of cameras and operators well nigh impossible. Of the 150 square metres of the Chamber, 100 square metres comprises the "floor" of the House with a further 30 square metres being the Presidential dais and the president's Reserve. The residual 20 square metres comprises the Public Gallery, the Press Gallery and the Hansard work station.

7.2 I am satisfied that filming will of necessity be intrusive, given the restrictions imposed by the Council layout. Installation of television cameras behind slots in both the western wall (next to the painting of Queen Victoria) and the northern wall (behind the President's Chair) is not considered practical. Indications from architectural firm Philp Lighton are that the sandstone and convict-brick fabric of the Chamber with its internal cedar panelling would make positioning of cameras outside the Chamber totally unacceptable aesthetically and with an order of cost of between \$250,000 and \$350,000 I have ruled out such a course of action.

7.3 I consider that camera placement should be at the eastern and western sides of the southern wall of the Chamber. Both locations have been used in the past for casual filming and on ceremonial occasions.

8.0 Access to and quality of sound

I received advice that the most effective way of providing sound outlets for radio and television broadcasting in the Legislative Council Chamber is to 'hard-wire' lines from existing internal sound channels 1 and 4, which offer the maximum in sound quality (losing quality only on interjections, which are recorded on channels 2 and 3), to a number of outlets in the media gallery. This approach has been found effective in providing a similar service in the House of Assembly Chamber. This work has now been completed.

The provision of a further outlet along the southern wall of the Chamber, towards the public gallery, has facilitated the direct use of a television camera operating from that position. The outlet at the southern end has been installed with concealed wiring along the western wall.

These modifications have been checked by qualified sound technicians, who have given an assurance that this would not adversely affect the existing system of recording debates in the Chamber.

9.0 Chamber access for still photographers

Historically still camera photography has never been permitted within the Council Chamber when the House is sitting. Photographers representing the metropolitan daily newspapers have been permitted to take photographs of the Opening Day Ceremonial, but, from outside the main doors to the Chamber.

9.1 The Committee's recommendations at paragraphs 4.0, 4.1 and 4.2 will mean that for the first time, subject to certain conditions, photographers may take stills within the Chamber of Members, of the Chamber in session and of Select Committees, again subject to certain conditions.

This will enable shots to be taken of Members being sworn, making their maiden speeches, whether by a professional photographer or a family member, along with farewell speeches or of any other significant event.

10.0 Likely Media usage


ABC Television, WIN Television and Southern Cross Television have all shown a high level of interest on filming of the Council in session with full sound coverage. When pressed to convert that level of interest to hours, it was seen as one of those imponderables. I think it is inescapable that notwithstanding any "open all hours" policy I might recommend, filming will still be very much on a casual and public interest basis.

10.1 The News Directors of the three television stations with offices in this State have confirmed that they would wish to have regular access to the Chamber for:

- (a) Question Time
- (b) Urgency Motions
- (c) Debates of Bills of Public Importance
- (d) Debates on Referendum Questions
- (e) Selected debates on Parliamentary Reform

- 10.2 I believe that while initial interest by news media organizations may be high, it will dissipate. It is felt that News Directors will not want to tie up camera crew and reporters any longer than is absolutely necessary to secure their news footage.
- 10.3 I am, however, confident that these recommendations and proposed guidelines will, if adopted, provide radio and television stations throughout the State with a satisfactory framework within which radio broadcasting and the televising of proceedings in the Legislative Council for the people of Tasmania can commence.

R.J.S. McKENZIE
Clerk of the Council



The Standing Orders Committee of the Legislative Council has this day agreed to the implementation of the rules and guidelines contained in paragraphs 1 to 5 of this document.

R.F. BAILEY
Chairman

Dated: 4 November 1998