



**The Queensland Parliamentary Media Gallery**  
**Alice Street, Brisbane**

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If we are forced to fall back on what parliament is streaming it will be bland indeed and patently obvious to the viewing public that a sea change has been foisted on them when it comes to news coverage of Queensland's Parliamentary proceedings.

When we first learnt of a mooted ban on cameras in 2001 and in the face our continued and declared opposition - we were assured in informal discussions with Speakers past the fixed camera cover would be based on the Commonwealth model. This is not the case - in fact Mr Reynolds belatedly informed us the cover would in fact be similar to what is provided in the NSW and WA Parliaments.

Mr Reynolds has said " I mistakenly stated the gallery was assured a service of the same standard as the Commonwealth Parliament" I reject this. Both Speakers Hollis and McGrady indicated this was to be the case in preliminary discussions with them. In fact in discussions with Reynolds I was asked why " Laurie Oakes can manage?" with what he's supplied.

During discussions with Reynolds much was made of advice and assistance provided by Channel Nine's Engineer Craig Larson with the set up and standard of the web cast. For instance -the provision of HD Cameras. Mr Larson has willingly assisted parliament with establishing television coverage since its inception. He has been regularly consulted to assure the best "technical' result. He was always fully aware the four free-to-air networks remain opposed to taking parliaments picture feed. However Mr Larson did his best to ensure the "technical quality of pictures" ( as opposed to the shot sizes and selections ) were of a standard for broadcast - if parliament ever insisted the news cameras go.

The problems our parliament faces in not being able to achieve what even Canberra provides results from the debating chambers size and configuration and no doubt money.

The chamber is high-sided with a narrow width. Side shots from the fixed cameras are therefore shot above members heads. The front on wide shots looking towards the chair are also high up and constrained by the width. The one and only, fixed reaction shot agreed to by Reynolds for twelve Opposition members and twelve Government ministers to be supplied for our use whenever the other sides member was on their feet is also inhibited.

Canberra's live coverage is vision switched by broadcast specific officers in a quality broadcast complex. Hence the my assertion of attendant cost to achieve that standard of pictures.

I can provide members of the committee with coverage provided by Canberra, our two camera operation and the present Parliament web cast to help illustrate our case to remain and preserve the status quo.

What is proposed is visual censorship - however good the intention. Why should we in the much heralded Smart State regress to stilted, inferior, rigid coverage that is forced on viewers in other states?

We have noted Premier Anna Bligh has put much store in opening up Government to more public scrutiny - to remove cameras from the floor of the peoples house in the first two hours of each sitting day would be counter productive in the public mind. Many MP's from all sides have stated publicly they are more than happy to be scrutinised by our cameras and object to the Speakers call for us to go. They fear the rules of coverage could in fact become the plaything of Speakers and a Government with a big majority - to the detriment of Opposition and Independent members.

During discussions with several Speakers we have stressed there are rules of television coverage and penalties agreed by the Gallery to punish any transgressions. These have never been invoked despite complaints from time to time from members and subsequent verbal warnings. We are prepared to consider any changes in this area.

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I conclude with the hope the committee will be convinced of the logic of our case and the status quo for camera access and our right to select the pictures is allowed to continue in the public interest.

SPENCER JOLLY  
PRESIDENT  
Queensland Parliamentary Media Gallery