



REPORT TO THE  
QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

on attendance at the

57th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference  
LONDON, 21 - 28 July 2011

*'Reinforcing Democracy'*

**BARBARA STONE MP**  
**Delegate**

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GLEN ELMES MP  
Observer

## CPC IN SUMMARY

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference 2011 (CPC 2011) brought together more than 600 Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from 175 commonwealth parliaments and legislatures to exchange views on global political issues and developments in the parliamentary system.

The conference marked the centenary of the Empire Parliamentary Association, the predecessor of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and highlighted the role of the CPA as the voice of parliamentary democracy throughout the Commonwealth

The conference was formally opened at a ceremony in Westminster Hall on Monday 25 July. The CPA's centenary was celebrated in a cultural evening which was held in Westminster Hall on the evening of Tuesday 26 July and at a plenary meeting at the Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel on Wednesday 27 July.

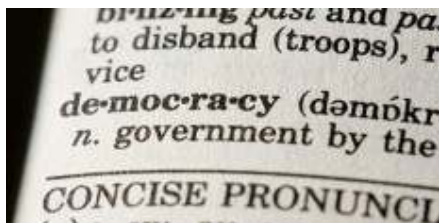
The CPA General Assembly, International Executive Committee and Working Party met during the conference and the following events were held:

- **Small Branches Conference**
- **Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) meeting**
- **Society of Clerks-at-the-Table (SOCATT) meetings**
- **Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference workshops**
- **Regional groups**

A full agenda is attached.

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### The theme for the 2011 CPC Conference was 'Reinforcing Democracy'



#### What does it mean?

As 2011 marks the centenary of the founding of the Association, the centennial conference provides a perfect opportunity to examine the CPA's role in reinforcing democracy over the next century. Workshops and plenary debates linked to this theme will help identify new ways to strengthen parliamentary democracy, aid the advancement of democratic governance and the development of good policy practices; build stable governments and deepen the Commonwealth's democratic commitment.

The 2011 Commonwealth Day theme of 'Women as Agents of Change' also reflects the idea of reinforcing democracy, with particular focus on gender equality and female participation in the parliamentary and democratic process.

## REPORT

Two members of the Queensland Parliament were appointed to attend the 57th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) in London, July 2011: Barbara Stone MP, Member for Springwood, Delegate and Glen Elmes MP, Member for Noosa, Observer.

Also in attendance at the conference was the Speaker of the Queensland Legislative Assembly, the Hon John Mickel MP, Member for Logan.

The Queensland Delegate and Observer attended the conference from 24th July until its conclusion on 27th July 2011, actively participating in the full opportunities offered by the complete agenda as well as undertaking a number of additional meetings outside of the conference program but of great interest to the working of our Westminster form of government in Queensland. See attached.

The 57th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference was also the centenary of the organisation, and the 175 representative members are comprised of nations such as the United Kingdom, India, Canada and Australia through to states /provinces of many countries, small territories and island nation states.

While some of the parliaments have, as their head of state, Her Majesty the Queen, others are republics but all share the common bond of the Westminster form of government, amended to suit local requirements and which has proved its worth as the most outstanding form of practical democracy in the world.

We were proud of the role played by the Australian Delegation, headed by the President of the Senate, Senator the Hon John Hogg. All States, Territories and Norfolk Island were represented and actively involved in sessions.

Countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada have questioned some of the extravagance of the CPA and have gone to great lengths to bring the finances under control. As a result, even though it will mean less delegation entitlements, Australia will pay £55,000 less per annum in voluntary contributions. This will be a priority for the newly elected Right Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, as the chairperson of the Executive Committee. The Right Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP stated "I hope the CPA can be a force for good and change across the world."

At our own cost we travelled, together with the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament, Hon John Mickel MP, to Edinburgh and spent some hours in the Scottish parliament talking with officers there. The magnificent Scottish Parliament building was built on a budget of £40 million and was finished at a cost to the taxpayer of £400 million. It was interesting to note that this parliament, which has responsibilities not unlike it's Queensland counterpart, has 129 members elected from a population of 5 million and from a very small land area.

The other very interesting meeting we attended outside the official program, again accompanied by the Hon John Mickel MP, was with Mr Robert Rogers, Director General, Department of Chamber & Committee Services of the House of Commons Commission. A lengthy conversation ensued, regarding the changes to the role of speaker in Queensland and to quote from the report submitted by the Hon John Mickel MP on his visit..."While not unlawful, the Queensland changes do not conform to Westminster conventions concerning the historical role of the Speaker, and *prima facie* amount to an intrusion by the executive arm of the Government into the administration of the Parliament." There is no doubt there is interest in the Queensland Parliament's new system and it will be carefully watched by other commonwealth parliaments.

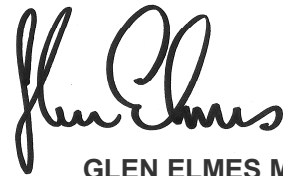
With changes having been made to the Queensland Parliament's committee system, it was interesting to see the various committee resources in both the UK and Scotland Parliament. The Rupert Murdoch/News of the World phone hacking inquiry occurred during the time of our visit, with media, police and other witnesses appearing before a parliamentary committee. This inquiry was watched intently both nationally and internationally, demonstrating that a strong committee system can make a difference and this will be reflected in the future by the Queensland Parliament's new committee system.

The next CPA conference is to be held in Sri Lanka. We have kept much of the information offered at this year's conference and will pass this on to whomever are the Queensland delegates in 2012.



**BARBARA STONE MP**  
Member for Springwood

9 September 2011



**GLEN ELMES MP**  
Member for Noosa

## TUESDAY, 19 JULY 2011

- 9 - 10am Barbara Stone, Glen and Lesleigh Elmes arrive in London from Brisbane
- 1:00 pm Depart Kings Cross station for Edinburgh by train together with John Mickel MP.
- 2.25am Arrive Edinburgh and party transfers to The George Hotel, Edinburgh, Scotland  
(This day paid for privately)
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## WEDNESDAY, 20 JULY 2011

- 10:55am Arrive at Scottish Parliament, Queensberry House entrance.  
Met by Mr Steven Bell of the UK and International Relations Office (UKIRO)
- 11:00am Private tour of the Scottish Parliament with Visitor Services Guide
- 11:45am Meeting with the Head of the Chamber and Reporting Office, Mr David McGill.
- 12.30pm Lunch hosted by Patricia Ferguson MSP, Member of the CPA Scotland Branch Executive Committee
- Overnight in Edinburgh  
(This day paid for privately)
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## THURSDAY, 21 July 2011

- Barbara Stone - Cardiff Wales UK  
(Private Travel)  
(This day paid for privately)
- Glen and Lesleigh Elmes - Blackburn, Lancashire  
(Private travel)
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## FRIDAY, 22 July 2011

- Barbara Stone - Private tour of Senedd National Assembly for Wales.  
Met by Robert Lloyd-Williams International Relations Manager  
(This day paid for privately)
- Glen and Lesleigh Elmes - Blackburn, Lancashire  
(Private travel)
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## SATURDAY, 23 July 2011

Barbara Stone - Cardiff Wales UK  
(Private Travel)  
(This day paid for privately)

Glen and Lesleigh Elmes - Blackburn to London.  
Register for CPC  
Accommodation: Park Plaza Westminster Bridge Hotel  
(This day paid for privately)

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## SUNDAY 24 JULY 2011

- ALL DAY                      Arrival of remaining delegates, observers, secretaries, accompanying persons and Society of Clerks-at-the-Table (SOCATT) participants
- 0930 – 1700                Meeting of the Executive Committee, including lunch  
Executive Committee Sub-Committee: Jubilee Room  
Grand Committee Room, Westminster Hall, Houses of Parliament
- 0900 – 1700                Small Branches Conference  
Park Plaza Suites 1-3, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel
- 'Women as Agents of Change in Small Societies'  
'Strengthening Democracy in Small States: Youth Leadership Training, Citizen Involvement and Parliamentary Reform'
- Lunch for all delegates to the Small Branches Conference  
Plaza Floor, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel
- 1900 – 2200                Formal Dinner for all delegates – 'Uniting the Commonwealth through Sport'  
Hosted by Rt Hon. Sir Alan Haselhurst MP  
Westminster Ballrooms, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel
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## MONDAY 25 JULY 2011

- 0700 – 0900                Breakfast Meeting of Regional Secretaries  
Venue TBC, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel
- 0900 – 1000                Briefing for delegates, observers and secretaries followed by briefing for workshop moderators, discussion leaders, rapporteurs and session secretaries  
Westminster Ballroom 1 & 3, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel
- 0900 – 1000                Briefing for spouses/partners accredited to the conference  
Westminster Ballroom 2, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel
- 1015 – 1245                Regional Group Meetings at the Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel:
- Africa Westminster Ballroom 1 & 3  
                                    Australia Park Suites 1 & 2  
                                    British Islands and Mediterranean Westminster Ballroom 2  
                                    Canada Park Suites 6 & 7  
                                    Caribbean, the Americas and the Atlantic Park Suites 3 & 4  
                                    India Westminster Ballroom 4
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Regional Group Meetings at the Park Plaza County Hall hotel:

Asia Putney & Westminster Room  
Pacific Millennium & Battersea Room  
South East Asia Vauxhall & Lambeth Room

- 1245 – 1400 Lunch for all delegates including observers and spouses/partners accredited to the conference  
Plaza Floor, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel
- Transport to Houses of Parliament and security checks
- 1600 Official Opening of the 57th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference  
by HRH The Princess Royal  
Westminster Hall, Houses of Parliament
- 1640 – 1750 Plenary: Addresses by the Secretaries-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and Commonwealth followed by Question and Answer Session  
Westminster Hall, Houses of Parliament
- 1800 – 1900 CPA Secretary-General's reception for Clerks, Secretaries to Delegations and their spouses/partners (by invitation)  
Lords Terrace, Houses of Parliament
- 1900 – 2200 Dinner hosted by the Clerk of the House of Commons and Clerk of Parliaments for Clerks, Secretaries to Delegations and their spouses/partners (by invitation)  
Members and Strangers Dining Rooms, Houses of Parliament
- 1800 – 1900 Reception hosted by the Speaker of the House of Commons and Lord Speaker, for Speakers, Presiding Officers, Leaders of Delegations and their spouses/partners (by invitation)  
Speaker's House, Houses of Parliament
- 1900 – 2200 Dinner hosted by the Speaker of the House of Commons and Lord Speaker for Speakers, Presiding Officers, Leaders of Delegations and their spouses/partners (by invitation)  
Royal Gallery, Houses of Parliament
- 1830 – 2030 Dinner for all other delegates, observers and spouses/partners accredited to the conference  
Plaza Floor, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel
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## TUESDAY 26 JULY 2011

- 0800 – 1045 CWP Meeting: "Being an Effective Agent of Change: Prerequisites and Modus"  
Westminster Ballroom 2, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel
- 1100 – 1330 Workshops A – D  
Westminster Ballrooms 1-4, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel
- A – 'Climate Change'  
B – 'Parliament and Reforms – Raising the Benchmarks'  
C – 'Commonwealth Initiatives in Handling Migration Issues'  
D – 'Enhancing Good Governance and Accountability: Improving Standards of Probity and Performance'
- 1330 – 1430 Lunch for all delegates and observers  
Plaza Floor, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel
- 1430 – 1700 Workshops E – H  
Westminster Ballrooms 1-4, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel
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E – ‘The World Economy and Obstacles facing the Commonwealth’  
F – ‘Women as Agents of Change: Where Are We Now? The Way Forward’  
G – ‘Technological Threats to International, National and Personal Security’  
H – ‘The Role of Parliamentarians in Advancing the Transfer of Agricultural Technology and Research’

0900 – 1630            48th Annual Meeting of SOCATT, including lunch  
Attlee Suite, Portcullis House, Houses of Parliament

1730 – 2200            Centennial Cultural Evening (by invitation)  
Houses of Parliament

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### **WEDNESDAY 27 JULY 2011**

0900 – 1315            General Assembly, elections and receiving of plaques  
Westminster Ballrooms, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel

1315 – 1415            Lunch for all delegates and observers  
Plaza Floor, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel

1415 – 1530            Centennial Plenary ‘Reinforcing Democracy’  
Westminster Ballrooms, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel

1530 – 1700            Plenary ‘Commonwealth Parliaments: Progress and Challenges’  
Westminster Ballrooms, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel

1700 – 1800            Closing Ceremony  
Westminster Ballrooms, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel

1800 – 1900            Meeting of the new Executive Committee  
Plaza Suites 1-3, Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel

0900 – 1630            48th Annual Meeting of SOCATT, including lunch  
Attlee Suite, Portcullis House, Houses of Parliament

Free Evening and Departures

### **THURSDAY 28 JULY 2011**

ALL DAY                Departure of Delegates