

People of Parliament: Sergeant-at-Arms

Cloze Passage

Read through the following passage and select the word or phrase from the table that best fits in each space. You can use each word or phrase only once.

House	Speaker	authority	century	eight
golden	Mace	Chamber	ceremonial	security
symbol	England	staff	Sergeant-at-Arms	Table

The Sergeant-at-Arms is in charge of security (1) at Queensland Parliament. In the Legislative Assembly Chamber, the Sergeant-at-Arms assists the Speaker (2) in maintaining order. It is the Sergeant-at-Arms who manages all security procedures and staff (3), throughout the entire parliamentary precinct.

The office of Sergeant-at-Arms dates back to the 15th century (4) in England. In 1415, King Henry V of England (5) appointed a Sergeant-at-Arms from his Royal Bodyguard, to attend the House (6) of Commons and enforce the Parliament's privileges. In those days, the Sergeant - at - Arms (7) was armed with a medieval club as a symbol (8) of their Royal authority.

Today in Parliament, we see a ceremonial (9) version of that weapon in the form of a jewelled, golden (10) staff, called the Mace. The Sergeant-at-arms is responsible for the Mace, which symbolises the authority (11) of the Speaker and of the House. At the opening of parliament, each sitting day, the Sergeant-at-Arms leads the Speaker into the Chamber, carrying the Mace (12) over their shoulder. The Mace is then placed on special brackets on the Table (13) of the House, in full view of the entire parliament (14). The Sergeant-at-Arms is the only person allowed to touch the Mace, which weighs nearly eight (15) kilograms.