

GLOSSARY OF TERMS RELATING TO PARLIAMENT

Act of Parliament. (1) A law made by Parliament; (2) a Bill which has passed all three readings and received the Royal Assent.

Assent. An agreement to a proposal. See also Royal Assent.

Backbenchers. Members of Parliament who are not part of the Ministry or its Opposition Shadow, and who are seated behind the frontbenchers.

Bar of the House. In the Queensland Parliament, a heavy brass rail at the rear of the Chamber plus two wooden rails at the front which form the dividing line between the Chamber and the areas outside. Once the three Bars are closed during a division, no Member can enter or leave the Chamber.

Bells. The method by which Members are summoned to the Chamber for the commencement of Parliament, a division, a quorum or a ballot. The bells are rung throughout the whole of the parliamentary precinct.

Bicameral. A Parliament with two Houses - an Upper House and a Lower House.

Bill. An Act in draft form which needs to be passed by the Parliament and receive Royal Assent before becoming a law.

Cabinet. A group of senior members of the governing party known as Ministers, who collectively are responsible for policy development and implementation, and individually head the various departments (known as portfolios).

Chair. The Speaker's Chair at the head of the Chamber from which the Speaker (or Deputy) chairs the meetings of Parliament.

Chamber. The Queensland Parliament's major meeting room where Members of the Legislative Assembly convene and participate in debates.

Clerk of the Parliament. The senior permanent parliamentary officer and the chief executive of the Parliamentary Service.

Coalition. An official combination of two or more parties in the Parliament whether as a Government or as an Opposition.

Consideration in Detail Stage. The stage in the legislative process when the House considers and votes on each clause of the Bill and may move amendments to the Bill.

Conscience Vote. A vote allowed by a party so that its members can exercise their vote as a matter of conscience, especially with moral issues.

Constituency. The electorate, or area, or the inhabitants within, which a Member represents in the Parliament.

Constitution. The fundamental set of rules which establishes the structure and processes of a State or national government.

Conventions. Unwritten rules or established practices relating to the operation of a constitution or to parliamentary or government procedures.

Cross Benches. The seating area in the Chamber where a party, or independent Members who are not linked with the Government or Opposition, are located.

Cross the Floor. During a division in the Parliament when a Member crosses the floor of the Chamber to vote with a rival party.

Crown. The formal term for the British Sovereign which is synonymously identified with Queensland's executive power, i.e. the Government.

Debate. The proceedings occurring between a Member's motion and the decision of the House as ascertained by the Chair.

Democracy. In a modern sense, a system of government where the power of the people resides in representative structures.

Division. A formal vote in the Parliament, heralded by the ringing of bells, whereby Members separate into the "ayes" (yes) on the right of the Chair, or "noes" (no) on the left, to have their votes recorded.

Dorothy Dixer. A pre-arranged question from a government Member to a Minister, in order to elicit praise for the Government or criticism of the Opposition.

Election. The method by which Queensland citizens select their representatives for the Parliament.

Electoral Districts Boundaries. The partition of the State into electoral districts (or seats) whose elected representatives are Members of the Queensland Parliament. At present, there are 93 single member electoral districts which have been created by the Queensland Electoral Commission.

Electoral Roll. The official list of eligible persons who may vote in a State election, which is updated on a regular basis. The roll is closed three weeks prior to election day.

Electoral System. The structures and processes necessary to hold an election including the electoral laws, system of appointment, redistribution and voting.

Electorate. See Constituency.

Executive. The Ministry which implements the Government's policy and is answerable to the Parliament for its administration.

Floor of the House. The area within the Chamber from which Members must speak during debates or cross during a division.

Frontbenchers. Members of the Ministry or Opposition Shadow Cabinet who occupy the front seats of the Chamber on the right and left of the Speaker's Chair respectively.

Government. The majority political party, or coalition of parties, enjoying the support of the Parliament.

Governor. The King's representative in Queensland. The current Governor is Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM.

Hansard. (1) The printed record of Members speeches in Parliament; (2) the section and its staff who record, edit and produce the written record.

House. The Chamber in which a legislative or deliberative assembly meets - in Queensland, the Legislative Assembly.

Independent. A candidate or parliamentarian who is not endorsed by a political party.

Informal Vote. A ballot paper declared invalid because it is incorrectly marked or incomplete.

King. An integral, constitutional component of the Queensland Parliament. The current head of the state Government, represented by the Governor.

Lay on the Table. A term used to denote the introduction of Bills, Papers or Subordinate Legislation into the Parliament by Ministers or Members who physically lay the items on the Table of the House. Synonymous with the term "tabling" of a paper.

Leader of the House. A Government Minister appointed by the party, to organise proceedings and coordinate tactics in the Legislative Assembly.

Leader of the Opposition. The leader of the Opposition party who shadows the Premier. The Leader of the Queensland Opposition is Mr David Crisafulli MP.

Leader of the Government. The leader of the Government is known as the Premier.

Legislation. Bills passed by the Parliament which as Acts become the State's laws.

Legislative Assembly. In the Australian States, the lower House and representative legislature, e.g. Queensland.

Legislative Council. The upper House in all Australian States, except Queensland, where it was abolished in 1922.

Legislature. The elected, representative body of persons in a nation or State invested with powers to make, alter or repeal laws.

Lower House. See Legislative Assembly.

Mace. A ceremonial staff representing the Speaker's, and hence the Parliament's authority, from the King. The Mace is carried into and from the Chamber by the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Member of Parliament. In Queensland, a person elected to the Legislative Assembly. There are 93 Members of Parliament in Queensland.

Minister. A Member of Parliament, who is a member of the executive government, and is responsible for a government department. Ministers are also Executive Councillors. The Cabinet consist of up to 18 Ministers and the Premier.

Ministry. See Cabinet.

MP. Member of Parliament.

Motion. A proposal seeking a decision of the House, e.g. a motion "That the House do now adjourn".

Notice. A declaration of intent to the House by a Member to either move a motion or present a Bill on a specified day.

On the Voices. See Voices, On the.

Opposition. The next, largest party or coalition of parties after the Government majority party, which shadows the Ministry and can provide an alternative government.

Parliament. The State's representative and legislative institution which, under the *Queensland Constitution Acts*, consists of the Queen and the Legislative Assembly.

Parliament House. In Queensland, the building on the corner of George and Alice Streets where the State Parliament meets.

Parliamentarian. See Member of Parliament.

Political Party. An organised group of people seeking political power through endorsed candidates at elections.

Portfolio. A Minister's area of responsibility as a member of Cabinet.

Prayer. The traditional beginning to the sitting day recited by the Speaker prior to the Legislative Assembly's daily business.

Preferential Voting. A voting system whereby voters are required to cast votes in a preferential order for all candidates.

Premier. The leader of the parliamentary majority party and the Chief Minister in the State Government. The Premier of Queensland is the Honourable Anastacia Palaszczuk MP.

Privilege. The protection accorded to the Parliament, its members, and its publications in order to assure the right of freedom of speech.

Public Gallery. The gallery or seated area above the Chamber from which the public can watch the parliamentary proceedings.

Queen. An integral, constitutional component of the Queensland Parliament. The head of the state Government, represented by the Governor.

Question Time. A set, daily period of time in the Parliament providing an opportunity for Members to ask questions of Ministers concerning their portfolios and include Questions on Notice and Questions Without Notice.

Quorum. The necessary number of Members needed to be present in the Chamber for the conduct of parliamentary business, which in Queensland's Legislative Assembly is sixteen.

Readings (of a Bill). The formal three stages of a Bill's passage through the Parliament, and includes the First Reading - permission to introduce the Bill; the Second Reading - debate on the Bill's underlying principles and including the Committee Stage; and the Third Reading - the final stage prior to the Bill being passed.

Royal Assent. The final stage by which a Bill becomes an Act when the Governor, as the Queen's representative, accords it formal approval.

Sergeant-at-Arms. A traditional, ceremonial office in which the incumbent bears the Mace, and assists the Speaker in the Chamber.

Shadow Minister. An Opposition frontbencher who is the party spokesperson for an area of responsibility that matches a Minister's portfolio.

Sitting Day. The daily period when the House meets between the time when the Speaker takes the Chair and the House is adjourned.

Speaker. The chief Presiding Officer of the Parliament, who chairs the debates and maintains order in the House.

Standing Orders. The printed rules which regulate procedure, debate and the conduct of Members in the Chamber.

Statutes. Acts of Parliament which collectively embody the laws of a nation or state.

Table. A table situated in front of the Speaker's Chair in the Chamber, at which the Clerk and Assistants sit in order to record the daily business of the House.

Tellers. The four Members (two each from either side) appointed to count the votes during a division in the House.

Unicameral. A Parliament with only one House, like the Queensland Parliament which comprises only the Legislative Assembly.

Upper House. A House which reviews the legislation passed by the representative Lower House. Queensland abolished its Upper House - the Legislative Council - in 1922.

Voices, On the. The initial method of voting by Members in the Parliament for or against a motion by exclaiming "Aye" (yes) or "Noe" (no). If the vote is contested a Division is called.

Vote. (1) The method by which the House determines the outcome of Motions, e.g. the various stages of legislation and can be either on the Voices or the calling of a Division; (2) the method by which the State's electors choose their parliamentary representatives.

Westminster System. The British system of government which provides the basic model for the parliamentary governments of Australia and its States. So called because the House of Commons and House of Lords are located on the site of the Palace of Westminster.

Whip. A political party appointee who is responsible for organising party members as speakers for debates or numbers in divisions.