



Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2026–2027 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2026–2027

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Thomas Emerson MLA

Addressed to: Speaker

Hearing: 30 July 2026

In relation to: In-camera hearings

Question received: 7 August 2026

Answer Due: 14 August 2026

A constituent has raised with me concerns about the lack of public information provided about the existence of in-camera hearings, compared to other parliaments that publish private hearings on their schedules. Has any consideration been given to publishing private hearings on committee schedules, while keeping their contents confidential?

THE SPEAKER: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

At the Assembly, in-camera hearings have generally been conducted on the basis that they are private in relation to both their occurrence and their content.

Recently, witnesses at in-camera hearings have fallen into two categories. The first is vulnerable witnesses. The second is witnesses whose evidence may have commercial, operational or reputational sensitivities.

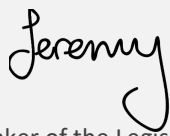
The entrance to the hearing venue is accessible to the public and media, and is visible from London Circuit, so committees may be reluctant to publish the occurrence of an in-camera hearing involving vulnerable witnesses. Their approach may be different for the second category.

I note that the conduct of a committee's hearings is a matter for each committee and a committee's decision on how it handles a hearing can depend on multiple factors.

I will arrange for this matter to be raised as an agenda item at the next meeting of the Committee of Chairs.

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Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature: 

Date: 10/08/2026

By the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for the ACT, Jeremy Hanson CSC MLA