

13. Questions seeking information

Introduction

- 13.1. The purpose of parliamentary questions is to allow members of the Assembly to seek and obtain information.¹ They are an important parliamentary procedure used by members to ensure that the executive government is held accountable, through its ministers, for its policies and actions. Questions are also used to obtain information from the Speaker or from private members on matters for which they are responsible (see under the heading ‘To whom may questions be directed’ below). Opposition, crossbench and government backbench members of the Assembly also use questions to obtain information about matters of concern to their constituents by directing questions to the minister with the appropriate portfolio responsibility.
- 13.2. Questions may be asked orally, without notice, in the chamber or placed on the *Questions on Notice Paper* for written reply.² The importance of questions without notice as a means of gaining information and holding ministers accountable is demonstrated by the requirement that there must be a period set aside on every Assembly sitting day for questions to be asked. These matters are discussed further below.

Who may ask questions?

- 13.3. The standing orders do not place any restrictions on who may ask questions. However, the accepted practice is that questions are asked by non-executive members. Ministers do not ask questions of other ministers.³ There is also nothing in the standing orders to prevent the Speaker from asking questions, although the practice has been that they do not. Occasionally, Speakers have placed questions on the *Notice Paper*.⁴ A suspended member cannot submit written questions during the period of their suspension (see Chapter 11: Rules of debate and the maintenance of order, under the heading ‘Exclusion of suspended members from the chamber’).⁵

1 For discussion on questions asked by members in the course of committee proceedings, see Chapter 17: Committees.

2 Standing order 113.

3 This convention would also extend to assistant ministers and parliamentary secretaries. In 2019, a position of ‘special secretary’ to the Chief Minister was created, and the Speaker allowed that member to ask a question without notice on the grounds that she was not a member of the ACT Executive. Assembly Debates, 17 September 2019, p 3453.

4 For example, see NP, No 4, 15 February 2005, p 39; NP, No 47, 9 December 2010, p 1697.

5 Assembly Debates, 15 November 2011, p 5263. This instance was in response to a rostered minister’s question being lodged by a member who had been suspended from the Assembly the previous sitting day

To whom may questions be directed?

Questions to ministers

- 13.4. In almost all cases, questions are directed to ministers. They may relate only to public affairs for which a minister has some official connection, to proceedings pending in the Assembly or to any matter of administration for which a particular minister is responsible.⁶ A question cannot be put to a minister about the portfolio responsibilities of another minister unless the minister is acting in the other minister's portfolio. This does not apply to the Chief Minister.⁷ On occasion, the Speaker has allowed a minister, not the minister originally asked a question, to provide an answer where the responsibility for the subject matter of the question rested with the alternate minister.⁸
- 13.5. Ministers may be asked by any member, without notice, for explanations regarding the failure to provide certain information. For instance, ministers may be asked why questions on notice (and taken on notice) remain unanswered (see under the heading 'Unanswered questions' below), and they may also be asked about the tardiness in providing government responses to committee reports (see Chapter 17: Committees).

Questions to Speaker

- 13.6. Any member may ask the Speaker a question relating to the Speaker's responsibilities.⁹ However, if the question relates to a matter of privilege, the member must raise the issue in accordance with standing order 276. Unlike the House of Representatives, which only allows oral questions to be put to the Speaker at the conclusion of question time, questions without notice can be asked of the Speaker at any point during question time, although such questions are rare.¹⁰ Questions on notice to the Speaker follow the same process as for questions directed to any other member (see under the heading 'Questions on notice' below).¹¹

(some three weeks earlier); see Assembly Debates, 27 October 2011, pp 5201-5202.

6 Standing order 114.

7 Assembly Debates, 10 March 2016, p 956.

8 For example, see Assembly Debates, 7 May 2013, pp 1621-1622.

9 Standing order 115.

10 For example, see Assembly Debates, 14 February 2008, p 253; Assembly Debates, 7 June 2017, p 2010. Although not provided for in the standing orders, and not the practice elsewhere, the Speaker has permitted questions to be asked that relate to rulings made by the chair. For example, see Assembly Debates, 2 August 2018, p 2640.

11 For example, see QNP, No 3, 24 March 2017, p 6; QNP, No 24, 21 September 2018, pp 16 and 18.

Questions to private members

13.7. On rare occasions, private members are asked questions, usually in the form of questions without notice. Such questions may relate only to a bill, motion or other public matter which is connected with the business of the Assembly and of which the member has charge.¹² A question to a committee chair has been permitted concerning committee proceedings, though care would need to be taken to ensure that the question did not transgress the provisions of standing order 241.¹³ For example, the chair of the Standing Committee on Planning and Environment was asked a question in relation to a request to inquire into a planning matter.¹⁴ Questions may also be put to shadow ministerial spokespersons in relation to matters they have charge of on the *Notice Paper*. For example, on 25 August 2005, the then shadow Minister for Education was asked a question without notice relating to the Education Amendment Bill 2005, which she had presented to the Assembly.¹⁵

General rules applying to questions

- 13.8. Chapter 10 of the standing orders sets out the rules for asking and answering questions. Standing order 117, which outlines the general rules that apply to questions, states that questions shall be brief¹⁶ and relate to a single issue and that they must not contain:
- statements of fact or names of persons unless they are strictly necessary to render the question intelligible and facts that can be authenticated; or
 - arguments, inferences, imputations, ironical expressions or hypothetical matters.¹⁷
- 13.9. Ministers should not be asked for an expression of a personal opinion or for a legal opinion. Nor should they be asked to announce executive policy, but a question may seek an explanation regarding the policy of the executive and its application, and a member may ask the Chief Minister whether a minister's

12 Standing order 116. For example, Assembly Debates, 25 August 2005, p 3246.

13 The issues and constraints were highlighted in an exchange during a question time; Assembly Debates, 6 May 2014, pp 1105-1108.

14 Assembly Debates, 19 August 2008, p 3216. The question sought confirmation on whether the committee had received the correspondence and when it intended to respond.

15 Assembly Debates, 25 August 2005, p 3246. The question was asked by another member of the opposition and was effectively a 'Dorothy Dixier' (see under the heading 'Questions without notice (question time)' below in this chapter). It provided an opportunity for the shadow spokesperson to make a statement about her bill. However, since the question related to a matter that was on the *Notice Paper*, any debate on the issue was not permitted, pursuant to standing order 117(f). The member was repeatedly warned by the Speaker to restrict herself to making a statement and not to debate the issue.

16 For example, see Assembly Debates, 18 August 2005, p 2900 and Assembly Debates, 23 August 2011, pp 3651-3652.

17 Standing order 117(b).

statement represents executive policy.¹⁸ Questions cannot refer to proceedings in a committee not yet published, nor should they anticipate the outcome of a committee inquiry.¹⁹ Questions may not be asked which reflect on, or are critical of, the character or conduct of persons whose conduct may only be challenged on a substantive motion.²⁰

- 13.10. Under standing order 117(f), the Speaker has the authority to direct that the language of a question be changed if it does not conform with the standing orders. This standing order can be applied more strictly to questions on notice as there is more time for them to be examined. This function is performed by the Clerk, who has the Speaker's authority to amend questions before placing them on the *Questions on Notice Paper*. The Clerk also edits questions to adapt them to the style of the *Questions on Notice Paper*. Generally, these edits are carried out to eliminate unnecessary words, to ensure the questions are directed to the correct ministers and to put them into a form compliant with the standing orders.
- 13.11. The Speaker also has the authority to rule any question out of order if it does not conform to the standing orders. The reasons for doing so have included, but are not limited to, the following:
- sub judice convention;²¹
 - not being within a minister's ministerial responsibility;²²
 - imputations;²³
 - seeking legal opinions;²⁴
 - being hypothetical;²⁵
 - duplicating a question on the *Notice Paper*;²⁶ and
 - re-asking a question that had been fully answered.²⁷

18 Standing order 117(c).

19 Standing order 117(e). See also the Speaker's statement regarding the intent of the standing order and how he intended to apply it; Assembly Debates, 2 May 2006, pp 1029-1030.

20 Standing order 117(d). The House of Representatives cites as examples of persons whose conduct can only be challenged on a substantive motion the following: members of either House; the Queen; the Governor-General; state governors; and members of the judiciary. *House of Representatives Practice*, p 559.

21 Assembly Debates, 18 October 2005, p 374.

22 Assembly Debates, 18 February 2015, p 488; Assembly Debates, 18 March 2010, p 1111; Assembly Debates, 23 March 2010, pp 1241-1242.

23 Assembly Debates, 6 June 2002, pp 2018-2019.

24 Assembly Debates, 22 February 2018, pp 600-601.

25 Assembly Debates, 15 August 2013, p 3114.

26 Assembly Debates, 24 September 2003, pp 3604-3605.

27 Standing order 117(g).

Questions without notice (question time)

- 13.12. The accountability of the government is tested most clearly and publicly during question time, when questions are asked orally without notice by opposition, crossbench and government backbench members. The importance placed on question time is indicated by the fact that all members will usually be present in the chamber and all non-executive members will seek to ask a question. If any minister is absent, it is the practice at the commencement of question time for the Chief Minister (or Deputy Chief Minister) to announce which minister or ministers will answer questions on behalf of the absent minister.
- 13.13. At 2 pm each sitting day, the Speaker calls for questions without notice.²⁸ Members indicate their wish to ask a question by seeking the call from the chair. In accordance with standing order 113A, the time allocated to questions without notice is determined by the time necessary for all non-executive members who wish to do so to have asked at least one question. This generally takes approximately one hour. If question time proceedings are interrupted by other proceedings—for example, a motion to suspend standing orders or a motion of dissent from a Speaker’s ruling—the requirement of standing order 113A still applies.
- 13.14. The practice of allowing all non-executive members to ask at least one question was adopted by the Assembly on 15 September 1994 after a motion to suspend standing and temporary orders was moved by a non-executive member during questions without notice. The motion sought to allow all non-executive members to ask a question without notice if they wished to do so.²⁹ For a description of the events leading to the adoption of the practice, see paragraphs 12.13 and 12.14 in the First Edition of the *Companion to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory*.
- 13.15. Once all non-executive members seeking to do so have asked a question, the Chief Minister concludes question time by asking that all further questions be placed on the *Notice Paper*. On an occasion when only three non-executive members had asked a question, the Chief Minister rose and asked that all further questions be placed on the *Notice Paper*.³⁰ The Speaker explained to the Assembly that the Chief Minister took that action because no other member had risen. The Speaker allowed question time to continue after several non-executive members rose to ask further questions.³¹

28 Standing order 74.

29 MoP, No 119, 15 September 1994, p 707; Assembly Debates, 15 September 1994, p 3015.

30 Assembly Debates, 4 August 2004, p 3416.

31 Assembly Debates, 4 August 2004, p 3416.

- 13.16. Under standing order 113A, non-executive members may each ask at least one question without notice at each sitting. Nevertheless, there has been an occasion when a member was allowed to ask two questions during a question time.³² The member rose to ask a second question and was reminded by the Speaker that she had already asked a question and that other members had not. The member gave a short explanation indicating that she had not been quick enough to get to her feet to ask a supplementary question and that there was nothing in the standing orders to prevent a member asking more than one question. The Speaker ruled that he was prepared to permit the member to ask another question on that occasion.³³ A member has also asked a second question after all other non-executive members had asked questions and before the Chief Minister had asked that further questions be placed on the *Notice Paper*.³⁴
- 13.17. To facilitate physical distancing requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Assembly implemented special arrangements for question time that had been agreed by the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure. The revised arrangements included:
- the government receiving advice from opposition and crossbench whips as to which ministers would be required (that is, to which ministers were questions going to be directed);
 - the opposition and crossbench being allocated their normal complement of questions, with members able to ask multiple questions; and
 - no questions being asked by government backbench members.
- 13.18. It is the practice of the Assembly that the Speaker calls the Leader of the Opposition to ask the first question. The call is then alternated between government and non-government backbench members, depending on who seeks the call next.
- 13.19. It is a well-established practice that questions asked by government backbenchers are often prepared with the knowledge of the relevant minister. This enables ministers to respond with the government’s point of view, to highlight government achievements and/or to contrast the opposition party’s policies (and to praise the ‘perspicacity and wisdom’ of the member who asked the ‘question’). These ‘prepared questions’ are usually referred to as ‘Dorothy Dixers’.³⁵ While such devices might reasonably be considered an abuse of the purpose of questions without notice, they have become accepted practice in all Australian parliaments.

32 Assembly Debates, 20 February 2002, p 401.

33 Assembly Debates, 20 February 2002, p 401.

34 Assembly Debates, 1 July 2010, pp 3093 and 3099.

35 This reference is reputed to have come from a popular advice column by journalist E M Gilmer called ‘Dear Dorothy Dix’. It was said that the journalist herself invented many of the more interesting questions that she answered in her column.

Supplementary questions

- 13.20. Immediately following the oral answer to a question without notice, one supplementary question may be asked by the member who asked the original question. Invariably, a supplementary question is asked. A supplementary question must:
- be relevant to the original question or arise out of the answer given;
 - not contain a preamble;
 - not introduce new matter;
 - be in precise and direct terms;³⁶ and
 - be directed to the original minister asked.³⁷
- 13.21. One further supplementary question from another non-executive member may then be allowed by the Speaker. As with the initial supplementary question, the further supplementary question must be relevant to the original question or the answers already given.³⁸
- 13.22. From August 2009 until the Ninth Assembly, standing order 113B permitted two further supplementary questions from other non-executive members to be asked.³⁹ Again, these supplementary questions had to be relevant to the original question or answers given. In moving to amend standing order 113B, the Speaker indicated that the change would increase the level of scrutiny and inquiry during questions without notice and also allow greater exploration of issues in greater depth.⁴⁰
- 13.23. Following adoption of a report of the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure by the Assembly, the standing order was amended at the beginning of the Ninth Assembly so that a single supplementary question was permitted.⁴¹ The committee recommended the change in order to preserve the essential character of question time in the expanded Assembly, enabling all non-executive members to ask a question within the roughly one-hour time frame.⁴²
- 13.24. Should a supplementary question be ruled out of order, there is no entitlement to ask an additional supplementary question.⁴³

36 Standing order 113B.

37 Assembly Debates, 15 May 2014, p 1580.

38 Standing order 113B. The Speaker has reminded members that ‘where there is a fairly specific question about a matter, any supplementary question should relate to that matter and not be simply a broad supplementary about the general issue’. Assembly Debates, 17 November 2009, pp 5080-5081.

39 MoP, No 32, 27 August 2009, p 353.

40 Assembly Debates, 27 August 2009, pp 3807-3808.

41 MoP, No 2, 13 December 2016, p 12.

42 Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure, *Review of standing orders for the Ninth Assembly*, p 7.

43 Assembly Debates, 19 November 2009, p 5311.

- 13.25. Statistics on questions and supplementary questions are contained in Appendix 13.

Answers to questions without notice

- 13.26. Standing order 118, which sets out the rules relating to answers to questions without notice, states that answers shall be concise and directly relevant to the subject matter of the question,⁴⁴ and not debate the subject to which the question refers.⁴⁵ The freedom given to ministers when answering questions without notice can be a source of frustration for non-executive members. However, as indicated by Speakers on a number of occasions, ministers cannot be directed to answer questions in a particular way. The Speaker can intervene only if the answer does not conform with the standing orders.⁴⁶
- 13.27. The length of answers to questions without notice has been considered by the Assembly on several occasions. In May 2001, the Assembly noted the report of the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure which recommended that:
- ... the Assembly not support the imposition of time limits for the asking and answering of questions without notice.⁴⁷
- 13.28. On 7 May 2003, the Assembly considered a motion which proposed that standing order 118 be amended to limit the time for answering questions without notice to five minutes. The Assembly resolved to refer the matter to the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure for inquiry and report.⁴⁸ The committee reported to the Assembly on 18 November 2003, recommending a time limit of five minutes on answers to questions without notice. The report was adopted by the Assembly, creating new standing order 118(c).⁴⁹
- 13.29. In August 2009, standing order 118(c) was amended to limit an answer to a question on notice to four minutes and to two minutes in the case of an answer to a supplementary question.⁵⁰

44 Inserted as a temporary order from 2008 (MoP, No 2, 9 December 2008, p 19), adopted as a standing order in 2012 (MoP, No 141, 22 March 2012, p 1820).

45 For example, see Assembly Debates, 22 October 2013, p 3587; Assembly Debates, 17 February 2015, pp 392 and 398; Assembly Debates, 3 June 2015, p 1954.

46 The Speaker has withdrawn the call from a minister during an answer to a question for failing to observe standing order 118(a). Assembly Debates, 16 September 2015, p 3087.

47 Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure, *Proposed amendments to standing orders relating to disorder, questions without notice and voting*, May 2001, Recommendation 3, p 12.

48 MoP, No 58, 7 May 2003, p 712.

49 MoP, No 78, 18 November 2003, p 1002.

50 MoP, No 32, 27 August 2009, p 353.

- 13.30. As one of the suite of measures designed to accommodate the expanded membership of the Assembly in 2016, standing order 118(c) was amended, setting the time limit for an answer to a question without notice at two minutes.⁵¹
- 13.31. At the same time, a provision was removed which had allowed any member, having judged a lengthy answer to be in the form of a ministerial statement, to seek leave of the Speaker to respond.⁵²
- 13.32. At the conclusion of question time, it is the practice of the Speaker to ask ministers to provide additional information regarding questions, should they wish to do so.
- 13.33. If a question without notice requires a detailed or complicated answer, a minister may take the question on notice and provide an answer to the member at a later time. This can be done orally in the chamber, or by lodging the answer with the Clerk's office, which then arranges for the answer to be provided to the member and published in Hansard.

Questions on notice

- 13.34. Questions to be asked on notice must be submitted to the Clerk both in writing and electronically.⁵³ They are published in the *Questions on Notice Paper* for a written answer by the appropriate minister at a later date. Questions on notice are usually asked when a detailed, complex or lengthy answer is required.
- 13.35. Prior to the Ninth Assembly, questions on notice were included on the *Notice Paper* for each sitting day; however, a new practice was adopted by the Assembly in December 2016 whereby questions are placed on a *Questions on Notice Paper*.⁵⁴ The *Questions on Notice Paper* is published on the Friday of every sitting week via the Assembly website.⁵⁵
- 13.36. Standing orders do not limit the number of questions that a member may place on the *Questions on Notice Paper*, and in recent years there has been an increase in such questions (see Appendix 13).
- 13.37. Questions must be lodged with the Clerk by 12 noon of a sitting Thursday in order to be included in the next iteration of the *Questions on Notice Paper* issued on the

51 MoP, No 2, 13 December 2016, p 12. See also Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure, *Review of the standing orders for the Ninth Assembly*, Report 1, p 3 and pp 6-7.

52 See MoP, No 135, 7 April 2016, p 1538, for an example of the Speaker granting leave. The provision was trialled as a temporary order from 2008 (MoP, No 2, 9 December 2008, p 19), adopted as a standing order in 2012 (MoP, No 141, 22 March 2012, p 1820) and omitted in 2018. (MoP, No 82, 29 November 2018, p 1173).

53 Standing order 113(a).

54 MoP, No 2, 13 December 2016, p 12.

55 www.parliament.act.gov.au

Friday.⁵⁶ Questions on notice must comply with the standing orders relating to questions, conform to the style of the *Notice Paper* and be signed by the member.

Answers to questions on notice

- 13.38. Answers to questions on notice are similarly delivered to the Clerk in both hard copy and in a digital form. A copy of the answer is then supplied to the member who asked the question, and the question and answer are printed in the next weekly Hansard.⁵⁷
- 13.39. Occasionally, ministers will reply to a question on notice or part of a question on notice by indicating that they are not prepared to allow the use of the resources required to obtain the information requested.⁵⁸ This usually occurs when a question requests very detailed information that, in the view of the minister, would require unreasonable time and effort to compile. The standing orders place no obligation on how a minister answers a question.⁵⁹ Given that standing order 117(g) states that ‘A question fully answered cannot be re-asked’, there is some conjecture as to whether a question that receives such a response could be considered as having been fully answered by the minister in the event that a member asks another similar question on notice.

Redirected questions on notice

- 13.40. If a question is directed incorrectly to a minister, the Chamber Support Office is contacted by the Cabinet Liaison Office of the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, or the relevant minister’s office, requesting that the question be redirected. It is then the practice of the Chamber Support Office to contact the relevant member to seek their approval for the redirection, which is usually given. Details of the redirection are then shown on the next issue of the *Notice Paper*. It should be noted that, although this process may take several days, the 30-day rule for answering the question is still taken to have begun from the date of the original question.

Unanswered questions

- 13.41. On 4 May 1995, the Assembly adopted standing order 118A, which deals with requests for explanations concerning unanswered questions.⁶⁰ Under this standing order, a minister has 30 days to provide an answer to a question (either on or

56 Standing order 113(a).

57 Standing order 122.

58 For example, see Assembly Debates, 22 February 2018, pp 659-660; Assembly Debates, 12 April 2018, p 1473.

59 But see under the heading ‘Unanswered questions’ below in this chapter. The Assembly may, of course, order a minister to provide information. See Chapter 10: Motions, under the heading ‘Orders and resolutions of the Assembly’.

60 MoP, No 4, 4 May 1995, pp 26-32.

without notice). If a minister has not provided an answer to the question within that time or has not provided the member who asked the question with a satisfactory explanation or statement as to why the answer has not yet been provided, at the conclusion of questions without notice the member may seek an explanation or statement from the relevant minister concerning the unanswered question.

- 13.42. At the conclusion of the minister's explanation, the member who asked the question may move to take note of the explanation⁶¹ or, in the event that the minister does not provide an explanation to the satisfaction of the member concerned, move a motion with regard to the minister's failure to provide an answer, explanation or statement.⁶²
- 13.43. This standing order has been utilised regularly since its adoption. On 29 November 2018, after a member had requested an explanation from a minister concerning an answer to a question on notice, the minister indicated that he would take the matter up with his office to ascertain why the member had not received the answer, as he believed he had signed off on an answer. After the member clarified that her office had confirmed with the Clerk's office that an answer had not been received, the minister stated that there was some information that was required for the response that took some time to arrive in his office. The member then moved, pursuant to standing order 118A(c), that the minister had failed to provide an answer to the question on notice, had failed to provide a satisfactory explanation for the failure and had failed to provide a satisfactory statement in relation to that failure. The motion was negated after a vote of the Assembly.⁶³ In an earlier instance, when the minister was not present in the chamber, a motion was moved and carried under standing order 118A(c) noting that the minister had not provided an answer to a question and requiring the minister to report to the Assembly by close of business that sitting. The minister provided an explanation later that day.⁶⁴
- 13.44. On 4 May 2005, a member attempted to move a motion under standing order 118A in relation to an answer provided by a minister concerning an unanswered question on notice. The minister indicated that he thought the answer had been signed and was on its way to the member. On moving the motion, the member indicated that the minister should provide an explanation for the lateness of the answer, not speculate on where it was. The Speaker ruled that the minister had given his explanation and the member was unable to move a motion under standing order 118A(c).⁶⁵ The next day the Speaker made a short statement indicating that he had reviewed his ruling. He stated that ministers need to give explanations as to why answers are late and that he would rule that way in the future.⁶⁶

61 For example, MoP, No 5, 14 February 2017, p 52.

62 For example, MoP, No 6, 15 February 2017, p 70.

63 MoP, No 82, 29 November 2018, pp 1173-1174.

64 MoP, No 21, 2 August 2017, p 303.

65 MoP, No 18, 4 May 2005, pp 163-164.

66 MoP, No 19, 5 May 2005, p 171; Assembly Debates, 5 May 2005, p 1867.

- 13.45. Standing order 118A was amended in 2008 to attempt to address the confusion in relation to whether a minister 'looking into it' is in fact an explanation and to provide the member raising the matter with the ability to choose between moving a motion to take note of the explanation or moving a motion with regard to the perceived failure to provide an answer or an explanation.⁶⁷

Rostered ministers' questions

- 13.46. In August 2011, the Assembly adopted temporary order 113C for the remainder of the Seventh Assembly to allow for rostered ministers' questions.⁶⁸ The purpose of the temporary order was to provide an opportunity to ask questions of those lower profile portfolios that did not receive the same amount of scrutiny as 'major' portfolios during question time.⁶⁹
- 13.47. The temporary order enabled a non-executive member to propose to the Speaker, on each sitting Tuesday and Wednesday, one question to be directed to a rostered minister. Notice of a question was provided to the Speaker by 8.30 am on the relevant sitting day and the Speaker determined whether the question was in order before choosing up to five questions by lot. These questions were then published before that sitting day. Following the conclusion of questions without notice, the Speaker called on each member whose question had been chosen to ask their question plus one supplementary. The time limit for a minister's answer was two minutes for each question.
- 13.48. Immediately following the adoption of the temporary order, the Assembly passed a resolution that detailed the roster for rostered ministers' questions for the remainder of the 2011 sittings.⁷⁰ On 8 December 2011, a further resolution was passed outlining the roster for additional rostered ministers' questions for the first two weeks of the 2012 sitting calendar.
- 13.49. The temporary order was removed following a vote in February 2012. It was argued during debate on the motion to remove it that, while it had been worthwhile experimenting with the temporary order, in practice the model adopted had proved unsuccessful; in particular, the requirement to give notice of a question.⁷¹

67 MoP, No 132, 6 March 2008, pp 1388-9. Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure, Report 2, *Review of standing orders and other orders of the Assembly—Volume 1*, December 2007, pp 38-39.

68 MoP, No 117, 25 August 2011, pp 1478-1479.

69 The temporary order had been based on a similar arrangement adopted within the United Kingdom Parliament (see *Assembly Debates*, 25 August 2011, pp 3858-3863).

70 MoP, No 117, 25 August 2011, p 1479.

71 MoP, No 138, 23 February 2012, p 1788; *Assembly Debates*, 23 February 2012, pp 791-793.