



MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

OTTAWA, Tuesday, November 18, 2025

(7)

[English]

The Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament met this day at 9:30 a.m., in room B30, Senate of Canada Building, the chair, the Honourable Peter Harder, P.C., presiding.

Members of the committee present: The Honourable Senators Batters, Burey, Dean, Dhillon, Downe, Harder, P.C., Petitclerc, Saint-Germain, Surette, Wells (*Alberta*) and White (11).

Other senators present: The Honourable Senator Petten (1).

Participating in the meeting: Joëlle Nadeau, Principal Clerk and Madgina Mesidor, Legislative Clerk, Chamber Operations and Procedure Office; François Delisle and Erin Virgint, analysts, Library of Parliament.

Pursuant to the order of reference adopted by the Senate on Wednesday, June 4, 2025, the committee continued its study on the inclusion of provisions relating to Question Period with a minister into the *Rules of the Senate*, including recommendations for amendments.

The committee considered a draft report.

It was agreed to review the report paragraph by paragraph.

It was agreed to adopt paragraphs one to seven.

The chair asked whether paragraph eight shall be adopted.

The Honourable Senator Saint-Germain moved that paragraph eight be modified by replacing the first sentence with the following:

“A clear majority of members of the committee (12-2) agree that these amendments to the Rules will promote consistency and ensure the long-term continuity of the practice.”

It was agreed to adopt the modification and paragraph eight, as modified.

It was agreed to adopt paragraphs nine and ten.

The chair asked whether paragraph 11 shall be adopted.

The Honourable Senator Saint-Germain moved that paragraph 11 be replaced with the following:

“The committee acknowledges that, although all parliamentary groups and caucuses have the duty to hold the government to account, the Opposition in the Senate has a special role in Question Period.”

It was agreed to adopt the modification and paragraph 11, as modified.

It was agreed to adopt paragraph 12.

The chair asked whether paragraph 13 shall be adopted.

The Honourable Senator Petitclerc moved that paragraph 13, in the French version, be modified by replacing the word “chef” with “leader”.

It was agreed to adopt the modification.

The chair moved that paragraph 13 be modified by replacing the first sentence with the following:

“The committee agrees that the Government Leader or Representative in the Senate, in consultation with the Leader of the Opposition, and the leaders and facilitators of all recognized parties and parliamentary groups, should establish an ongoing list of ministers to invite.”

After debate, it was agreed that the modification be modified by replacing the words “an ongoing list” with the words “and regularly update a list”.

It was agreed to adopt paragraph 13, as modified.

It was agreed to revert to paragraph five.

The Honourable Senator Batters moved that paragraph five be modified by adding the following after the first sentence:

“The newly elected Liberal government did not have a government leader in the Senate at the time, and it was therefore desired to have ministers from that government appear at Question Period to hold the government to account.”

After debate, it was agreed that the modification be modified by removing the word “Liberal”.

It was agreed to adopt the modification, as modified, and paragraph five, as modified.

It was agreed to revert to paragraph three.

The Honourable Senator Batters moved that paragraph three be modified by adding the words “by majority vote” after the word “agreed”.

It was agreed to adopt the modification and paragraph three, as modified.

The chair asked whether paragraph 14 shall be adopted.

The Honourable Senator Saint-Germain moved that paragraph 14 be modified by adding the following at the end of the paragraph:

“The committee agrees that Ministers of State should be able to appear at Question Period.”

After debate, it was agreed to adopt the modification and paragraph 14, as modified, on division.

After debate, it was agreed to adopt paragraph 15, on division.

The chair asked whether paragraph 16 shall be adopted.

After debate, the chair moved that paragraph 16 be modified by adding the following at the end of the paragraph:

“, as agreed by leaders”.

It was agreed to adopt the modification and paragraph 16, as modified.

After debate, it was agreed to adopt paragraph 17.

It was agreed to adopt paragraphs 18 to 24.

The chair asked whether paragraph 25 shall be adopted.

After debate, it was agreed to modify paragraph 25 by adding the words “parliamentary history and” after the words “better reflecting”.

It was agreed to adopt paragraph 25, as modified.

The chair asked whether the section entitled “Recommendation” shall be adopted.

After debate, the section entitled “Recommendation”, was adopted on the following vote:

YEAS

The Honourable Senators

Burey, Dean, Dhillon, Downe, Harder, Petitclerc, Saint-Germain, Surette, Wells (*Alberta*), White
– [10]

NAYS

The Honourable Senator

Batters – [1]

ABSTENSIONS

Nil

It was agreed that the draft report, as amended, be adopted in both official languages, and that the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be empowered to approve the final version of the report, in both official languages, taking into consideration this meeting’s discussions, and with any necessary editorial, grammatical and translation changes required.

It was agreed that the draft report be brought back to the full committee if the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure does not reach a decision.

It was agreed, on division, that the chair be authorized to present the report in the Senate, in both official languages, at the earliest opportunity.

At 10:23 a.m., the committee discussed a draft agenda (future business).

It was agreed that the committee continue the study on non-affiliated senators begun during the last parliamentary session and that the next meeting focus on discussing a draft agenda for this study.

It was agreed that the committee then study possible amendments to the Rules in relation to the membership of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators and then resume its study on the structure and mandates of committees, begun during the last parliamentary session, in that order.

At 10:32 a.m., the committee adjourned to the call of the chair.

ATTEST:

Maxime Fortin

Clerk of the Committee