

WHAT IS HANSARD?

Hansard is the official report of debate for Commonwealth parliaments and legislatures around the world. Supporting the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, Hansard Services records, transcribes and prints the debates of the Legislative Assembly and its legislative committees. As a unit of Hansard Services, Hansard Television broadcasts live proceedings from B.C.'s Legislative Chamber.

DID YOU KNOW...

Hansard is "a full report, in the first person, of all speakers alike, a full report being defined as one 'which, though not strictly verbatim, is substantially the verbatim report, with repetitions and redundancies omitted and with obvious mistakes corrected, but which on the other hand leaves out nothing that adds to the meaning of the speech or illustrates the argument.'"

Written in 1907 for the U.K. Parliament in Westminster, this statement of Hansard policy still applies throughout the Commonwealth.

HANSARD'S MISSION

Hansard Services supports the work of the Members, Officers and staff of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia and fosters public awareness and understanding of the legislative process by making the proceedings of the House and its committees accessible to all British Columbians.



VISITING THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

WE WELCOME VISITORS.

Free tours of the B.C. Parliament Buildings are available Monday through Friday throughout the year, and on Saturdays and Sundays in the summer months.

To see MLAs in action, visitors are welcome in the public galleries of the Legislative Chamber whenever the House is sitting. The galleries are often full during Question Period – the 30-minute period every Monday to Thursday afternoon when MLAs ask questions about government activities – so plan to arrive early.

For more information on the work of the Legislative Assembly, please contact:

**Public Education & Outreach
Room 144, Parliament Buildings
Victoria BC V8V 1X4
250-387-8669 phone
250-356-5981 fax
PEO@leg.bc.ca**

For information on visiting the Parliament Buildings, please contact:

**Tour Office
Parliament Buildings
Victoria BC V8V 1X4
250-387-1400**

Or visit the Legislative Assembly website at: www.leg.bc.ca

HANSARD THE OFFICIAL REPORT OF DEBATE

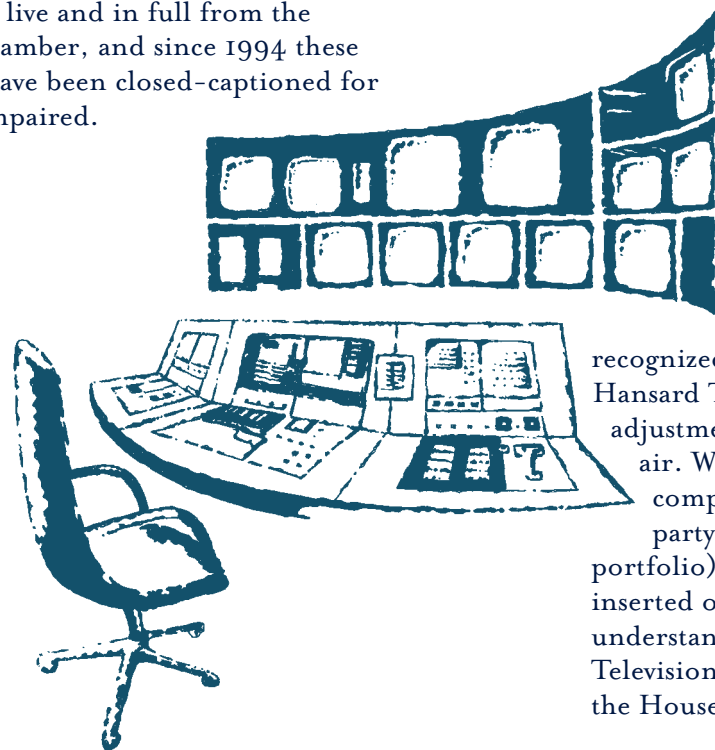


A BRIEF HISTORY OF HANSARD

The name Hansard extends back to early nineteenth century Britain, when Luke Hansard and his son Thomas, printers to the British Parliament, produced a transcript of proceedings. Published as *Debates*, this service continued under private contract until 1908, when the British Parliament began producing a publicly funded record of debate.

In later years, the name Hansard was formally attached to these reports in recognition of the Hansard family's contribution, but it reflected the informal name given the reports.

The Canadian House of Commons has had a complete *Hansard* report since 1880. First introduced in 1970, British Columbia's *Hansard* became a complete printed report — including estimates and bills debate — in 1972. Since 1991, House proceedings have been televised live and in full from the Legislative Chamber, and since 1994 these proceedings have been closed-captioned for the hearing impaired.



HOW HANSARD IS PRODUCED

In print form, *Hansard* begins with the digital recording of five-minute audio files.

Console operators located in the House or in committees switch on microphones as MLAs are recognized by the Speaker or Chair and begin to speak.

Console operators ensure that annotations accompanying each audio file correctly identify the member(s) speaking and the House or committee business underway.

At each stage, Hansard Services editors ensure legislative procedure is clearly represented, repetitions and redundancies are removed and obvious errors are corrected. *Hansard* remains a substantially verbatim account of what takes place in the Chamber or in committees during debate.

Automated equipment in the Chamber streamlines the television broadcast of Assembly proceedings. Robotic cameras linked to the microphone system focus on each MLA as they are recognized in the Chamber and allow Hansard Television staff to make last-minute adjustments to each shot prior to going on air. When cameras are positioned, the computer signals the recall of the name, party label and riding (or cabinet portfolio) of the selected member to be inserted on-screen. To enhance public understanding of proceedings, Hansard Television staff insert on-screen headings for the House or committee business underway.

These audio files go through a four-stage editing process, from transcription to final proof, and at peak production Hansard processes over 16,000 words per hour.

HOW TO ACCESS HANSARD TRANSCRIPTS & BROADCASTS

Complete first drafts, known as *Blues*, of morning and afternoon House proceedings are available within 90 minutes of the last words being spoken in the House. These draft transcripts, along with on-line finals of previous days' proceedings, can be accessed via the Legislative Assembly's website.

Final transcripts are published the next business day and can be ordered through the Crown Publications retail book store. Bound volumes of Hansard finals are also available to the general public at major public libraries in the province.



Draft transcripts of legislative committee proceedings are normally available on the Legislative Assembly website the same day, or within a few days in the case of travelling committees, and final transcripts are available on the website within a week of a committee meeting taking place. Proceedings of Select Standing and Special Committees are not televised.

Hansard Television's satellite broadcast signal is provided free of charge to all cable television companies, and live legislative broadcasts of House proceedings are available in most locations around the province. Consult local TV listings for channels and times. House proceedings are rebroadcast nightly when the House is in session, beginning shortly after the end of live proceedings. Recorded broadcasts are also available in VHS and DVD format at the British Columbia Archives.