



SPEAKER AND OTHER PRESIDING OFFICERS

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

The Board of Internal Economy is the governing body of the House of Commons. Under the *Parliament of Canada Act*, the Board has the legal authority to “act on all financial and administrative matters respecting (a) House of Commons, its premises, its services and its staff; and (b) the Members of the House of Commons”.

Membership and Quorum

The Board consists of the Speaker, who acts as Chair, two members of the Privy Council (appointed to the Board by the Government), the Leader of the Opposition or his or her representative, and additional Members appointed in numbers so that the total results in an overall equality of government and opposition representatives (apart from the Speaker).

All recognized parties (i.e., those holding at least 12 seats in the House) are given representation on the Board. Five members, including the Speaker, constitute a quorum.

The Clerk of the House is the Secretary to the Board of Internal Economy.

Mandate and Authority

The powers and authority of the Board flow from provisions of the *Parliament of Canada Act*, the *Standing Orders of the House of Commons*, and the *Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act*.

The Board:

- examines and approves the annual budget estimates of the House;
- approves and controls the budget expenditures of the committees of the House of Commons, and tables an annual financial report outlining the expenses incurred by each committee; and
- approves salary scales for non-unionized employees and authorizes officials of the House to negotiate the renewal of the collective agreements of unionized employees and ratifies such agreements. (The Board is deemed to be the employer of the staff of the House of Commons, except for Members' staff, who are deemed to be employed by the Members.)

When Parliament is prorogued or dissolved, members of the Board retain their functions until they are replaced.

By-laws

The Board is authorized by the *Parliament of Canada Act* to make by-laws governing Members' use of the funds, goods, services and premises made available to them. The by-laws regulate the use of parliamentary resources that are made available to Members to perform their parliamentary functions.

The by-laws are contained in a public document and are amended by the Board from time to time.

Meetings and Decisions

The Board meets *in camera* approximately every second week when the House is sitting. The *Minutes* of the Board's meetings are tabled in the House.

Spokespersons

The Board of Internal Economy designates two spokespersons from its membership: a member of the Government and a member of the Official Opposition. They respond during Question Period to questions relevant to the Board and deal with questions raised by the media.

Find this and other articles on House of Commons procedure by visiting the *Compendium of Procedure* Web site at www.parl.gc.ca/compendium-e.

For further information about the procedures of the House of Commons, please contact the Table Research Branch at (613) 996-3611 or by e-mail at trbdrb@parl.gc.ca.