

**THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE  
NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA (2006-2007)**

**REPORT**

**OF THE**

**STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE**

**PRESENTED TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY  
BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE**

**COMMITTEES DIVISION  
PARLIAMENT OFFICE  
PUBLIC BUILDINGS  
GEORGETOWN**

**14<sup>th</sup> December, 2007**

# **REPORT OF THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE**

## **OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

### **Introduction**

1. The Standing Committee is established by Standing Order 88 (1) and has as its duty, consideration of all matters relating to the Standing Orders referred to it by the National Assembly.

### **Members of the Committee**

2. In accordance with Standing Order No. 88 (1), the Speaker is the Chairman of this Committee.

3. At a meeting of the Committee of Selection held on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2006, the following Members were nominated to the Standing Orders Committee:

### **Members from the People's Progressive Party/Civic:**

- (i) The Hon. Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P  
Minister of Health
- (ii) The Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P  
Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs
- (iii) The Hon. Clement Rohee, M.P  
Minister of Home Affairs
- (iv) Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P, Chief Whip
- (v) Ms. Bibi S. Shadick, M.P
- (vi) Mr. Moses V. Nagamootoo, M.P

**Members from the People's National Congress/Reform - 1 Guyana:**

- (i) Mr. Dave Danny, M.P.
- (ii) Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P.
- (iii) Mr. Desmond Fernandes, M.P.

**Member from the Alliance For Change:**

- Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P

4. On 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2007, owing to the resignation of the Hon. Clement Rohee, M.P. of the PPP/C and Mr. Dave Danny, M.P. of the PNCR -1G from the Committee, the Committee of Selection nominated the Hon. Dr. Frank Anthony and Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P., respectively.

**Motions in the National Assembly**

**Standing Order No. 54**

5. On 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2007, the Minister of Home Affairs moved the following motion in the National Assembly:

**RESOLVED** that,

- (a) Standing Order 54 be amended to provide an interval of not less than six (6) days between the first and second reading of a Bill, unless the Assembly, on motion made and question put, agree to proceed with the Bill at an earlier date.
- (b) the said amendment be effected by deleting the word and figure "seven (7)" and replacing it with the word and figure "six (6)".

The amended Standing Order 54 will read as follows:

- "(1) After a Bill has been introduced and read a first time, the Member in charge may either:*
- (a) name a day to be appointed for the next stage of the Bill, provided an interval of not less than six (6) days must elapse between the first and second reading of a Bill, unless the Assembly, on motion made and question put, agree to proceed with the Bill at an earlier date; or*
  - (b) move that the Bill be referred to a Sectoral Committee for consideration and report; or*
  - (c) move that the Bill be referred to a Special Select Committee for consideration and report.*
- (2) No Bill shall be read a second time before the expiration of six (6) days from the date of its publication in the Gazette and until it has been printed and circulated to Members."*

**Standing Order No. 10**

6. On 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2007, Mr. Raphael Trotman moved the following motion in the National Assembly:

**RESOLVED** that,

The Standing Order Committee examines the issue of the times at which the Assembly shall meet including the right of the Speaker to suspend the Standing Orders to allow the time to be abridged or varied and to report to the National Assembly its finding and recommendations within three months.

The amended Standing Order 10 will read as follows:

- “(1) Save as other wise provided by the Constitution and subject to paragraph (2) of this Standing Order, every sitting for the consideration and debate of and for the Motion for the Approval of the Estimates of Expenditure shall begin at 10.00 am in the forenoon and unless previously adjourned, shall end at 6 p.m. on the same day.*
- (2) During the sittings referred to above the Speaker may at any time suspend the sitting for a stated period but, unless the Assembly otherwise resolve, the Speaker shall at 12.00 noon suspend the sitting for one hour, and at 3.30 p.m. suspend the sitting for half an hour.”*

#### **Referral to the Standing Orders Committee**

7. In accordance with Standing Order 110 the motions moved by the Hon. Minister of Home Affairs and Mr. Raphael Trotman were referred to the Standing Orders Committee on 31<sup>st</sup> January and 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2007, respectively.

#### **Meetings of the Committee**

8. The Committee met on 31<sup>st</sup> May, 19<sup>th</sup> July, 22<sup>nd</sup> November and 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2007.

#### **Consideration of Amendments to the Standing Orders**

##### **Standing Order No. 54**

9. At its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2007, as no consensus had been reached, the Committee agreed to proceed to call for a vote. The proposal was put that an interval of not less than six (6) days must elapse between the first and second reading of a Bill and consequently Standing Order 54 (1)(a) and 54 (2) be amended by the deletion of “seven (7)” and the substitution therefore of the word and figure “six (6)”. By a majority vote the amendment was carried.

## **Standing Order No. 10**

10. The motion was withdrawn after much deliberation by the Committee.

## **Report**

11. The Committee has agreed that this be its Report to the National Assembly on the amendment of Standing Orders 54 and 10.

12. The Report is duly submitted.

## **Minutes**

13. The Minutes of Proceedings of the Committee are at Appendix I.



*Hari N. Ramkarran, S.C., M.P*  
*Speaker of the National Assembly*  
*Chairman*

*10<sup>th</sup> December, 2007*

# **APPENDIX I**

## **Minutes of the Meetings of the Committee**

1<sup>st</sup> Meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2007

2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2007

3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2007

4<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2007

**THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION  
OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA (2006 - 2007)**

**MINUTES OF THE  
1<sup>ST</sup> MEETING OF THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 31<sup>ST</sup> MAY, 2007  
IN THE SPEAKER'S CEREMONIAL OFFICE  
PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN**

**MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE (11)**

**CHAIRMAN (1)**

The Speaker of the National Assembly  
The Hon. Hari N. Ramkarran, S.C., M.P.

**From the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) (6)**  
**(Nominated by the Committee of Selection on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2006)**

The Hon. Clement J. Rohee, M.P. - Excused  
Minister of Home Affairs

The Hon. Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P.  
Minister of Health

The Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P.  
Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

Mr. Donald R. Ramotar, M.P. - Absent

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P, Chief Whip - Excused

Mr. Moses V. Nagamootoo, M.P. - Excused

**From the People's National Congress Reform – 1 Guyana (PNCR – 1G) (3)**  
**(Nominated by the Committee of Selection on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2006)**

Mr. Dave D. Danny, M.P

Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P

Mr. Desmond Fernandes, M.P. - Excused



**From the Alliance For Change (AFC) (1)**  
**(Nominated by the Committee of Selection on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2006)**

Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P

**Officers**

Mr. Sherlock E. Isaacs	-	Clerk of the National Assembly
Ms. Debra H. Cadogan	-	Assistant Head of Committees Division
Ms. Deborah Gray	-	Assistant Clerk of Committees

**ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER**

1.1 The meeting was called to order at 3.45 p.m.

**ITEM 2: EXCUSES**

2.1 The following Members were excused from the Meeting:

- The Hon. Clement J. Rohee,
- Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal,
- Mr. Moses V. Nagamootoo,
- Mr. Desmond Fernandes.

**ITEM 3: CIRCULATION OF DOCUMENTS**

3.1 The following document was circulated prior to the meeting:

- Notice dated 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2007 to attend the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting;
- Motions re: Amendment to Standing Orders Nos. 10 and 54.

**ITEM 4: CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS 54 AND 10**

4.1 **Standing Order 54:**

4.1.1 The Hon. Dr. Ramsammy stated that the Special Select Committee which had previously considered amendments to Standing Order 54, had agreed that the amendment should be such, that a bill could

be read a second time within six days of its first reading and that the provision in question which provided for seven days did not allow for that.

4.1.2 He further stated that this was a corrective motion.

4.1.3 In light of the statement, the Committee agreed that extracts of the relevant Minutes and Report of the Special Select Committee on the Needs Assessment of the Guyana National Assembly should be circulated to Members prior to the next meeting for their consideration.

4.1.4 The Committees Division was requested to circulate the extract of the Minutes and Report.

4.1.5 In the meantime, the Hon. Dr. Ramsammy would liaise with PNC/R members, Messrs. Murray and Carberry, who were members of the Special Select Committee, to discuss the issue.

#### 4.2 **Standing Order 10:**

4.2.1 Mr. Trotman suggested that there was a growing need to devise a way to change the hours of sitting of the National Assembly as, in his view, the current long hours were *counter-productive*. He also highlighted the following factors that should be taken into account while considering any amendment:

- the safety and comfort of Members of Parliament;
- consideration for staff of the Parliament Office who have to work extra long hours.

4.2.2 In response, the Chairman stated that he had previously proposed that all sittings should not go beyond 10.00 p.m. except during budget time. He further shared the following options with the Committee in relation to times for sittings during budget debate and consideration:

1.00 p.m. - 10.00 p.m.

2.00 p.m. - 10.00 p.m. (over a 7-day period)

4.2.3 The Hon. Dr. Ramsammy stated that the Special Select Committee had considered this issue and agreed that it should remain as stated in the Standing Order. He requested a deferral of the issue before further consideration.

4.2.4 Discussion on this issue was therefore deferred to the next meeting.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned *sine die* at 4.05 p.m.

Confirmed this..19<sup>th</sup>..day of July, 2007

  
.....  
**The Hon. Hari N. Ramkarran, S.C., M.P**  
**Chairman**

**THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION  
OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA (2006 - 2007)**

**MINUTES OF THE  
2<sup>ND</sup> MEETING OF THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 19<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2007  
IN THE SPEAKER'S CEREMONIAL OFFICE  
PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN**

**MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE (11)**

**CHAIRMAN (1)**

The Speaker of the National Assembly  
The Hon. Hari N. Ramkarran, S.C., M.P.

**From the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) (6)**  
**(Nominated by the Committee of Selection on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2006)**

The Hon. Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P.  
Minister of Health

The Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P.  
Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

The Hon. Dr. Frank Anthony, M.P.  
Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P, Chief Whip

Ms. Bibi S. Shadick, M.P

Mr. Moses V. Nagamootoo, M.P

**From the People's National Congress Reform – 1 Guyana (PNCR – 1G) (3)**  
**(Nominated by the Committee of Selection on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2006)**

Ms. Deborah Backer, M.P - Excused

Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P - Excused

Mr. Desmond Fernandes, M.P - Absent

**From the Alliance For Change (AFC) (1)**  
**(Nominated by the Committee of Selection on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2006)**

Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P - Excused

**Officers**

Ms. Debra H. Cadogan - Assistant Head of Committees Division  
Ms. Deborah Gray - Assistant Clerk of Committees

**ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER**

1.1 The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

**ITEM 2: ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**2.1 Excuses**

2.1 The following Members were excused from the Meeting:

- Mr. Mervyn Williams
- Ms. Deborah Backer
- Mr. Raphael Trotman

**2.2 Agenda**

2.2.1 The Chairman suggested that in light of the absence of the Members of the Opposition, the Committee would suspend the substantive item on the agenda to the next meeting. However, they would address the confirmation of the Minutes.

**ITEM 3: CIRCULATION OF DOCUMENTS**

3.1 The following documents were circulated prior to the meeting:-

- (i) Notice dated 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2007 to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Standing Orders Committee to be held on 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2007;
- (ii) Minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2007;

- (iii) Extract of Minutes and Report of the Special Select Committee on the Needs Assessment of the Guyana National Assembly;
- (iv) Extract of the Verbatim Report of the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Needs Assessment Committee.

**ITEM 3: CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> MEETING HELD ON 31<sup>ST</sup> MAY, 2007**

- 3.1 The Minutes were confirmed without correction, on a motion moved and seconded by the Hon. Minister Ramsammy and the Hon. Doodnauth Singh, respectively.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned *sine die* at 3.35 p.m.

*Confirmed this.....day of November, 2007*



**The Hon. Hari N. Ramkarran, S.C., M.P**  
**Chairman**

**THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION  
OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA (2006 - 2007)**

**MINUTES OF THE  
3<sup>RD</sup> MEETING OF THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 22<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER, 2007  
IN THE SPEAKER'S CEREMONIAL OFFICE  
PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN**

**MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE (11)**

**CHAIRMAN (1)**

The Speaker of the National Assembly  
The Hon. Hari N. Ramkarran, S.C., M.P.

**From the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) (6)**  
**(Nominated by the Committee of Selection on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2006)**

The Hon. Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P  
Minister of Health

The Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P  
Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs - (Absent)

The Hon. Dr. Frank Anthony, M.P  
Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P, Chief Whip - (Excused)

Ms. Bibi S. Shadick, M.P

Mr. Moses V. Nagamootoo, M.P

**From the People's National Congress Reform – 1 Guyana (PNCR – 1G) (3)**  
**(Nominated by the Committee of Selection on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2006)**

Ms. Deborah Backer, M.P

Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P

Mr. Desmond Fernandes, M.P - (Excused)

**From the Alliance For Change (AFC) (1)**  
**(Nominated by the Committee of Selection on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2006)**

Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P

**Officers**

Ms. Debra H. Cadogan - Assistant Head of Committees Division  
Ms. Sonia Maxwell - Assistant Clerk of Committee

**ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER**

1.1 The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

**ITEM 2: ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**2.1 Excuses**

2.1 The following Members were excused from the Meeting:

- (i) Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P, Chief Whip, and
- (ii) Mr. Desmond Fernandes, M.P

**ITEM 3: CIRCULATION OF DOCUMENTS**

3.1 The following documents were circulated prior to the meeting:-

- (i) Notice dated 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2007 to attend the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Standing Orders Committee to be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2007, and
- (ii) Minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2007;

**ITEM 3: CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> MEETING HELD ON 19<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2007**

3.1 The Minutes were confirmed without correction, on a motion moved and seconded by the Hon. Dr. Ramsammy and Mr. Nagamootoo, respectively.



**ITEM 4: TO CONTINUE CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS 54**

- 4.1 The Chairman reminded Members that the Hon. Minister of Home Affairs had proposed that Standing Order 54 (1)(a) be amended to read “not less than six (6) days must elapse between the first and second reading of a Bill.”
- 4.1.1 He reiterated that the initial issue was encircled by arguments of not less than seven days being elapsed before the second reading of the Bill. However there were arguments for “seven (7) clear” days.
- 4.1.2 Some Members felt that there was no need to amend Standing Order 54 since the Government had a majority in the National Assembly to move a motion to suspend Standing Order 54 (1)(a).
- 4.1.3 After noting the different views, the Chairman put the matter (that Standing Order 54 be amended accordingly) to a vote. The following division was taken:

<b>Name of Nominee</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>
The Hon Dr. Leslie S Ramsammy	√	
The Hon. Dr. Frank Anthony	√	
Ms. Bibi S. Shadick	√	
Mr. Moses V. Nagamootoo	√	
Ms. Deborah Backer		√
Mr. Mervyn Williams		√
Mr. Raphael Trotman		√

- 4.2 **Legislative Agenda**
- 4.2.1 A Member referred to the Legislative Agenda which allowed for the business of the National Assembly for a specified period to be brought before the Parliamentary Management Committee.
- 4.2.2 The Clerk was required to ascertain whether the issue of the Legislative Agenda arose in the President’s address at the opening ceremony of the Ninth Parliament.

**ITEM 5: TO CONTINUE CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDER 10**

- 5.1 Mr. Trotman indicated that the Leader of Government Business should take cognisance of his proposal to amend the time for the sitting of the National Assembly from 2.00 p.m. to 10.00 pm., especially during the budget debate.
- 5.1.1 The Chairman advised that provision was already made for the Standing Orders to be suspended to provide for a change in time. Hence there was no need for Standing Order 10 to be amended.
- 5.1.2 Thereafter, Mr. Trotman withdrew the motion.
- 5.1.3 The Chairman undertook to discuss the matter at the level of the Parliamentary Management Committee.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned *sine die* at 3.35 p.m.

Confirmed this <sup>10<sup>th</sup></sup> 10<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2007

  
.....  
**The Hon. Hari N. Ramkarran, S.C., M.P**  
**Chairman**

**THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION  
OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA (2006 - 2007)**

**MINUTES OF THE  
4<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2007  
IN THE SPEAKER'S CEREMONIAL OFFICE  
PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN**

**MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE (11)**

**CHAIRMAN (1)**

The Speaker of the National Assembly  
The Hon. Hari N. Ramkarran, S.C., M.P.

**From the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) (6)**  
**(Nominated by the Committee of Selection on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2006)**

The Hon. Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P  
Minister of Health

The Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P  
Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

The Hon. Dr. Frank Anthony, M.P  
Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P, Chief Whip - Excused

Ms. Bibi S. Shadick, M.P

Mr. Moses V. Nagamootoo, M.P - Excused

**From the People's National Congress Reform – 1 Guyana (PNCR – 1G) (3)**  
**(Nominated by the Committee of Selection on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2006)**

Ms. Deborah Backer, M.P - Excused

Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P - Excused

Mr. Desmond Fernandes, M.P

**From the Alliance For Change (AFC) (1)**

**(Nominated by the Committee of Selection on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2006)**

Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P - Excused

**Officers**

Mr. Sherlock E. Isaacs - Clerk of the National Assembly  
Ms. Deborah Gray - Assistant Clerk of Committee

**ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER**

1.1 The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

**ITEM 2: ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Excuses**

2.1.1 The following Members were excused from the Meeting:

- (i) Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P, Chief Whip;
- (ii) Mr. Moses Nagamootoo, M.P;
- (iii) Mrs. Deborah Backer, M.P; and
- (iv) Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P

**ITEM 3: CIRCULATION OF DOCUMENTS**

3.1 The following documents were circulated prior to the meeting:-

- Notice dated 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2007 to attend the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Orders Committee to be held on 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2007;
- Minutes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2007; and
- Copy of Committee's Draft Report.

**ITEM 4: CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> MEETING HELD ON 22<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER, 2007**

4.1 The Minutes were confirmed without correction, on a motion moved and seconded by the Hon. Dr. Ramsammy and Mr. Fernandes, respectively.

**ITEM 5: CONSIDERATION OF COMMITTEE'S DRAFT REPORT TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON STANDING ORDERS 54 AND 10**

5.1 The Committee examined the Report and the following corrections were made:

5.2 **Page 2, paragraph 5(b):**

The said amendment be effected by deleting the word and numeral "seven (7)" and replacing it with the word and numeral "six (6)".

5.3 Without further correction, the Report was adopted by the Committee and it was agreed that the necessary motion would be prepared for the adoption of the Report in the National Assembly on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2007.

**Adjournment**

The meeting ended at 3.20 p.m.

*(Unconfirmed)*