

**HAVE A SAY IN MAKING  
THE LAWS OF NEW ZEALAND**

**MAKING A SUBMISSION  
TO A  
PARLIAMENTARY  
SELECT COMMITTEE**

**Easy to Read version**

June 2004

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Note: This Easy to Read translation of “Making a Submission to a Parliamentary Select Committee” has been produced by the Office for Disability Issues in consultation with the Office of the Clerk at Parliament. It is also available in a Pictorial version. This translation is based on the Office of the Clerk’s standard full text version, available from them in hard copy or at their website (in English and Maori) at: [www.clerk.parliament.govt.nz/Publications](http://www.clerk.parliament.govt.nz/Publications).

## What is a Select Committee?

- A Select Committee is a group of MPs from different political parties
- There are up to 12 MPs on a Select Committee
- They look in detail at issues or things affecting New Zealanders

Things like:

- Bills
- Petitions
- Inquiries
- As well as reviewing things

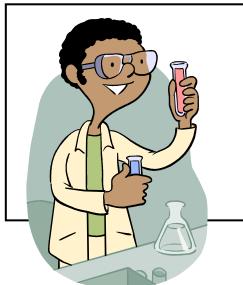
- They ask the public for their ideas and comments on things happening in New Zealand
- They listen to and think about the views and ideas of the public when it comes to developing New Zealand's laws
- They get these ideas and views from the public by:
  - Submissions – ideas and comments sent in to the committee
  - Hearings – people going to talk to them
- After the submissions and hearings the Select Committee reports to Parliament
  - They may make changes
  - They provide information for MPs to think about
  - They say if the Bill should be law or not

## List of different Select Committees

In New Zealand there are 13 different Select Committees.  
Each Committee has a different area of work:



**Commerce Committee:** business development, commerce communications, consumer affairs, energy, information technology, insurance and superannuation.



**Education and Science Committee:** education, education reviews, industry training, research, science and technology.



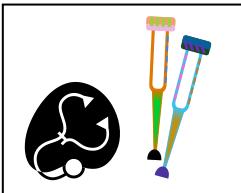
**Finance and Expenditure Committee:** audit of the Crown's and departmental financial statements, Government finance, revenue and taxation.



**Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee:** customs, defence, disarmament and arms control, foreign affairs, immigration and trade.



**Government Administration Committee:** civil defence, cultural affairs, fitness, sport and leisure, internal affairs, Pacific Island affairs, Prime Minister and Cabinet, racing, services to Parliament, State services, statistics, tourism, women's affairs and youth affairs.



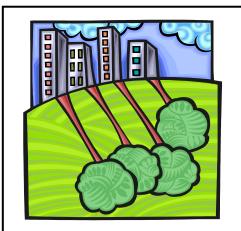
**Health Committee:** health



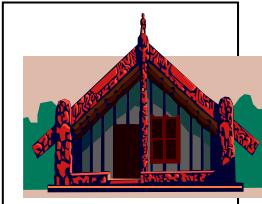
**Justice and Electoral Committee:** Crown legal and drafting services, electoral matters, human rights and justice.



**Law and Order Committee:** corrections, courts, criminal law, police and serious fraud.



**Local Government and Environment Committee:** conservation, environment and local government.



**Maori Affairs Committee:** Maori affairs



**Primary Production Committee:** agriculture, biosecurity, fisheries, forestry, lands and land information.



**Social Services Committee:** housing, senior citizens, social welfare, veterans' affairs and work and income support.



**Transport and Industrial Relations Committee:** accident compensation, industrial relations, labour, occupational health and safety, transport and transport safety.

## **What is a Submission to a Select Committee?**

A submission is a presentation of ideas or views on an issue or Bill that a Select Committee is looking at.

- Usually submissions are in writing
- They can be written and presented in English or Maori
- They can be in New Zealand Sign Language on video tape
- Submissions can also be given by talking at a Select Committee meeting – this is called an “Oral Submission”

## **What is a Bill?**

It is an official document with written ideas for new laws in New Zealand

## **How do you know a Submission is being ask for by a Select Committee?**

Through advertisements in newspapers in the public notices sections.

The advertisement will have:

- The name of the Bill or Inquiry
- The name of the Select Committee looking into the issue
- Where you can find out more about the issue
- Where submissions can be sent
- What date they are due
- The contact names and number of the committees clerk

On the Office of the Clerks' website:

[www.clerk.parliament.govt.nz/Programme/Committees/](http://www.clerk.parliament.govt.nz/Programme/Committees/)

## How do you make a Submission?

There is no one way – but think about:

- How to make your views easy to understand
- How to make your views easy to read

You should say:

- Who your submission is from
- Is it from you or from a group of people?
- Which Select Committee you are sending your submission to?
- If you want to meet with the select committee

If you are writing your submission:

- Type it on A4 paper or write it clearly
- Put some space in the left hand side so people can write notes
- Use headings
- Number your pages
- Staple it on the left corner

If you are using New Zealand Sign Language and video recording:

- Sign clearly
- Sign your points in order and one at a time

## What do you put in a Submission to a Select Committee?

Make sure you have a copy of the Bill you are going to write your submission about and that you understand what it means

- Be clear straight away if you support or disagree with the Bill
  - ➔ Say why you support or disagree with the Bill
- Stick to the issue or issues. Talk about your points one at a time. Don't jumble them
- Keep it simple, what you think and why you think it
- Be truthful and provide information that supports what you are saying
- Make sure your facts are right
- Put a summary of what you want to say at the beginning
- Use bullet points to help make your points clear
- Provide information on what parts of the Bill concern you, and why you don't agree with them
- If you think some things should be changed let the Select Committee know how they should be changed and give reasons why you think this
- Go through the Bill in the order that it is written

# EXAMPLE SUBMISSION

Page Number

/ (Stapled here)

**To:** (Name of Select Committee)

**From:** (Is it from you or a group?)

Say if you support or disagree with the Bill / Inquiry

**Summary of your points** (Use headings)

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

**Issues of top priority**

Suggest **actions** that should be taken on top priorities

I want to talk about my submission at a Select Committee Meeting Yes  No

## **When you write a Submission about an Inquiry?**

### **An Inquiry is different from a Bill because:**

- You need to look at what the Inquiry is about
- You need to know what the Select Committee is interested in
- You need to write it differently as an Inquiry doesn't have clauses like a Bill does
- You need to get a copy of what the Select Committee is looking at – this is called



### **Terms of Reference**

This is a list of what a Select Committee will look at and talk about

Remember when writing a submission for an inquiry, follow the same rules as writing a submission about a Bill

Clear, logical, simple and truthful

## How do you send your Submission?

If you write your submission, you must:

➔ send 20 copies to the select committee.

So there are enough copies for the Select Committee and its officials, the media, the official records and the Parliamentary Library

If you use New Zealand Sign Language and video tape, you must:

➔ send one copy of the video tape to the select committee.

Address it to:

Clerk of Select Committee  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

Get your submission there on time – if you think it is going to be late contact the select committee and ask if you can have send it in later.

## **Talking to a Select Committee (Oral submission)**

**After sending in a submission some people want  
to talk about their submission at a  
Select Committee meeting**



**This is called an “Oral submission”**

This is a chance for you to present the points you made in  
your written submission  
(or your submission in New Zealand Sign Language  
on video tape)

In your submission you send in you need to say if you want to  
also do an oral submission at a Select Committee meeting



After the Select Committee has received your submission  
and  
if you said you want to do an oral submission  
and  
if the select committee wants to hear your submission



then the Clerk of the Committee will contact you and tell you  
the time and place for your oral submission

## **Getting ready to have your say at a Select Committee meeting**

- You may want to watch a Select Committee meeting on another issue to see what happens
- Remember oral submissions at Select Committees meetings are usually open to the public and news media
- Arrive early and see what others do
- Find out how much time you have from the Clerk of the Select Committee

### **Remember times can change**

- Prepare your presentation so you have all points set out clearly and in order.
- Make sure you have enough time for the Select Committee to ask you questions

## At the Select Committee Meeting ...



The chairperson will invite you to sit at the table and people introduce themselves



You will need to introduce yourself and anyone with you

You will then be asked to talk about your submission

### Remember

- Be brief – say the main points. Do not read out your submission word for word as the Select Committee will have already read it
- If you have any new information since you wrote to the submission – tell the Select Committee
- If you have any other information with you give it to the Clerk of the Select Committee

## After you have had your say ...



The Select Committee will usually ask you questions

If you have other people with you, you can ask them to help with answering questions

The Select Committee might also ask for more information about what you are saying. If the Select Committee asks you to send them more information – you will need to send 20 copies to the Clerk of the Committee by the date they say

## Some Rules for Select Committees

### There are some Rules

The Select Committees have a right to:

- ask people to provide information or turn up to a Select Committee
- ask that information, records or documents are given to them
- ask Parliament's Speaker of the House to order a person to give evidence

### Submissions:

Select Committees don't have to hear all oral submissions but they usually do

When you talk to the Select Committee about your submission (make an oral submission) the meeting is open to the public

## **Who does the Submission belong to?**

Once it has been sent to the Select Committee it becomes their property

If you want to give the submission to someone else or to the media before you have given it to the Select Committee you should contact the Clerk of the Committee

## **Costs**

You are responsible for paying for your own travel expenses to meetings or Select Committees or any other costs associated with making your submission.

The Select Committee will organise and pay for New Zealand Sign Language interpreters, if you ask them to be available at your oral submission.

## More Information on Select Committees

There is other information available on:

- Effective Select Committee Membership
- Natural Justice Before Select Committee
- Making a Complaint to the Regulations Review Committee

If you want to know more about Select Committees, contact:

Select Committee Office  
Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON

Telephone: (04) 471 9999  
Fax: (04) 499 0486  
Internet: [www.clerk.parliament.govt.nz](http://www.clerk.parliament.govt.nz)