



**Legislative Assembly  
Parliament of Victoria**

## **Fact Sheet 6**

### **Personal Explanations**

#### **Standing Orders**

Standing Order 123 relates to personal explanations in the House:

A member may make a personal explanation with the consent of the Chair when there is no question before the House. A personal explanation cannot be debated.

#### **General Purposes**

The purposes for which personal explanation are allowed are to:

- Correct a statement where the member may have inadvertently misled the House.
- Explain where the press has misquoted what the member has said in the House.
- Correct statements made in the House by other members which misrepresent what the member has actually said in the House.

#### **Process**

Because it is the practice of the House to hear personal explanations without interjection or debate, the exact contents of any proposed statement must be given in writing in advance to the Speaker to ensure its appropriateness and to obtain the Speaker's approval.

Once approved, a personal explanation can be made when there is no question before the Chair. Normally this will be after question time or at a change in business.

Relevant rules relating to the making of explanations are as follows:

- An explanation should be brief and constitute a simple statement of fact.
- A member must not, in making a statement, simply engage in argument on differences of opinion.
- No new material should be introduced in making the explanation; all a member can do is correct the record.
- Personal explanations must not be debated.
- Personal explanations should be heard in silence by other members in the Chamber.
- In making a personal explanation, a member must not seek to reflect on matters affecting his or her party but should confine the explanation to matters that affect him or her personally.
- A member must not use the opportunity for making a personal explanation to make charges or attacks upon another member.
- As mentioned above, the text of the explanation will have been given prior approval by the Speaker. When making the explanation, the member must therefore not depart from the agreed text.
- A member cannot make a personal explanation on behalf of another member who may be absent.
- The Chair may withdraw approval for a personal explanation if the member tries to use the opportunity to enter into general debate.

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### **Fact Sheets**

The Legislative Assembly Procedure Office has produced a series of Fact Sheets that explain parliamentary procedure and terminology. All Fact Sheets are available on Parliament's website [www.parliament.vic.gov.au](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au) or through the Procedure Office.

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