

**Parliamentary Committees Act 1968**INQUIRY INTO ELECTRONIC  
DEMOCRACY

Under the powers found in section 4F(1)(a)(ii) and section 4F(3) of the **Parliamentary Committees Act 1968** the Governor in Council refers the following matters to the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee –

The Committee is requested to report on the opportunities available through the use of new technologies to improve public access to, and participation in, the processes of Parliament and government, including:

- Netcasting of Parliamentary proceedings;
- Online interactive and collaborative approaches to policy discussion, including citizen email and online forums; and
- Other technology solutions to promote access and participation;

and to this end consider the core issues of the:

- Potential impact of new and emerging technologies on the democratic processes of government;
- Options available to improve democratic processes through the use of such technologies (for example, through electronically enabled voting);
- Costs and benefits of new technologies that promote e-democracy;
- Equitable access of all citizens to e-democracy;
- Legal and regulatory factors; and
- Educational or social barriers to the implementation of e-democracy –

in order to review and make recommendations on any necessary or desirable amendments to the **Constitution Act Amendment Act 1958**, the **Electronic Transactions Act 2000** and any other relevant legislation to facilitate these opportunities.

The Committee, in undertaking this Inquiry, should also have regard to experiences in other jurisdictions and a number of projects either implemented or currently under way in Victoria, including:

- E-mail to and from citizens;
- “Have Your Say” on [www.vic.gov.au](http://www.vic.gov.au); and
- Legislation and Hansard Online, and the Parliamentary website ([www.parliament.vic.gov.au](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au)).

This Inquiry has been proposed to examine the above matters with a focus on public participation in democratic and parliamentary processes. It is not intended to examine issues relating to service delivery and government on-line processes, except as they may impact directly on issues of e-democracy.

The Committee is to report to Parliament by 31 December 2002.

Dated 19 February 2002

Responsible Minister:

S. BRACKS MP

Premier

HELEN DOYE

Clerk of the Executive Council