

STATES OF JERSEY

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DRAFT AMENDMENT (No. 27) TO THE STANDING ORDERS OF THE STATES OF JERSEY (P.171/2004): THIRD AMENDMENTS (P.171/2004 AMD.(3)) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 19th October 2004
by the Privileges and Procedures Committee**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

- (1) This amendment would remove the 2 oral question limit and would therefore allow members to submit as many oral questions as they wished. The Privileges and Procedures Committee does not support this amendment. If adopted it would almost inevitably encourage members to submit large numbers of questions in order to gain a better chance of being near the top of the list after the drawing of lots and there would almost be certainly be many more questions listed than could be answered. The Committee considers that a 2 questions per member limit is adequate and any member who has more than 2 topical questions can liaise with a colleague who may not already be asking questions. Members should however note that asking questions through another member may influence the eventual ranking of their primary questions in the ballot held to finalise the order of questions. The Privileges and Procedures Committee believes that because Members choose their 2 best questions it ensures that the questions asked of Presidents are of a high quality.
- (2) This amendment would increase the length of the oral question period from 1 hour to 90 minutes. The Privileges and Procedures Committee does not support this amendment. In proposing the trial period the Committee pointed out that it strongly supported question time as a way of holding Presidents to account but expressed the view that it should not be allowed to dominate proceedings at the expense of public business and other items. The Committee considers that a one hour period is appropriate and that this period should not be increased as any increase will almost inevitably encourage the States to seek to fill the additional time at every meeting and the start of public business will be delayed.