

Publications - LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.txt

LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS;-

The Leader of Government Business is an important figure in Parliament. They are in charge of the government business, which is presented in the Parliament. Each House of Parliament has a Leader of Government Business.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

The Leader of Government Business must be conscious of his responsibilities to; the Government, the Government's own supporters-the backbenchers, the Opposition, the House as a whole and the individual Ministers in charge of business before the House.

FUNCTIONS OF THE LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

The authority of the Leader of Government Business is incorporated in the Standing Orders, which are rules governing the procedures of Parliament. The Leader arranges the business of the house and also protects and defines the position of the government. The Leader of Government Business in either case obtains approval from the President of The Senate or Speaker of the House of Assembly for any Minister who may wish to make a Ministerial Statement.

In Zimbabwe, the Leader of Government Business has a huge voice in the entire legislative process. He/She helps determine the scope and content of the legislative programme for the session as well as the business of the week.

The Leader may have a final decision on what amendments will be accepted and which private Members Bills will receive Government support.

Being a Leader of Government Business is an exciting job, which demands a wide command of facts and the ability to correctly interpret the mood of the house. The leader must try to carry the house along with him with minimum discontent and obstruction.

His/Her duties relate to floor duties and he/she is the lead speaker for the majority party during floor debates. He/She also develops the calendar and assists the President of the Senate or the Speaker of the House of Assembly with programme development, policy formation and decisions.

The Leader of Government Business is also obliged to show some force in advocating the Government's programme. It is a prerequisite that the Leader must be both competent and calm under pressure.

In Zimbabwe the Leader of Government Business is responsible for the day to day running of the House, moving of the motion for the adjournment of the House, ordering that an order of the day be stood over, that stages of bills be suspended, and any interruption of business.

The Leader also ensures that Government business has precedence on all other days except Wednesday. He/She is responsible for moving formal motions such as motions of condolences, paying tribute and suspension of a member.

The Leader of Government Business should be friendly and co-operative with the Chief whips thereby facilitating the plan of the Parliamentary timetable for Government legislation and discussion of urgent matters of public policy. He/She listens to the Chief whips though is not obliged to agree with their views.

The Leader recognizes himself/herself not only as a member of the Government but as one of the principal guardians of the rights of the House as a whole.