



Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee

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Dear Alison

Timings between Stages 2 and 3 of Bills

I am writing to you as Convener of the Parliamentary Bureau on behalf of the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee.

In an evidence [session with the Minister for Parliamentary Business on 19 March 2024](#), the Committee raised the issue of timing between Stages 2 and 3. Its particular interest in this area relates to allowing more than the minimum time than is specified by Standing Orders between the submission of a supplementary delegated powers memorandum after Stage 2, and the scheduling of Stage 3¹, to allow the Committee sufficient time to consider it and report to Parliament on any new or amended delegated powers.

This is most relevant in cases of Bills which either have significant new, and/or significant amendments, to delegated powers at Stage 2.

It followed up on the discussions at the Committee with [this letter](#). In his [response](#), the Minister confirmed that “where time and business allow, the Scottish Government always aims to allow more than the minimum time required by Standing Orders between stages of Bills”. He offered to accommodate any requests from the Committee as far as possible, while acknowledging that timing of Bills is ultimately for Parliament to agree.

¹ Standing Orders rule 9.7.9 states that the supplementary Delegated Powers Memorandum by the earlier of (i) the tenth sitting day after the day on which Stage 2 ends or (ii) the end of the second week before the week on which Stage 3 is due to start.

As such, the Committee wants to make use of this opportunity to flag this as an issue to all members of the Parliamentary Bureau.

It would appreciate any reassurance you are able to give that the Parliamentary Bureau will seek to accommodate any such requests.

The Committee also felt it would be helpful in general terms to remind the Parliamentary Bureau of the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee's scrutiny role after Stage 2, and ask it to bear this in mind, to allow for sufficient time for the Committee to appropriately scrutinise any new or amended delegated powers.

Yours sincerely

Stuart McMillan MSP
Convener of the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee