

SPEAKER'S CHAIR 1

The Speaker oversees the proceedings from the impressive carved oak chair at the south end of the Chamber. The Speaker makes sure that MLAs follow established rules of behaviour and parliamentary procedure. The Speaker is neutral and only votes to break a tie.

CLERK'S TABLE 2

The Clerk of the House and the Clerks Assistant sit at the Clerk's Table on the floor of the Chamber. The Clerks are permanent officers of the House who offer non-partisan advice on parliamentary procedure to the Speaker and all MLAs.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS 3

The Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for security at the Parliament Buildings, including the Legislative Chamber. The Sergeant-at-Arms is on hand during debates, seated next to the Bar of the House, to ensure the security of the MLAs and to enforce the Speaker's orders.

MACE 4

The mace is the symbol of the Legislative Assembly's authority to govern. It is placed on the Clerk's Table at the start of each sitting by the Sergeant-at-Arms which signifies that the House is in session with the monarch's full knowledge and consent.

BAR OF THE HOUSE 5

The Bar of the House is a brass bar that blocks entrance to the Chamber and cannot be crossed by anyone who is not an MLA, unless by invitation of the Speaker.

HANSARD 6

Hansard is the official report of the debates of the Legislative Assembly. MLA desks have microphones and the Chamber walls have television cameras for live broadcasting. Hansard is also available as a written report on the internet.

Legislative Assembly
of
British Columbia



L'Assemblée législative
de la
Colombie-Britannique



7 GOVERNMENT

The political party that wins the largest number of seats in a general election forms the government. The Premier selects a group of MLAs from his or her party to work as Ministers of the Crown, in charge of the day-to-day activities of government ministries.

8 PREMIER

The Premier is the leader of the political party that wins the most seats in a general election and becomes the head of the provincial government. The Premier is also the President of the Executive Council made up of the Ministers of the Crown.

9 OPPOSITION

The political party that wins the second-largest number of seats in a general election becomes the Official Opposition. The primary role of the Official Opposition, as well as any other smaller opposition parties and independent MLAs, is to question government actions and present alternatives to existing government policies.

10 LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

The Leader of the Official Opposition is the leader of the political party with the second-largest number of seats in a general election. The Leader of the Official Opposition may also choose MLAs from his or her party to act as critics to Ministers of the Crown.

11 PUBLIC GALLERY

Seats are available to the public in the galleries overlooking the Chamber to observe the work of the MLAs.

12 PRESS GALLERY

A term that refers to both the seats above the Speaker's Chair where reporters sit to watch the MLAs at work, as well as the group of reporters that cover the news of the Legislature.

Inside the Parliament Buildings in Victoria, British Columbia,
the 85 elected representatives – called Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) –
meet to shape the future of the province.