



A non-partisan branch of the Legislative Assembly, Hansard Services publishes the official reports of the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Committees and is responsible for broadcasting House and Committee proceedings.

Hansard is a “full report, in the first person, of all speakers alike, which, though not strictly verbatim, is substantially the verbatim report, with repetitions and redundancies omitted and with obvious mistakes corrected, but which on the other hand leaves out nothing that adds to the meaning of the speech or illustrates the argument.”

Written in 1907 for the U.K. Parliament in Westminster, this statement of *Hansard* policy still applies throughout the Commonwealth. In British Columbia, the transcripts and broadcasts are full, accurate and impartial records of the work of the Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Hansard Transcripts

The name “Hansard” comes from the Hansard family. At the turn of the 19th century, Luke Hansard was the highly respected printer to the British House of Commons, responsible for publishing parliamentary documents such as the journals, orders, bills and other official parliamentary papers. At that time, reporting the debates was not officially sanctioned, and the published accounts were journalistic. Speeches were paraphrased, with a sprinkling of direct quotations. In 1809, Luke Hansard’s son Thomas Curson Hansard, also a printer, took on a private contract to publish the debates. In 1829 T.C. Hansard attached his own name to the publication — *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*.

While Britain’s *Hansard* did not become fully publicly financed until 1908, the Canadian House of Commons has had a full, publicly funded *Hansard* report since 1880. All provincial and territorial governments in Canada provide *Hansard* transcripts that are produced entirely under legislative authority and offer full, accurate and impartial records of legislative proceedings.

British Columbia’s *Hansard* report was instituted in 1970 and became a complete report — including the debates of budget estimates (Committee of Supply), clause-by-clause debate of bills (Committee of the Whole House) and indexes — in 1972. These and other transcripts of House and Parliamentary Committee proceedings are available on the Legislative Assembly’s website.

Hansard Broadcasting

Hansard Broadcasting began in the spring of 1991 with live, gavel-to-gavel TV coverage of all proceedings in the Legislative Chamber. In 2005, cameras were installed in the Douglas Fir Committee Room, enabling full TV coverage of the debates in Committee of Supply.

Today, the public has access to live and archived webcasts — TV broadcasts delivered over the internet — of all House and Committee A debates. Audio-only webcasts of public Parliamentary Committee proceedings, wherever they occur in the province, are also available live and as archives. TV broadcasts and internet webcasts of House proceedings are closed captioned. All of these internet services, as well as podcasts of Question Period and more detailed information about Hansard Broadcasting, can be found on the Legislative Assembly’s website.