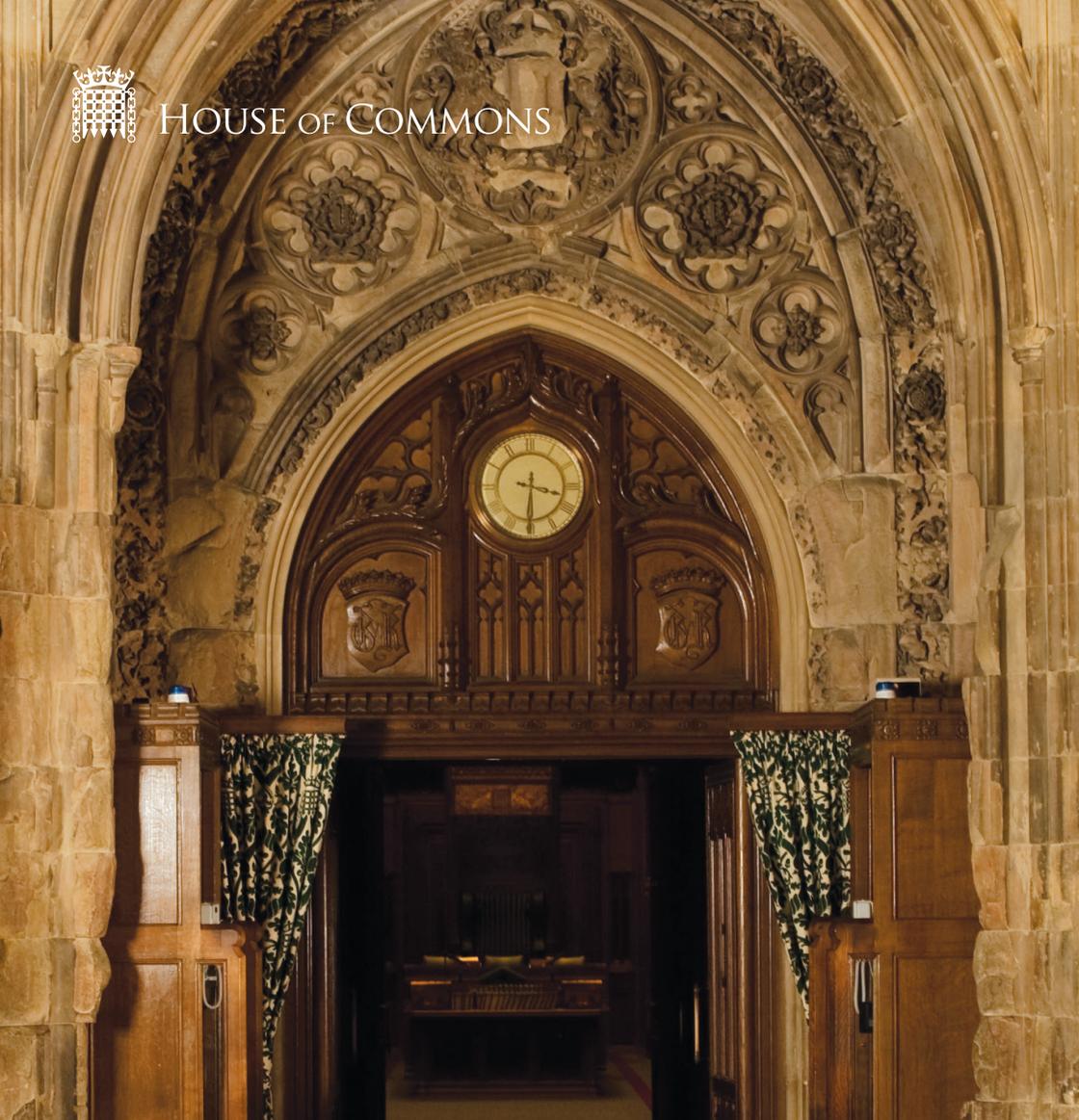




HOUSE OF COMMONS



Journal Office

# Guide to laying papers

August 2017

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1) This guidance note is aimed at staff in organisations required to lay papers before Parliament.
- 2) The information in this guide will help you to determine which type of document you are laying, set out what you are required to do at each stage of the laying process, and ensure that it is presented for laying in the correct format. If you have any questions or queries please do not hesitate to contact the House of Commons Journal Office.
- 3) Specific requirements for the following categories of paper are set out in this guide:
  - Act papers (for both those printed as House of Commons (HC) papers and unnumbered Act papers); and
  - Command papers (numbered and unnumbered).
- 4) This document does not provide detailed guidance on the laying of Statutory Instruments—basic information is given on *page 14* and the Journal Office will be happy to provide you with the advice that they can offer. The SI Registrar ([SIRegistrar@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SIRegistrar@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)) is able to provide detailed information on the preparation and making of statutory instruments and the parliamentary procedures relating to them or you can consult Statutory Instrument Practice.
- 5) If you have any queries, you can contact the House of Commons Journal Office on 020 7219 3361 or at [journaloffice@parliament.uk](mailto:journaloffice@parliament.uk). The parliamentary branch of your department or parent department may also be available to offer advice. If your document is a Command or House of Commons Paper you will need to contact the APS Group (the RM3785 Lot 1 Framework supplier) about producing and distributing your document. While there is flexibility on producing and printing your document, you will need to use the APS ‘distribution service’ as a minimum. Contact The National Archives for further information.<sup>1</sup> For other documents, if you are printing a document yourself you will need to contact the House of Commons Vote Office to ensure that copies of the document are available to Members. If you are laying your document in the House of Lords, you will also need to contact the House of Lords Printed Paper Office.
- 6) The information in this booklet relates to laying requirements for the House of Commons. However, the requirements of the House of Lords are substantially similar. Contact details for the Printed Paper Office in the House of Lords are provided, together with the details for the Journal Office and other sources of advice, at the end of this guidance (*see page 18*).

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<sup>1</sup> The Controller of Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, the Chief Executive of The National Archives, is responsible for setting the production standards and overseeing the publication of certain government publications including HC and Command papers.

## PAPERS AT A GLANCE

### Reason and authority for laying a paper before the House

- 7) The purpose of laying a paper before the House of Commons is to make the information contained in the document available to the House and its Members. **Members may come to the Journal Office to look at a document as soon as it is laid. Copies of laid documents should also be available in the Vote Office shortly after they are laid.**<sup>2</sup> Depositing a paper in the House of Commons Library does not constitute laying.
- 8) Once a paper has been laid before the House, it will appear in the Appendix to the Votes and Proceedings. The Votes and Proceedings is the formal legal record of what happens in the House of Commons and is published overnight at the end of each sitting day and is available online.<sup>3</sup>
- 9) Many documents are required by law to be laid before the House. These are called Act papers and are referred to as being laid “by Act”.<sup>4</sup> Other papers are made available to the House by the Government. These are called Command papers and are referred to as being laid “by Command”.<sup>5</sup> A paper cannot be laid by both Act and Command, although in some cases papers are laid by Act in the Commons and by Command in the Lords. If you are in any doubt as to the authority by which your document should be laid please contact the Journal Office as early as possible, as we can check the authority used when a similar paper has previously been laid. It might also be advisable to check with your departmental lawyers who will be aware of the department’s (or non-departmental body’s) relevant statutory responsibilities, as well as any updates to them.

### Laying before both Houses or before the House of Commons only

- 10) Before laying your paper you should check whether it needs to be laid before Parliament (i.e. both the House of Commons and the House of Lords) or only before the House of Commons. The title page of the document should be worded accordingly (i.e. ‘Presented to Parliament...’ or ‘Presented to the House of Commons...’).

<sup>2</sup> [Speaker’s Ruling, 25 March 2009 \(HC Deb Col 307\)](#).

<sup>3</sup> [www.parliament.uk/business/publications/business-papers/commons/votes-and-proceedings](http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/business-papers/commons/votes-and-proceedings).

<sup>4</sup> The Act that requires the document to be laid provides statutory authority. This also applies to papers laid by Statutory Instrument

<sup>5</sup> The Government lays these papers “by Command” of Her Majesty under the Royal prerogative.

- 11) The Treasury may issue an accounts direction under section 7 of the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000. Accounts to which such a direction applies must be prepared and transmitted to the Comptroller and Auditor General, who must certify and report on them to the Treasury. **They must be then laid before the House of Commons. Accounts produced under sections 6 and 7 of this Act should not be laid before the House of Lords unless there is an Act of Parliament stating that an accompanying report must be laid before Parliament.**
- 12) Trading Funds are subject to an accounts direction provided for by Section 4(6) (a) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 (as amended by the Government Trading Act 1990). The same procedures for reporting by the Comptroller and Auditor General should be followed, **except that reports and accounts under the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 are laid before both Houses.**
- 13) If your paper is laid under a different Act, the Act will specify whether the document is to be laid before Parliament or before the House of Commons. Your lawyers or those of your parent department will be able to check this for you.
- 14) Command papers and most Statutory Instruments are normally laid before both Houses.

### Laying requirements for all papers

- 15) To lay a paper, two complete copies of the paper must be delivered, by hand, to the Journal Office, which is on the third floor of the House of Commons above the Chamber (the room is marked 'CBD administration'); this is usually done by parent departments, whose messengers have passes to access the Parliamentary Estate. The Journal Office in the Commons is not the same place as the Vote Office, which handles bulk copies of papers for distribution to Members and others. Documents are not accepted for laying by post, fax or e-mail. Where applicable, two copies of the paper will also need to be laid in the House of Lords Printed Paper Office. When laying a paper you need:
  - two copies of the paper;
  - two copies of the covering letter (one stapled to the front of each copy of the document) and a third copy of the cover letter to act as a receipt. The cover letter should state:

- the title of the paper;
- the authority for laying the paper (e.g. Act, Command);
- what or whether any parliamentary procedure (e.g. negative, affirmative) applies;
- whether there are any accompanying documents (e.g. explanatory memorandum or impact assessment);
- the name of the Minister formally laying the document;<sup>6</sup>
- contact details, including a direct telephone number, of the person responsible for laying the paper; and
- (if applicable) that the document is being laid in proof or ‘typescript’ form. A “proof” copy for laying must be correct and not different in any way from the final published version.

Sample cover letters are available at *Appendices 3 and 4*.

**16)** The copy of the document laid before the House must be the final version. The online version of the paper, which cannot be published before the paper is laid, must be identical to the printed version. If any revision or correction is necessary after laying, please contact the Journal Office in the Commons and the Printed Paper Office in the Lords to discuss whether the document can be corrected or if it should be withdrawn and re-laid. Further information is given at *page 16*.

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<sup>6</sup> This should be the responsible Commons Minister. Where there is shared Ministerial responsibility it will be for departments to decide which Minister will lay the paper before the House. Where the Minister responsible is a Lords Minister a decision should be made at departmental level about the Commons Minister who should be recorded as having laid the paper.

## Timing of release and publication of papers laid before the House

- 17) A paper is considered to be formally laid before the House when a copy of it is accepted by the Journal Office. At that point Members of the House are able to come to the Journal Office to view the document. Hard copies of the document should be available in the Vote Office shortly after laying so that copies can be made available to Members.<sup>7</sup> If the Lot 1 Framework supplier is producing and/or distributing the document through its HC and Command papers service it will liaise with the Vote Office directly. If organisations are using other production and distribution arrangements (such as producing and printing the paper within the department) then it will be their responsibility to ensure that hard copies are available. This does not mean that the document also has to be available to the general public at that time, however there should not be a long delay between laying and making the document publicly available. For example HC, Command and un-numbered Act Papers should be published on gov.uk on the same day as laying, after the Journal Office has accepted the paper for laying.
- 18) If your document is an unnumbered Command paper (other than an Explanatory Memorandum or Impact Assessment to a Statutory Instrument or an Annual Report and Accounts) you should e-mail a copy to the Vote Office shortly after it has been laid ([Vote\\_Office@parliament.uk](mailto:Vote_Office@parliament.uk)).
- 19) If a document is subject to an embargo, you may lay it before the embargo expires. You should however label it with embargo stickers. The Journal Office is not responsible for monitoring or enforcing embargos, and you should be aware that Members may view documents as soon as they have been laid (i.e. before the embargo expires).
- 20) If your document is subject to a timed release (for example to coincide with a statement) and it is not desired that Members have copies in advance, you should wait until the time of release to lay the document. Nonetheless, there is an expectation that Members should be able to have sight of papers which form the content of ministerial statements before the statement begins. You may not deposit papers in the Journal Office for laying at a later time.
- 21) Any paper required by an Act of Parliament to be laid before the House, should not be made publicly available (e.g. on a website) before it has been laid. The

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<sup>7</sup> Speaker's Ruling, 25 March 2009 (HC Deb Col 307).

release of an HC paper before laying is a discourtesy to the House and the paper would not attract the protection of parliamentary privilege until it was laid.

- 22) HC papers cannot be laid when the House is not sitting. Other Act papers will be received, but are not treated as being laid until the next sitting day and should not be published, or otherwise released, until that sitting day. We therefore recommend that unnumbered Act papers are only laid when the House is sitting.<sup>8</sup> You should also be aware that if your Act paper needs to be laid in both Houses it will be necessary for both Houses to be sitting. Where only one House is sitting, the same restrictions as for non-sitting days will apply.
- 23) After you have laid your paper it will be formally recorded in the appendix to the House of Commons Votes and Proceedings for that day (the authoritative, formal record of the House's proceedings) which will be published the following day. You should check the entry for your paper in the Votes and Proceedings for the day on which you have laid your paper.<sup>9</sup>
- 24) You should plan the laying and publication of your document carefully to avoid being unable to lay because the House is in recess. If you anticipate that you will have difficulties in respect of this requirement you should contact the Journal Office as early as possible in the process.
- 25) Departments are responsible for ensuring their paper is published on gov.uk correctly and promptly after laying. Organisations without gov.uk access rights that are listed on gov.uk should contact their parent departments to arrange publication. Alternatively, organisations that have any queries should email [official.publishing@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:official.publishing@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk). The NAO, Electoral Commission, Local Government Boundary Commissions, IPSA and professional bodies overseen by the Privy Council Office should only publish papers on their own websites and not on gov.uk. Statutory Instruments published by TSO are deposited in accordance with The National Archives contractual arrangements. Documents produced as Command, House of Commons and un-numbered Act Papers are subject to digital legal deposit and the British Library, on behalf of the legal deposit libraries, harvests documents' PDFs from gov.uk.

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8 The recess dates for the House of Commons are available here: [www.parliament.uk/about/faqs/house-of-commons/faqs/business-faq-page/recess-dates/](http://www.parliament.uk/about/faqs/house-of-commons/faqs/business-faq-page/recess-dates/) and the recess dates for the House of Lords are available here: [www.parliament.uk/about/faqs/house-of-lords/faqs/lords-recess-dates/..](http://www.parliament.uk/about/faqs/house-of-lords/faqs/lords-recess-dates/)

9 The Votes and Proceedings is available online: [www.parliament.uk/business/publications/business-papers/commons/votes-and-proceedings](http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/business-papers/commons/votes-and-proceedings)

## Format of Documents and Title Pages

26) Documents laid before the House must be in a standard format:

- A4 size;
- legible text in a font size of 10 point or greater;
- monochrome printing is acceptable, and is likely to reduce cost—graphical information should have sufficient contrast to enable it to be read;
- colours used on title pages and on copyright statements should have enough contrast between the text and the background;
- primarily portrait orientation (tables, etc. may be in landscape orientation); and
- correctly bound (saddle stitching (staples through the spine) or perfect binding (spine glued)).

Documents that do not meet House of Commons requirements will have to be reprinted. Please contact the Journal Office if you have any queries, to ensure that your document is acceptable for laying. The laid copy must be identical to the published version (including the online version).

27) All papers must contain a title page (the first inside facing (recto) page of a paper). The copyright notice (with the correct copyright statement and the publication's ISBN) must be displayed on the reverse of the title page in accordance with guidelines from The National Archives. The title page should not bear substantive text, images or a contents page on its reverse.

28) A title page needs to include:

- the full title of the document;
- the full statutory title of the body producing the report (rather than the name the organisation is known by);
- (if applicable) the specific period of time covered by the report (e.g. 2014–15 for financial years and 2014 for calendar years);
- the authority under which the paper is laid (e.g. an Act or by Command)—this should be in the form of 'Presented to Parliament pursuant to' or 'Presented to Parliament by Command of Her Majesty';

- (if a HC paper) the words “Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on XX month year”;<sup>10</sup> and
- (if applicable) a series number (Cm or HC) —this should also appear on the front cover of the paper.

A sample title page is set out in *Appendix 2*.

- 29) The Journal Office encourages departments and organisations to submit draft title pages for checking at the earliest opportunity, to ensure that the required information has been included and title pages meet laying requirements. Draft title pages can be sent to [journaloffice@parliament.uk](mailto:journaloffice@parliament.uk). The Journal Office can turn these around relatively quickly, usually within three working days (the summer adjournment may be a possible exception). Allowing the Journal Office to check the draft title page before the content of the paper has been finalised may help to avoid any delay in printing and laying your document.
- 30) For organisations which, unusually, expect to produce a report and accounts or other papers as two separate volumes the requirements about title pages apply to each volume. The laying letter and each title page should make it clear that there is more than one volume. If the same HC number is being used for a multi-volume document the volumes should be numbered as HC123–I, HC 123–II etc. (i.e. volumes are distinguished by uppercase roman numerals).

## Times papers can be laid in the Journal Office

31) The Journal Office is open to receive papers at the following times:

- Sitting days: 9.30 am to the rise of the House.<sup>11</sup>

*The office should be informed of any papers that are likely to be laid after 5.00 pm.*

- Non-sitting Fridays and recesses: 11.00 am to 3.00 pm.

32) If the House of Lords rises earlier than the Commons the Journal Office will stop taking papers which are due to be laid before both Houses on that day.

<sup>10</sup> If the date of laying changes late in the publishing process, the title page must be updated accordingly to show the correct date (this can be done by sticker if you have already printed the paper). You should also check that you have updated the copies which you are providing to the Vote Office in the Commons and the Printed Paper Office in the Lords.

<sup>11</sup> On Mondays the House has usually risen by 10.30 pm, on Tuesdays and Wednesdays the House has usually risen by 7.30 pm, on Thursdays the House has usually risen by 5.30 pm and on Fridays the House has usually risen by 3.00 pm. However, the House may rise earlier than the times given, depending on the progress of business.

## ACT PAPERS

### House of Commons (HC) Papers

- 33) Papers ordered to be printed by the House of Commons attract the protection of parliamentary privilege under the Parliamentary Papers Act 1840 from the moment they are laid. This ensures that legal proceedings cannot be brought against persons for the publication of the document. Papers ordered to be printed are printed as part of the HC reference series which is administered by the House of Commons Journal Office.
- 34) However, papers should not, other than in exceptional circumstances, knowingly make references or comments which are in breach of an injunction or other order of any court, or which might, without the protection of privilege, give rise to an action for defamation. If circumstances arise when parliamentary privilege will be used to protect the content of a paper, the authorities of the House must be consulted beforehand.
- 35) If papers in the same sequence as your paper have previously been published as an HC paper, or your paper has sensitive content, it is likely that it should be an HC paper. If there is any question about whether a document should be laid in the HC paper series or not, please contact the Journal Office. You should note that many organisations' annual reports and accounts are required by an Act of Parliament to be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General (i.e. the National Audit Office) before they are laid before the House.<sup>12</sup> Reports so audited should be laid as part of the HC numbered series.
- 36) If your document is being published as an HC paper you will need to contact the Journal Office to be issued with an HC paper number (*further information at paragraph 38*).
- 37) HC papers:
- must not be released, either in print or electronic format, before they have been laid before Parliament (to do so would be considered a discourtesy to

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<sup>12</sup> Organisations whose accounts are audited by the NAO usually fall into one of the following categories: a) the Treasury has issued an accounts direction in relation to the report and accounts under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000; b) the accounts are those of a trading fund under the Government Trading Funds Act 1973; or c) the organisation is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB)/Arm's Length Body (ALB).

Parliament and the paper would not attract the protections of parliamentary privilege before it is laid); and

- should not be re-printed, in full or in part, as separate documents.<sup>13</sup>

You should plan the laying date and publication of your document carefully to avoid being unable to lay because the House is not sitting. Further information on the timing of the release of documents laid before the House is given on *page 6*.

## HC numbers

- 38) The HC number series is administered by the Journal Office. Please contact the office if you are unsure whether your document should be an HC paper, to obtain an HC paper number (sometimes called a printing number) or to let the Journal Office know if a printing number is no longer required.
- 39) The HC number series restarts at the beginning of each Session rather than at the start of the calendar year. To request an HC number you should email [journaloffice@parliament.uk](mailto:journaloffice@parliament.uk) with the words “HC Number Request from” followed by the name of the organisation in the subject header. You should indicate in the body of the email the date on which you intend to lay the document. If your request is urgent please contact the Journal Office on 020 7219 3361/3318. If the expected date for laying changes you should inform the Journal Office.
- 40) The HC number will remain valid unless the paper is laid in a different parliamentary Session from the one originally planned. The Journal Office will not allocate HC numbers more than a month in advance of laying. A new HC number is required for each year’s report and accounts.

## Laying an HC paper

- 41) As HC papers are ordered to be printed by the House they can only be laid when the House is sitting. The House does not normally sit on Fridays except those on which private Members’ bills are taken (thirteen per Parliamentary Session) and also adjourns periodically for recesses. The Parliamentary calendar is available on the Parliamentary website<sup>14</sup>; the Journal Office can also advise about the days on

<sup>13</sup> For example, accounts which have been printed as part of a combined annual report and accounts should not be reprinted as a separate document. If you wish to circulate only the accounts section please contact the Journal Office.

<sup>14</sup> The recess dates for the House of Commons are available here: [www.parliament.uk/about/faqs/](http://www.parliament.uk/about/faqs/)

which the House is expected to sit. Where possible avoid laying on the last day before a recess; if there is a problem with your paper, you may not be able to lay it until after the recess and this will significantly delay publication. Normal laying requirements as set out at *pages 4 and 5* apply.

### **Printing and format requirements for Act papers (including unnumbered Act and HC papers)**

- 42) The printing and format requirements of Act papers are set out at *pages 8 to 9*.
- 43) The procedures for laying Act papers are the same as set out at *pages 4 to 5*.

### **Papers laid by Return to an Address (Unopposed Returns)**

- 44) In some cases the government may wish to lay a particularly sensitive report for which there is no statutory requirement or authority to lay, but for which the protection of parliamentary privilege is needed (the Report of the Hallett Review is a recent example). You should contact the Journal Office as soon as possible if you are preparing a paper which falls into this category. The Journal Office can offer further written and oral advice. You should note that the advance agreement of the Clerk of the Journals is required and that a motion has to be tabled at least one sitting day in advance and moved and agreed to on the Floor of the House to allow the laying of a Return to an Address.
- 45) The process of laying a Return to an Address only applies to the House of Commons. If you are laying the same document in the House of Lords, the letter to the Printed Paper Office should state that the document is an unnumbered Command paper.

## COMMAND PAPERS

- 46) If there is no statutory authority for laying a document, it can be laid “by Command”. Command papers are normally required to be laid before both Houses and can be laid on any working day during the existence of a Parliament. Some Command papers appear within a numbered series administered by The National Archives, which allocates the numbers required, and also sets common standards on appearance and format. Guidance is available [online](#).<sup>15</sup> The title page of all Command papers should state that the document is “Presented to Parliament by the [Secretary of State/Minister for [name of department/position]] by Command of Her Majesty” and be followed by the month and year in which it is to be laid.
- 47) If you are likely to want to present accounts as a Command paper, you should consult your parent department well in advance. You should not request or use an HC number.
- 48) You should contact The National Archives if you are planning to produce a document as a Command paper. Contact details are provided on *page 18*.
- 49) Departments should be aware of other proceedings that run alongside the laying of a paper. For example, when a Minister lays a departmental minute on a contingent liability they also need to make a written ministerial statement, for which notice should be given to the Table Office<sup>16</sup>.
- 50) In some cases papers (e.g. Departmental Minutes) are laid “by Command” but are not printed or published in the numbered series. These tend to have limited distribution. Guidance about unnumbered Command papers should be sought from The National Archives.
- 51) The procedures for laying Command papers are the same as set out at *pages 4 to 5*.

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15 [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/our-services/publishing-command-papers.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/our-services/publishing-command-papers.htm).

16 The Table Office can be contacted on [tableoffice@parliament.uk](mailto:tableoffice@parliament.uk) 020 7219 3302 .

## STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

- 52) Most Statutory Instruments are required to be laid before the House by Act, although some are required to be laid by Statutory Instrument (for example, many Statutory Rules of Northern Ireland). Explanatory Memoranda and Impact Assessments are laid by Command. Please ensure that the letter accompanying an instrument clearly sets out whether an instrument has attachments (Explanatory Memorandum or Impact Assessment) and what the laying authority is for the SI and the accompanying documents.
- 53) Statutory Instruments are usually subject to parliamentary procedure. Please ensure that you include details of which parliamentary procedure an instrument is subject to (including the number of days, if any, applicable to that procedure). If it is not subject to parliamentary procedure please state this in the covering letter.
- 54) If you are laying an affirmative instrument you will also need to bring a letter to the Journal Office requesting that they arrange for a motion be tabled on the remaining Orders (Future Business B) (*see Appendix 5*).
- 55) All instruments must bear the National Archives certification imprint at the top of each page, they no longer need to be signed and dated as a true copy.
- 56) The Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments, the Select Committee on Statutory Instruments and the Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee in the House of Lords all scrutinise Statutory Instruments. Further information on the work of these Committees is available online.<sup>17</sup> Departments have a responsibility to ensure that they comply with Statutory Instrument Practice and supply the correct number of hard copies of SIs (in the form in which they were laid before Parliament) to the scrutiny committees.
- 57) For further information on the preparation and making of Statutory Instruments and the parliamentary procedures relating to them, please contact [SIRegistrar@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SIRegistrar@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

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<sup>17</sup> [www.parliament.uk/business/committees/](http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/)

- 58) All SIs should be accompanied by a laying letter (stapled to the front of both copies of the paper) that sets out clearly (see also *Appendix 4*):
- the title of the document and its number if applicable;
  - the full title of the Act (including the relevant Section) or SI under which it is being laid;
  - (if applicable), that an Explanatory Memorandum and/or Impact Assessment is being laid by Command;
  - if a Public Bodies Order, that the Explanatory Document is laid under section 11 of the Public Bodies Act 2011;
  - if a Legislative Reform Order, that the Explanatory Document is laid under section 14 of the Regulatory Reform Act 2006, as well as the procedure that the Explanatory Document recommends;
  - what, if any, procedure applies to the SI;
  - if an instrument is subject to a praying period, the number of praying days;
  - the name of the laying Minister; and
  - the direct phone number for the person responsible for laying.

## WITHDRAWING A PAPER AND CORRECTION SLIPS

### Corrections to HC papers

59) If it becomes necessary to correct or revise a document published as an HC paper after the document has been laid, you must contact the Journal Office in the Commons and the Printed Paper Office in the Lords prior to the publication and distribution of a correction slip. Correction slips will be accepted for minor, typographical errors that are obvious on the face of the paper. If the correction is substantive, it may be necessary to withdraw your paper and lay it again. Information about correcting documents is available online from The National Archives. If a correction slip is issued it should be distributed to all known recipients of a document.

### Corrections to Statutory Instruments

60) The laid version of a made instrument (i.e. not a draft) must be the final correct version. If it becomes clear during scrutiny by the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments that a minor correction is required and should be included in the published version of the instrument, copies of corrections slips, or revised versions, should be sent to the Journal Office and Vote Office. You should also consult the House of Commons Journal Office, the House of Lords Printed Paper Office and the SI Registrar before deciding to proceed with a correction slip. Please note that made instruments cannot usually be withdrawn. Therefore, if significant corrections are required, the instrument will need to be revoked or an amending SI will need to be made.

61) The laid version of a draft instrument is the copy that will be debated in a Delegated Legislation Committee and considered by the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments (JCSI). If corrections that fall within the category regarded by the Joint or Select Committee on Statutory Instruments as “suitable for inclusion in the published version of the instrument” are identified, a correction slip or reprint of the draft may be issued but you should consult the Journal Office in the Commons, the Printed Paper Office in the Lords and Statutory Instrument Registrar before the correction slip or reprint is produced. Such corrections, if identified after approval by the House, can be made in the published version of the instrument, but a letter

outlining the correction should be sent to the Journal Office and Printed Paper Office to be filed with the original laid instrument. Where corrections are outside that category a withdrawal and relaying will be required.

- 62) Explanatory Memoranda and Impact Assessments relating to Statutory Instruments are laid by Command and may be withdrawn (please state which instrument the memorandum relates to clearly in the covering letter). You should note that correction slips are not permitted in relation to Explanatory Memoranda or Impact Assessments.

### Withdrawing a paper

- 63) If it becomes necessary to correct or revise a document published as an HC paper after the document has been laid, you must contact the Journal Office in the Commons and the Printed Paper Office in the Lords prior to the publication and distribution of a correction slip.

- 64) If you need to withdraw a paper you will need to lay a withdrawal letter in the Journal Office in the Commons and the Printed Paper Office in the Lords. You should bring three copies of the letter, one of which will be stamped and returned to you as proof of receipt. **This letter must be separate from any letter laying a new version of the document.** The letter should include (see *Appendix 7*):

- the full title of the document including any paper reference number;
- the date on which the paper was originally laid;
- the reason for withdrawal; and
- whether and when a revised copy is to be laid.

- 65) If you are withdrawing a document that has been laid in both Houses of Parliament you will need to contact the Journal Office in the Commons and the Printed Paper Office in the Lords. Withdrawing and relaying a paper should happen on the same day in both Houses. On withdrawal of a document all original copies should be withdrawn from circulation and destroyed.

## CONTACTS FOR FURTHER ADVICE

### Journal Office, House of Commons

For advice on laying papers in the House of Commons, format of papers and title page requirements contact: 020 7219 3317/3361 or e-mail [journaloffice@parliament.uk](mailto:journaloffice@parliament.uk)

For HC numbers email [journaloffice@parliament.uk](mailto:journaloffice@parliament.uk) or, if urgent, contact: 020 7219 3361.

### Other contacts

**Laying papers in the House of Lords:** Clerk of the Printed Paper Office, House of Lords, (020) 7219 1246

**Making papers available to members of the House of Commons:** Vote Office, (020) 7219 3631

Preparing reports and accounts for laying: In the first instance, advice should be sought from the parliamentary branch of your parent department.

To organise the production and/or distribution of HC and Command Papers with the RM3785 Lot 1 Framework supplier - **The APS Group** - email [commandandhousepublishing@theapsgroup.com](mailto:commandandhousepublishing@theapsgroup.com)

Lot 1 Framework costs or queries: Crown Commercial Service: [printframework@crowncommercial.gov.uk](mailto:printframework@crowncommercial.gov.uk)

For advice concerning the production and publication of HC and Command Papers, and obtaining Command Paper numbers: **The National Archives**, 020 8392 5218 or email [official.publishing@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:official.publishing@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

**The National Archives Guidance relating to Papers** is also available at [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/our-services/parliamentary-papers-guidance.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/our-services/parliamentary-papers-guidance.htm)

**Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General:** the appropriate Audit Manager at the National Audit Office. The Parliamentary branch can be contacted on 020 7798 7106 or [Denise.Smith@nao.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Denise.Smith@nao.gsi.gov.uk)

Publication and Registration of Statutory Instruments: **The SI Registrar.** Email: [SIRegistrar@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SIRegistrar@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

## APPENDICES:

### Appendix 1: **What can be laid when**

	Sitting Day	Adjournment or Recess	Dissolution
Draft SI	Yes	No	No House exists before which any document can be laid.
Special Procedure Order	Yes	No	
Made SI subject to affirmative resolution before coming into force	Yes	No	
Made SI (whether subject to no procedure, negative procedure or affirmative resolution within a statutory period after coming into force)	Yes	Yes	
Command paper	Yes	Yes	
Act paper printed by order of the House	Yes	No	
Other Act paper	Yes	Received but treated as laid on next sitting day	
Return to an Address	Yes	No	

Appendix 2:

**Sample title page for a House of Commons paper**

**NAME OF ORGANISATION**

**Annual Report and Accounts  
2014-15**

Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 9(8) of the Museums and Galleries Act 1992

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on 7 July 2015

Appendix 3:  
**Sample covering letter for an HC paper, Act paper or  
 Command paper**

DEPARTMENTAL CONTACT  
 INFORMATION HERE

Date

The Clerk in Charge  
 Journal Office/Printed Paper Office  
 House of Commons/House of Lords  
 LONDON  
 SW1A 0AA/SW1A 0PW

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Title of Document in Bold [HC or Cm No if applicable]**

1. The above paper is presented for laying before [Parliament/ the House of Commons]  
 pursuant to:

***[Section of Act under which laying is authorised] or [Section of Act under  
 which laying is authorised, as amended by Section of Amending Act]***

2. We are also laying an explanatory memorandum [and an impact assessment] by  
 Command of her Majesty (if applicable)

3. The instrument is subject to: **[Type of Procedure: delete as appropriate]**

***a. Special Parliamentary Procedure***

***b. Affirmative Resolution***

***c. Affirmative Resolution within [x] days***

***d. Affirmative Resolution under s.11 Public Bodies Act 2011***

***e. Negative Resolution within [x] days***

***f. No Procedure***

4. [A Printing Order is required and HC XXX has been allocated]  
 (only required for HC Papers)

5. Please lay in the name of **[Laying Minister]**

Regards,  
 Parliamentary Branch

Name and contact telephone number of person dealing with this document

## Appendix 4:

### Sample covering letter for a Statutory Instrument

DEPARTMENTAL CONTACT  
INFORMATION HERE

Date

The Clerk in Charge  
Journal Office/Printed Paper Office  
House of Commons/House of Lords  
LONDON  
SW1A 0AA/SW1A 0PW

Dear Sir/Madam,

#### **[Draft] Title of SI in Bold**

1. [[Draft] Title of SI] [SI No. 20 X X/Y Y Y] is presented for laying before [Parliament/ the House of Commons] pursuant to:  
  
[Section of Act under which laying is authorised] or [Section of Act under which laying is authorised, as amended by Section of Amending Act]
2. We are also laying [an explanatory memorandum [and an impact assessment] by Command of her Majesty]/[an explanatory document under s.11 Public Bodies Act 2011]/[ an explanatory document under s.14 Regulatory Reform Act 2006 recommending the X X X X X procedure]
3. The instrument is [a Legislative Reform Order]/ [subject to **[Type of Procedure: delete as appropriate]**]
  - a. **Special Parliamentary Procedure**
  - b. **Affirmative Resolution**
  - c. **Affirmative Resolution within [x] days**
  - d. **Affirmative Resolution under s.11 Public Bodies Act 2011**
  - e. **Negative Resolution within [x] days**
  - f. **No Procedure**
4. Please lay in the name of **[Laying Minister]**

Regards,

Parliamentary Branch

Name and contact telephone number of person dealing with this SI

## Appendix 5:

**Sample letter requesting a motion to be tabled:**DEPARTMENTAL CONTACT  
INFORMATION HERE

Date

The Clerk in Charge  
Journal Office  
House of Commons  
LONDON  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Full title of Document in Bold and SI/HC/Cm. No if applicable**

Please can you arrange for a motion to be tabled in Future Business to approve the following Statutory Instrument which is subject to the [Affirmative procedure]. The information relating to the SI is as follows:

- Name of instrument: []
- (if applicable) SI number: []
- Laid date: []
- Laid in [both Houses/the House of Commons]
- Laying Minister: []

Regards

Parliamentary Branch

Name and contact telephone number of person dealing with this document

## Appendix 6:

### **Sample letter withdrawing a paper:**

DEPARTMENTAL CONTACT  
INFORMATION HERE

Date

The Clerk in Charge  
Journal Office/Printed Paper Office  
House of Commons/House of Lords  
LONDON  
SW1A 0AA/SW1A 0PW

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Full title of Document in Bold and SI/HC/Cm. No if applicable**

1. Due to an error in the above document, which was **laid on [date]**, it needs to be withdrawn.
2. [The document is not subject to Parliamentary Procedure]
3. A corrected version of this document is being laid today/ will be laid on [date].

Regards

Parliamentary Branch

Name and contact telephone number of person dealing with this document

## Appendix 7:

**Sample letter withdrawing a motion:**DEPARTMENTAL CONTACT  
INFORMATION HERE

Date

The Clerk in Charge  
Journal Office  
House of Commons  
LONDON  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Full title of Document in Bold and SI/HC/Cm. No if applicable**

Due to an error in **[Full title of Document]**, which was laid on **[date]** by **[name of Minister]** it has been withdrawn **[today/date]**. The document is subject to affirmative procedure. Please therefore withdraw any motion to approve the document

Regards

Parliamentary Branch

Name and contact telephone number of person dealing with this document

