

## Timeframes for the development of Bills

Estimated timeframe	Characteristics	What the estimated timeframe does and does not allow for	Other factors that will result in a longer timeframe being needed	Urgent Bills
2-6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>requires a small number of provisions to be drafted/amended</li> <li>easy to identify what provisions/amendments are needed</li> <li>some analysis or research may be required</li> <li>involves applying well-established drafting precedents or practices</li> <li>only 1 to 5 drafts required to finalise the Bill and may be up to 10 pages long</li> </ul>	<p><b>The estimated timeframe for the development of a Bill starts when drafting instructions are received by OPC.</b></p> <p>It allows for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>drafting of the Bill (for more information, see <a href="#">OPC's drafting services: a guide for clients</a>)</li> <li>clarification and refinement of the policy objectives by the instructing agency</li> <li>the instructing agency's capacity to respond to drafts and to issue additional instructions as required</li> <li>referral of provisions to other agencies for consideration (allow at least 7 business days) (for more information about the referral requirements, see <a href="#">Drafting Direction 4.2</a>)</li> <li>editorial checking (allow 1 business day for small Bills, 3-5 business days for medium Bills and 5-10 business days for large or very large Bills)</li> <li>additional policy approval to be sought from the Prime Minister</li> <li>the Legislation Approval Process to be completed for the Bill</li> <li>the printing of the Bill for introduction</li> </ul>	<p><b>There are many other factors that can affect the estimated timeframe for the development of a Bill. In many cases, these factors will result in a longer timeframe being needed.</b></p> <p>These factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an exposure draft process</li> <li>consultation requirements for the Bill (whether internal or external)</li> <li>obtaining policy authority from the Cabinet</li> <li>requiring legal advice</li> <li>competing legislative priorities for OPC and the instructing agency</li> <li>how clear and well-developed the drafting instructions are (for more information about instructions, see <a href="#">OPC's drafting services: a guide for clients</a>)</li> <li>how clear and well developed the policy objectives are</li> <li>changes in the policy objectives or approach once drafting has started</li> <li>the instructing agency's timeliness in responding to drafts and issuing additional instructions as required</li> <li>the need for substantial consequential amendments</li> <li>the need for substantial transitional, application and saving provisions</li> </ul> <p>For more information about the processes and practices of the Cabinet, see the <a href="#">PM&amp;C Cabinet Handbook</a></p>	<p><b>If a Bill is urgent, OPC can work with you to ensure it is developed within the required timeframe.</b></p> <p>However, the overall quality of the Bill may be impacted by a compressed timeframe because of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reduced capacity to identify the best legislative solution and to identify and solve problems, gaps or other issues</li> <li>reduced capacity to identify policy, legal or implementation issues, to seek legal advice and to consult others</li> <li>reduced capacity to complete drafting and editorial checks</li> </ul> <p>The following are some of the risks that come with developing a Bill in a compressed timeframe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased likelihood of unintended consequences or ineffective provisions</li> <li>increased likelihood of amendments being needed during the Parliamentary process and/or in the future</li> <li>increased likelihood of adverse comments from the Senate Standing Committee for the Scrutiny of Bills, other Parliamentary Committees, stakeholders and others</li> </ul>
2-6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>requires a reasonable number of provisions to be drafted/amended <u>or</u> a smaller number of complex provisions to be drafted/amended</li> <li>reasonable amount of analysis or research is required to identify what provisions/amendments are needed</li> <li>reasonable amount of work may be required to clarify the policy objectives</li> <li>involves a degree of original or novel drafting or the careful application of drafting precedents and practices</li> <li>raises some constitutional or legal issues and/or some political or other sensitivities</li> <li>may require up to 30 drafts to finalise the Bill and may be up to 100 pages long</li> </ul>	<p><b>The estimated timeframe does <u>not</u> allow for the time needed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>for an exposure draft process or other consultation requirements (whether internal or external)</li> <li>to obtain policy authority from the Cabinet</li> <li>to obtain agency or Ministerial clearances</li> <li>the time needed for any other factors mentioned in the next column</li> </ul> <p>For more information about the requirements of the legislation process, see the <a href="#">PM&amp;C Legislation Handbook</a></p>		
6 to 24 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>requires a large number of provisions to be drafted/amended <u>or</u> a smaller number of highly complex provisions to be drafted/amended</li> <li>significant amount of analysis or research is required to identify appropriate legislative solution</li> <li>significant amount of work may be required to clarify the policy objectives</li> <li>involves a high degree of original or novel drafting or the careful application of drafting precedents and practices</li> <li>raises significant constitutional or legal issues and/or significant political or other sensitivities</li> <li>may require 30 or more drafts to finalise the Bill and may be hundreds of pages long</li> </ul>			