

## Finding Government Debates: Hansard and the Scottish Parliament Official Report

The Library holds copies of the debates of the Westminster Parliament, both the House of Commons and The House of Lords (Hansard) and the Scottish Parliament (Official Report).

### Hansard

Reports of the debates in both Houses of Parliament are known as "Hansard" after the publishing company which produced them for most of the 19th century; they are now published by The Stationery Office (TSO). Until 1909 the Commons and Lords debates were published together but since then they have appeared in separate volumes.

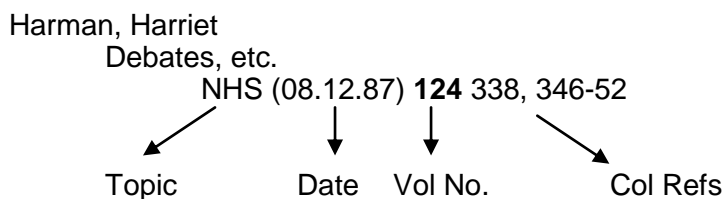


### House of Commons

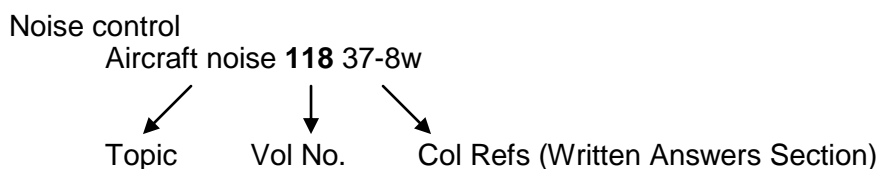
House of Commons Hansard is issued daily at <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/hansard/commons/> (1988 onwards) and the library stocks bound volumes covering two to three weeks in hard copy. Written answers are separated from the debates and appear at the back of each volume. There is an index in each volume and eventually a sessional index is issued (shelved after the last volume of a Parliamentary Session). The format of all the indexes is very similar; items are listed under subject headings, names of MPs and Ministers, names of places and names of Bills being debated.

References in the index show the volume numbers in bold type, then the column numbers. The letter W after an entry denotes a written answer, e.g.: -

### Debate Reference

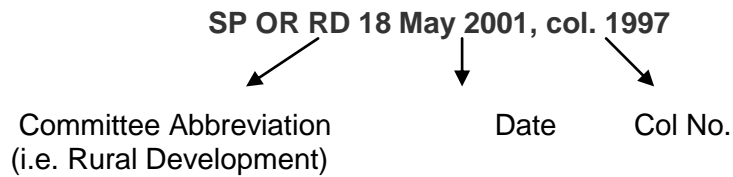


### Written Answer Reference





- **Committee Sessions** (electronic reports are accessible on individual committee websites): report of the proceedings of meetings for each of Parliament's individual Committees. Issues appear for each day that a Committee sits. The correct citation for an entry in the **Official Report – Committee** is, for example,



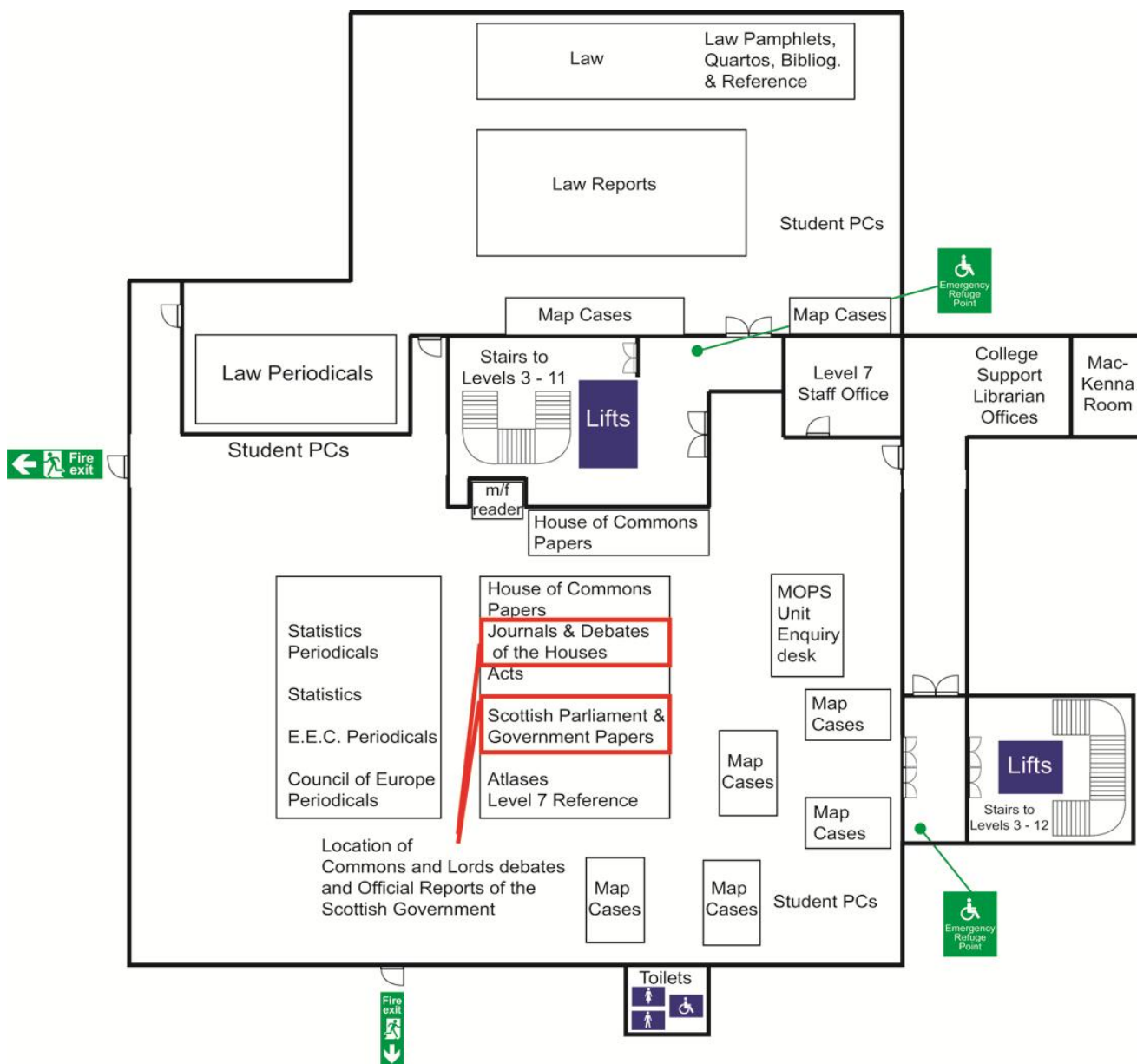
The Official Report has no index. However, it is possible to search for information on a particular topic by using the Scottish Parliament website **Advanced Search** engine  
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/help/searchadvanced.aspx>

The screenshot shows the Scottish Parliament website's Advanced Search interface. At the top, there is a search bar with a 'Search' button and links for 'Advanced Search' and 'Search Tips'. Below the search bar is a navigation menu with options like 'Home', 'Parliamentary Business', 'MSPs', 'Visit & Learn', 'Getting Involved', 'News & Media Centre', and 'About the Parliament'. The main content area is titled 'Advanced Search' and contains several filters: 'Keywords' (a text input field), 'Select area of the site to search' (checkboxes for 'Current Committees', 'Previous Committees', 'Bills', 'Business Bulletins (current session)', 'MSPs', 'Education', and 'News and Parliament.tv'), 'Language' (a dropdown menu set to 'English'), 'Results Per Page' (a dropdown menu set to '10 Results'), and 'Order By' (a dropdown menu set to 'Relevance'). A 'Search' button is located at the bottom of these filters. To the right of the filters is a 'More search options' section, which is highlighted with a red box. This section lists several search options: 'Parliamentary Questions and Answers Search', 'Motions Search', 'Official Report Search', 'MSP vote search', and 'MSP allowances search'. Below this section is a 'Contact us' section with a message: 'We are working to improve the site search facility. Please [contact us](#) with any feedback or suggestions.' A red arrow points from the 'More search options' section to the text 'Official Reports, Questions, Answers and motions can be searched from here'.

Official Reports,  
 Questions, Answers  
 and motions can be  
 searched from here

## Locating Hansard and the Scottish Parliament Official Reports in the Library

Commons and Lords Hansard are shelved in the Debates section on Level 7 of the University Library in the Maps and Official Publications Unit. The Official Reports of the Scottish Parliament are shelved in the Scottish Parliament section.



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 Updated September 2014 Elaine Anderson