members for Casuarina and Johnston be appointed to the House Committee; the member for Wanguri be discharged and the member for Nhulunbuy appointed to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee; and the member for Johnston be discharged and the member for Casuarina be appointed to the Standing Orders Committee.

Motion agreed to.

VISITORS

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I would like to welcome in the gallery the Mayor of Litchfield Council, Allan McKay. Welcome to Parliament House. I also acknowledge the electorate officers of Country Liberal members who are having their week's seminar.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS
Introduce Two Bills
Take Two Bills Together
Pass Bills through all Stages

Mr ELFERINK (Leader of Government Business): Madam Speaker, while there is no question before the Chair, I move, pursuant to Standing Order 306, suspension of so much of standing orders which would prevent the Chief Minister from immediately introducing the following bills:

1. Motor Accidents (Compensation) Commission Bill (Serial 108)

2. Territory Insurance Office (Sale) Bill 2014 (Serial 109)

and that the bills be considered together as cognate bills with one second reading debate, be considered separately in the Committee of the Whole if required by the Assembly, and that the bills pass through all stages today.

The question raised by the introduction of these bills before the House today will be one of threshold. As a matter of threshold, it is important that members understand that whilst this process is hastened, it is done for a good reason. I understand all members were provided with copies of the bills yesterday, and were offered and given briefings in relation to this matter. Also, if any member in this House determines they do not want TIO sold they do not need to read these bills because they will be voting against them.

The issue before Territorians, and before this government, is one of urgency. Urgency is at the core of the issues surrounding this motion. This motion seeks to deal with a hardship element, and for it to be successful hardships needs to be made out. One of the elements of hardship we on this side of the House are mindful of is to TIO. The sale of TIO, as well as its banking arm, will pass to another owner should this legislation be passed today. Having this debate drawn out over a period of time will damage confidence – as we have already seen from today's newspaper – in the insurer. If it damages confidence in the insurer, and in the brand of the insurer, it potentially causes hardship not only to the purchaser – which is Allianz and People's Choice Credit Union – but may well cause damage to customers, which is what we are concerned about.

If insecurity is allowed to build around these brands, people will choose to move away from them. That is a matter of concern because we, as good business partners – unfortunately current business partners of Allianz and People's Choice by way of contractual arrangements with them – are forced to take a businesslike approach to what we are doing.

I do not want to see the brand damaged. I do not want to see a run on the bank. I do not want to see people suddenly withdrawing their insurance from TIO and going elsewhere because there is an ongoing element of public uncertainty surrounding this debate. I do not think any member of this House would like to see that uncertainty continue.

At the moment, with the sale arrangements and agreements between the Northern Territory government and the purchasers of these two arms of TIO in place, they will continue to use the TIO brand and sell the TIO product.

We also heard today that People's Choice is offering slightly lower interest rates to many of the people who have loans with TIO. We do not want to jeopardise those people who have loans with TIO enjoying lower interest rates, but I am also mindful of the 259 employees currently guaranteed continued work in their various workplaces.

If TIO was to suffer reputational damage and a contracting environment through ongoing public debate, ongoing committee processes and ongoing discussions, by the time we reached the point of sale we would not have much left to sell and there could be fewer than 259 people employed by the organisation.

I will finish on this simple observation: the business of government should, and generally does, allow for open transparent processes for the passage of legislation through committee processes where committees are warranted. We are doing the business of business. The problem with doing the business of business is that to protect brands you have to do things quickly. This is one of the reasons government owned