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Opposition attempts to make mockery of estimates process

The Opposition is more interested in playing political games than properly participating in the Territory's first-ever Estimates Committee process, Leader of Government Business in Parliament Syd Stirling said today.

"Estimates provides Opposition members with the opportunity to fully scrutinise the Budget on behalf of Territorians, yet they are making a mockery of the process by asking pointless question after pointless question.

"This morning they spent close to two hours questioning the Speaker of the House on the Legislative Assembly Budget and then spent a further two hours questioning the Chief Minister on the budget for the Auditor-General's Office – an office which employs a mere four people.

"They are deliberately dragging out the process and asking time-wasting questions in a pathetic attempt to sabotage it.

"A credible Opposition would concentrate their efforts on the big portfolios with big budgets – such as education, health and police.

"It is clear they are attempting to set the process up to fail by asking petty, pointless questions so at the end of the process they can claim that they have not been given enough time to scrutinise the budget.

"I say to the Opposition Members who are only interested in wrecking the new process – have the decency to give it a fair go.

"It's far better than anything Territorians have had in the past.

"The Opposition's cheap attempts to derail the process are pathetic in the extreme."