

The SERJEANT-at-ARMS

The Serjeant-at-Arms is an unelected parliamentary official. At the beginning of each meeting day, the Serjeant-at-Arms, carrying the mace, escorts the Speaker into the Chamber and places the mace into its stand at the end of the central table. They also help to keep order in parliament by removing any member from the Chamber at the Speaker's request.



The Name

The title Serjeant-at-Arms literally translates to a 'servant bearing arms', so one serving the Speaker using the mace as a weapon.

The Serjeant-at-Arms of the Northern Territory places the mace in its stand to begin the 2009 Alice Springs parliamentary meetings.

History of the Serjeant-at-Arms

The Serjeant-at-Arms is an office with origins in the Westminster System of Parliament. Originally, the Serjeants-at-Arms were members of the British royal bodyguard. In the 14th Century, a royal Serjeant-at-Arms British House of Commons.

On becoming a fully elected Legislative Assembly in 1974 the Northern Territory Parliament adopted the practice of appointing a Serjeant-at-Arms to serve in the Legislative Assembly.



Northern Territory's Serjeant-at-Arms from 1985 - 2012.



Traditionally for formal ceremonies the Serjeant-at-Arms wore silver-buckled shoes, stockings, knee-breeches, a black coat with a large rosette on the back, a waistcoat, a stiff shirt front, white lace around the neck and cuffs, white gloves and a ceremonial sword. The above is a cartoon of Lord Charles Russell from 1873.