

## DANEIS POIs Explained

DANEIS will not be using Points of Order, Points of Personal Privilege, or Heckling in parliamentary debates this year. Instead, the only form of parliamentary interruption that will be allowed is a Point of Information (POI).

When, how, and by whom are POIs offered and then either accepted or declined?

Either member of the team that is not speaking may offer a Point of Information at any time in the permitted period. To do so, he/she will stand and say "On a Point of Information" if he/she wishes (or simply stand and wait). He/she will say no more at this time, but remain standing. The person who is giving his/her speech is free to accept or decline the Point of Information. Whichever may be the case, he/she would normally complete his/her current sentence before revealing the decision. If he/she wishes not to accept it, he/she may say "No thank you", or "Declined", or may indicate with a suitably polite gesture that the person offering the Point of Information should sit down. If he/she wishes to accept it, then this should be indicated with words such as "Accepted" or "Yes please" or "Go ahead."

What is the procedure for "protected time" during speeches?

"Protected time" is simply time when POIs are not allowed. Here's how it works by order of speaker.

PM: The first minute of the PM's opening (main) speech is protected time  
-table rap at end of minute 1, indicates protected time is suspended for the remainder of the PM's speech

MO: The first & last minute of the MO's speech is protected time.  
-table rap at end of minute 1, indicates protected time is temporarily suspended  
-table rap at end of minute 7, indicates protected time kicks in again for final minute of the MO's speech

MC: The first & last minute of the MC's speech is protected time.  
-table rap at end of minute 1, indicates protected time is temporarily suspended  
-table rap at end of minute 7, indicates protected time kicks in again for the final minute of the MC's speech

LO: The first minute & last three minutes of the LO's speech is protected time.  
-table rap at end of minute 1, indicates protected time is temporarily suspended  
-table rap at end of minute 5, indicates protected time kicks in again for the final 3 minutes of the LO's speech

PM: The entire 3-minute closing speech of the PM is protected time.  
-no table rap, therefore, is needed

How do I evaluate the use/non-use of POIs in judging a round?

Here are some guidelines:

\*A POI may contain a preface, but must end with one, and only one, question.

\*A POI should be fairly compact--certainly no more than 15 seconds.

\*A good POI will have clarity, relevance, and strategic value.

\*A POI raised cannot require a yes or no answer, but a response to a POI of "Yes" or "No" can be appropriate.

\*A speaker is not required to immediately respond to a POI. He/she may defer it by saying, "Just one moment..." or "I will take your point in a moment..." or something similar, and finish his/her statement before responding.

\*To an accepted POI, speakers are required to respond to the POI but not necessarily to give a direct answer to the question as framed.

\*The questioner is not entitled to an immediate follow-up question once a response is given, as this could unreasonably interrupt the flow of the speech of the person holding the floor.

\*The raising of POIs in rapid succession--a "barrage"--is to be avoided.

\*Debaters are encouraged to raise multiple POIs over the course of the debate, and each speaker is expected to take at least one POI, provided that multiple POIs are offered.

\*There is no allowance for the time required by a POI. The clock continues to run.

\*A POI offered just before "protected time" kicks in again is still valid, and can be accepted within protected time.

\*As the effective use of POIs is integral to the debate, the judge, in deciding the debate and awarding speaker points, may take into consideration the number of POIs raised, the number taken, the quality of points raised, and the content of responses.

The bottom line is this: Without getting too bogged down in the picayune application of technical rules (since this will take some getting used to by both judges and debaters) the main thing to consider is whether the questioner clashed effectively, or whether the responder was able to effectively respond to, or neutralize, his opponent's POI. POIs are about thinking on your feet and injecting life and spontaneity into the debate.