



PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY AND WORKS COMMITTEE

That, notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in the standing orders:

Appointment

1. A Public Accountability and Works Committee be appointed.

Functions

2. The committee may inquire into and report on the public accountability, financial management, regulatory impact and service delivery of New South Wales government departments, statutory bodies or corporations. In performing this function, the committee may:
 - (a) examine the consolidated financial statements and general government sector financial statements transmitted to the Legislative Council by the Treasurer,
 - (b) examine the financial reports of authorities of the State, being financial reports that have been:
 - (i) audited by the Auditor-General or an auditor appointed under section 47(1) of the Government Sector Audit Act 1983, or
 - (ii) laid before the Legislative Council by a Minister of the Crown,
 - (c) examine the opinion or any report of the Auditor-General transmitted with the consolidated financial statements and general government sector financial statements or laid before the Legislative Council with the financial report of an authority of the State (including any documents annexed or appended to any such opinion or report),
 - (d) examine any report of the Auditor-General laid before the Legislative Council,
 - (e) report to the Legislative Council from time to time upon any item in, or any circumstances connected with, those financial reports, or reports or documents which the committee considers ought to be brought to the notice of the Legislative Council,
 - (f) report to the Legislative Council from time to time any alteration which the committee thinks desirable in the form of those financial reports or in the method of keeping them or in the method of receipt, expenditure or control of money relating to those financial reports, and

- (g) inquire into expenditure by a Minister of the Crown made without Parliamentary sanction or appropriation or otherwise than in accordance with the provisions of the Government Sector Audit 1983 or any other Act and report to the Legislative Council from time to time upon any matter connected with that expenditure which the committee considers ought to be brought to the notice of the Legislative Council.
3. The committee may inquire and report on all public works to be executed (including works that are continuations, completions, repairs, reconstructions, extensions, or new works) where the estimated cost of completing such works exceeds \$10 million. In performing this function, the committee is to consider:
- (a) the stated purpose of the work and the need to carry it out,
 - (b) the current and prospective public value of such work,
 - (c) the amount of revenue the work is expected to produce, where the purpose of the work is to increase revenue,
 - (d) the timeframe for carrying out the work, and
 - (e) any other related matter.

Referral of inquiries

4. The committee:
- (a) is to inquire into and report on any matter relevant to the functions of the committee which is referred to the committee by resolution of the House, and
 - (b) may self-refer an inquiry into any matter relevant to the functions of the committee.
5. A committee meeting to consider a self-reference under paragraph (4)(b) must be convened at the request of any three committee members in writing to the Committee Clerk.
6. The Committee Clerk must convene a meeting within seven calendar days of the receipt of the request, providing that members are given at least 24 hours' notice.
7. A majority of committee members is required to adopt the self-reference.
8. Whenever a committee resolves to self-refer a matter, the terms of reference are to be reported to the House on the next sitting day.

Membership

9. The committee is to consist of seven members comprising:
- (a) three government members,
 - (b) two opposition members, and
 - (c) two crossbench members.

Chair and Deputy Chair

10. The committee is to elect the Chair and Deputy Chair in accordance with the standing orders.
11. The Chair of the committee is to be a non-government member.

Conduct of committee proceedings

12. Unless the committee decides otherwise:
 - (a) all inquiries are to be advertised via social media, stakeholder emails and a media release distributed to all media outlets in New South Wales,
 - (b) submissions to inquiries are to be published, subject to the Committee Clerk checking for confidentiality and adverse mention and, where those issues arise, bringing them to the attention of the committee for consideration,
 - (c) attachments to submissions are to remain confidential,
 - (d) the Chair's proposed witness list is to be circulated to provide members with an opportunity to amend the list, with the witness list agreed to by email, unless a member requests the Chair to convene a meeting to resolve any disagreement,
 - (e) the sequence of questions to be asked at hearings is to alternate between government, opposition and crossbench members, in order determined by the committee, with equal time allocated to each,
 - (f) transcripts of evidence taken at public hearings are to be published,
 - (g) supplementary questions are to be lodged with the Committee Clerk within two business days, following the receipt of the hearing transcript, with witnesses requested to return answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions within 21 calendar days of the date on which questions are forwarded to the witness,
 - (h) answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be published, subject to the Committee Clerk checking for confidentiality and adverse mention and, where those issues arise, bringing them to the attention of the committee for consideration, and
 - (i) media statements on behalf of the committee are to be made only by the Chair.

[Resolved 10 May 2023, Minutes No 2, Item 8, pp 34-36]