

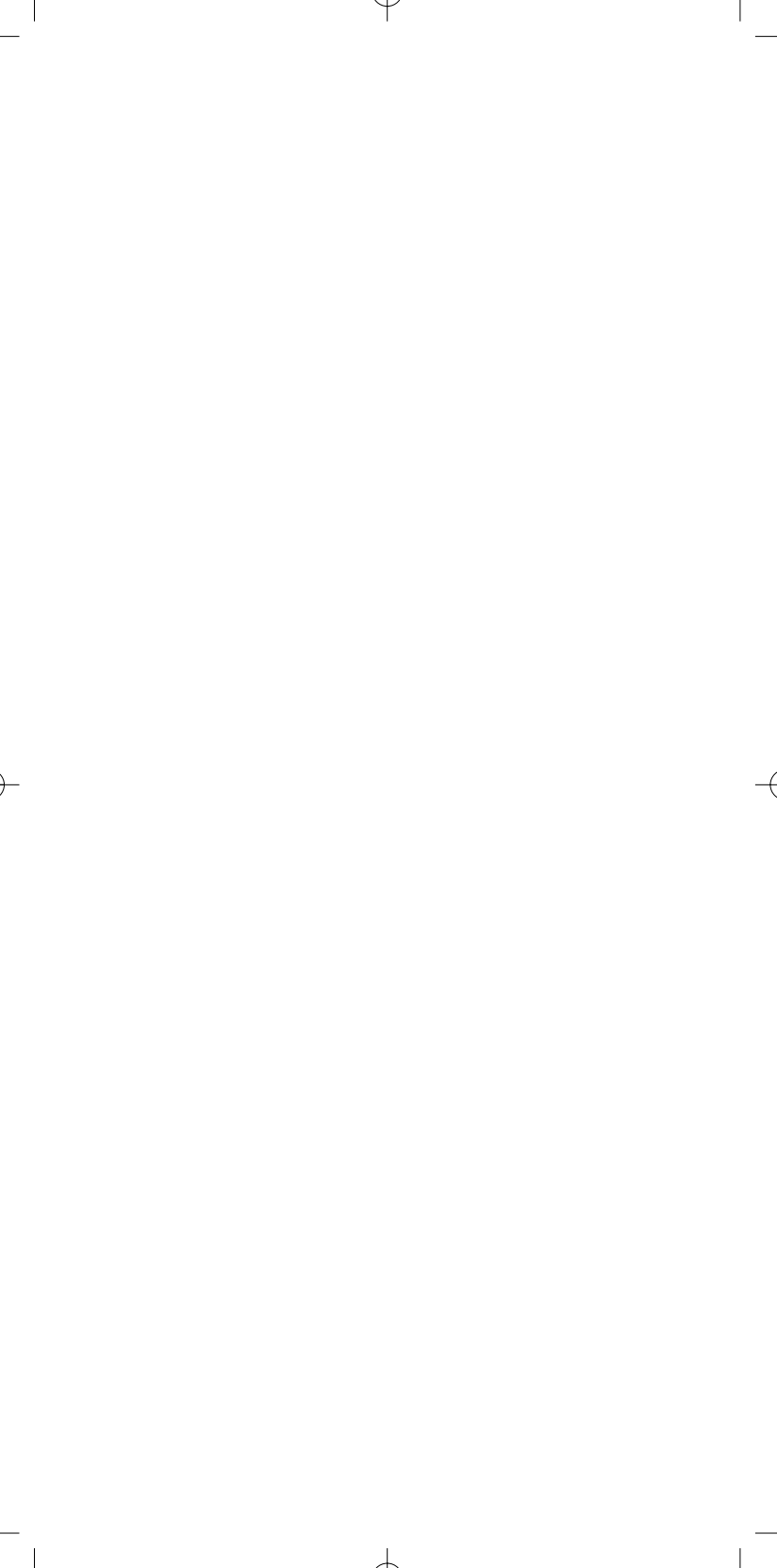


WORLD BANK INSTITUTE  
*Promoting knowledge and learning for a better world*

# Parliamentary Financial Scrutiny: The Role of Public Accounts Committees

**A Report Published by the  
Commonwealth Parliamentary  
Association**

[www.cpahq.org](http://www.cpahq.org)



## **PARLIAMENTARY FINANCIAL SCRUTINY: THE ROLE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEES (PACS)**

**Report of the CPA Parliamentary Financial Scrutiny Workshop, held from 7 to 15 February 2006 in Canberra and Sydney, organized with the World Bank Institute and La Trobe University.**

Parliamentary Public Accounts Committees (PACs) are the institutions by which Westminster-style Parliaments exercise their role in the oversight of public finances. They are the oldest parliamentary committees, dating back to the mid-19th century in Britain, New Zealand, Canada and Australia. As former British colonies became independent and established Parliaments, they were almost inevitably modeled after the British (or Westminster) model and therefore established their own respective Public Accounts Committees.

PACs carry out their responsibilities by examining public finances after expenditure has taken place. This is an *ex post* responsibility, rather than the *ex ante* role in the budget process typical of Legislatures in the United States model. Some PACs (e.g. the state Parliament of Victoria in Australia) also have a role in examining the estimates, but this is unusual. PACs work closely with the Auditor General. Like the Auditor General, PACs are increasingly involved in performance auditing as well as financial auditing.

The elements that the PACs have in common (examining expenditure retrospectively and working closely with the Auditor General) are few. Their diversity, on the other hand, is substantial. Whereas some are joint committees, others consist of Members of only one House. Occasionally, as in Nigeria, each House of Parliament has its own PAC. Usually the committee Chairperson is an opposition Member, but in most Australian PACs, the Chairperson is a government Member. Some committees can call Ministers as witnesses, others cannot and some refrain from doing so.

In pursuit of their shared objective of enhancing parliamentary capacity, the World Bank Institute (WBI) and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) partnered with the Public Sector Governance and Accountability Research

Centre (PSGARC) at La Trobe University, Australia, to hold a workshop on parliamentary financial scrutiny for Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from developing nations.

This followed from previous collaborations between the CPA and the WBI. Over the years, the WBI has sought to increase the capacity of Parliaments in developing countries as a method of increasing transparency and accountability in government. It has developed workshops and seminars designed for Members of PACs and Finance/Budget Committees and their staff, as well as representatives from supreme audit institutions and watchdog agencies, the executive and civil society. The objective is to improve government accountability through parliamentary oversight, principally (but not exclusively) through Parliaments' involvement in the budget process. It has also conducted empirical and analytical research into PACs, including wide-ranging surveys into best practice.

The Parliamentary Financial Scrutiny Workshop was held from 7 to 15 February 2006 in Canberra and Sydney. The participants consisted of 38 Parliamentarians (almost all of whom were senior Members of Public Accounts Committees), parliamentary staff and the Auditors General of Bangladesh, Ghana, Malawi, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Solomon Islands.

They participated in 13 sessions with presenters from La Trobe University PSGARC, the WBI and the CPA. There were also visits to the Public Accounts Committee of the Australian Capital Territory's Legislative Assembly, to the Australian Parliament's Joint Public Accounts and Audit Committee and to the New South Wales Parliament's Public Accounts Committee – one national, one state, one territory, one unicameral House, the largest and the smallest.

## ORGANIZING INSTITUTIONS

The **World Bank Institute** (WBI) is the capacity development arm of the World Bank and helps countries share and apply global and local knowledge to meet development challenges. Its capacity development programmes are designed not only to build skills among groups of individuals involved in performing tasks, but also to strengthen the organizations in which they work and the sociopolitical environment in which they operate.

The **Commonwealth Parliamentary Association** (CPA) is composed of Members of Legislatures in Commonwealth countries. Its mission is to promote the advancement of parliamentary democracy by enhancing knowledge and understanding of democratic governance. Its activities include work in support of the developmental needs of Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff.

The mission of the **Public Sector Governance and Accountability Research Centre** (PSGARC) at La Trobe University, Australia, is to combine academic research into Public Accounts Committees with training programmes. Its Director, Prof. Kerry Jacobs, has a long-standing interest in parliamentary financial scrutiny in the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. Dr Kate Jones, Research Fellow, has researched the Victoria state Legislature's Public Accounts Committee and the career paths of Australian Parliamentarians.

Mr Peter Loney MP, the chair of PSGARC's advisory body, is a former chair of the Australasian Council of the Public Accounts Committee and Victoria's Public Accounts and Audit Committee.

For the workshop PSGARC was able to draw on the assistance of two La Trobe staff Members, Dr Prem Yapa and Mr Sunil Dahanayake, and a postgraduate student, Mr Sajjad Hossain Khan.

## PUBLIC FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND PARLIAMENTS

The conference began by defining and examining critical concepts of democratic governance: transparency, accountability and good governance. With corruption acting as a serious threat to democracy, issues of financial scrutiny are paramount in maintaining the viability of a democratic system of governance. The focus on examining key elements of public financial accountability, i.e. those designed to establish an environment of compliance to laws, rules and best practice, drew largely on the deliberations of an earlier Study Group organized by the CPA and research conducted by Mr David McGee, the Clerk of the Parliament of New Zealand (2002).

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is designed as one of the organizational forms through which Parliament ensures the accountability of government. The Auditor General, also critical in the creation of an ethos of compliance, is usually an appointee of Parliament. The role and relationship of the two are seen as mutually supportive mechanisms in facilitating transparency and minimizing the potential for corruption in government's financial operations.

There are three imperatives to improving the effectiveness of PACs. They are:

- Capacity building, i.e. the provision of adequate resources to improve the ability of Parliaments and their PACs to perform their functions,
- Independence, i.e. freedom from political and legal constraints to carry out duties, and
- Information exchange, i.e. a commitment to keeping PACs up-to-date with best practices.

The conference further emphasized and explored the nexus between PACs and Auditors General, and critical aspects of their accountability functions – primarily that of variations in “formal independence” of the Auditor General and that of executive/legislative derivations. Legislatures are seen as having three vital functions: representative, legislative and oversight. In this regard, they are seen as having serious variations in their respective abilities to perform a function of oversight, based largely on

the variations in cultural arrangements and constitutional authority. There is therefore considerable variation across the Commonwealth in terms of:

- PACs' terms of reference and *modus operandi*,
- the relationship between the Auditor General and the PAC, and
- the relationship of the PAC with Parliament.

Across the board, however, PACs examine efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of policy. In this regard, it is important to place special emphasis on defining performance and identifying major factors that facilitate or hinder performance, such as resource constraints.

### **PROMOTING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY: STRATEGIES TO CURB CORRUPTION**

In focusing on why parliamentary oversight of public funds is important, governance is defined as: “the process and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised”; in other words:

- the process by which governments are selected, held accountable, monitored and replaced,
- the capacity of governments to manage resources efficiently and to formulate, implement and enforce sound policies and regulations, and
- the respect for the institutions that govern economic, political and social affairs, and the interactions among them.

To assist in the operationalization and measurement of governance, each of the main components of this definition can be unbundled into two sub-components:

- Voice and accountability,
- Political stability and lack of violence,
- Quality regulatory framework,
- Government effectiveness,
- Control of corruption and
- Rule of law.

Using measurements of these sub-components, the rela-

tionship between good governance, corruption and development can be explored. In positing a multi-faceted strategy to promote good governance and curb corruption, parliamentary oversight and political accountability must be included along with institutional and civil service reform, economic policy reform, financial controls and an effective legal-judicial system.

If Parliaments are to play a proactive role in promoting transparent and accountable governance then they, too, must adopt transparent operations and be accountable to the electorate on an ongoing basis.

## **PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEES**

Public Accounts Committees have been described as the “ultimate institutional judge” in the *ex post* process of assurance in Parliament of regularity, propriety and “value for money”. They are usually parliamentary standing committees of the lower House. Their role, however well established and valuable, requires investigation in order to further secure their position in ensuring sound public spending. Drawing from a comprehensive CPA study group report commissioned to assess how PACs work and whether they are fulfilling expectations as guarantors of good governance, and on follow-up reports, a number of salient issues were identified. They include:

- The relationship between the PAC and the Auditor General in defining respective remits,
- Defining a policy-neutral mandate for the PAC while at the same time creating factors that make membership of the PAC career-enhancing,
- Creating a clear focus on accountability,
- Developing thorough technical expertise in enhancing PAC capacity,
- The nature and role of the legislative auditor in this regard, and
- Variations in defusing a climate of bi-partisanship and striving towards PAC consensus.

PACs must be seen as an essential part of a country’s systems of integrity and as an efficient mechanism within its political and financial infrastructure. They do not, howev-

er, set their own mandates. This is critical given that PACs need the support of Parliament to carry out their investigations. The scope of a PAC's mandate is determined by Parliament, but how this mandate is implemented is largely dependent upon the committee's Chairperson. A PAC with a committed and strong and skillful Chairperson will undoubtedly gain in effectiveness.

Parliamentarians must give serious consideration to ways of enhancing the role of PACs with emphasis on:

- maintaining the integrity of a country's public sector,
- increasing parliamentary capacity to process increasing volumes of audit information, and
- analyzing issues that pose challenges with a call towards innovative resolutions.

As seen from the study conducted by McGee (2002), the major challenges to PAC effectiveness are connected to a government's lack of responsiveness and severe scarcity of resources. These are not however the only impediments. Other issues concern the overarching need to create consensual relationships between the different constitutional actors. There must also be a focus on audit reports and the evolving nature and quality of audits. The government response is critical in strengthening follow-up steps to a PAC report. Options for dealing with increasing volumes of audit output include the creation of subject-relevant standing committees.

Much of the PACs' work is designed to function as a part of the follow-up process to the work of the Auditor General and it may lead to recommendations for organizational and systems changes in the way ministries operate their accounting and regulatory procedures.

## **AUDITORS GENERAL AND PACS**

The relationship between the Auditor General and the PAC is not uniform throughout the Commonwealth. It has evolved differently in various contexts and jurisdictions. But invariably the role of the Auditor General is dependent on its independence from government. Designing for this independence can have many dimensions: method of

appointment, tenure, career expectations, method of removal, funding and legal immunities.

Drawing from study group findings, the session centered largely on maintaining the prerogative for self-directed action and the integrity of the role of the Auditor General.

The role of the Auditor General must be based in the legislative branch of government, and therefore the Auditor General must be responsible and accountable to Parliament. The supplemental issues of establishing its independence are less straightforward. The debate in this regard is based on issues concerning the nature and method of appointment, terms and removal from office—as in there must be an implemented method for removing or suspending the occupant from office. The role of the Auditor General must also be enhanced by the recruitment and training of staff, with secondment as a good means of developing staff by increasing their range of experiences. This can be critical for the relationship with the executive branch and for reporting to Legislature as a whole. A co-operative working relationships with the PAC regarding preparation of reports and self-monitoring performance are also important.

Many international auditing standards pose numerous difficulties for developing countries on a capacity level. There have been new demands on their expertise toward performance and results auditing, rather just than financial accounting for public expenditure. This has played an enormous in changing expectations of the role of Auditors General. Their expanded remit has grown to including promoting organizational performance and performance-based auditing.

The Auditor General's close relationship with the PAC is one means of maintaining its independence. Formal rules describe the nature this independence, but local circumstances are also essential in this determination. It is the PAC however, that has primary responsibility in safeguarding the independence of the Auditor General by exercising oversight of its work, including taking evidence on the resources available to its office.

### **CASE STUDY: MALAWI**

The Parliament of Malawi's PAC examined an Auditor General report on the Ministry of Education. The government was expanding free primary education but without following all necessary rules and procedures. The Ministry of Education was in a hurry to build schools and purchase teaching materials without following procedures. The Auditor General investigated and reported, and then the investigation was referred to the PAC, which called witnesses to testify. The PAC made several field visits and found instances of misprocurement.

The PAC reported general laxity, and the Permanent Secretary was subsequently told to review some of the cases of mismanagement. According to the PAC report a very significant amount of money was misused in the construction of schools. The matter was then referred to the Anti-Corruption Bureau, which made the following recommendations:

- The Ministry of Education should act for the prompt recovery of money misspent,
- The Ministry of Education should have an agreement with the Auditor General that the amount of irrecoverable money should be written off,
- The Ministry of Education should blacklist corrupt contractors,
- Civil servants also running construction companies implicated should be dealt with under the Public Procurement Act, and
- The government should amend the Public Financial Management Act, recommend an Audit Act and enact a Procurement Act.

### **ENHANCING PAC PERFORMANCE: BENCHMARKING AND STANDARDS**

Enhancing PAC performance requires focusing on PAC leadership and its role as contributing to government accountability, on building sustainable capacity and on results-based effectiveness. Participants at the conference presented cases from their jurisdictions. They identified different scenarios of the working relationship between a

PAC and the Auditor General, cases where major government programmes were not adequately audited, features of effective PACs and key problems faced by PACs in achieving results.

Information exchanges are the most effective way of establishing and improving international standards of performance. There needs to be a focus on strengthening PACs individually and collectively through meetings and developing a database of knowledge regarding their work.

An analysis of performance issues for Public Accounts Committees leads to a number of conclusions as to an “ideal committee” scenario:

- PACs must be relatively small,
- Senior opposition figures should chair PACs,
- The chairperson should be a senior Parliamentarian
- The committee should be appointed for a full term and adequately resourced,
- Committee roles and remits must be clear,
- The committee should meet frequently,
- PAC hearings should be open to the public,
- The Auditor General’s report should be automatically referred to the PAC and the Auditor General should meet with the committee to go over report highlights,
- The PAC should issue formal and substantive reports to Parliament at least annually and
- The PAC should establish a procedure with the government for following up on its work.

## **CONCLUSION**

In relation to public sector governance, the major characteristics of good governance are the accountability and transparency in government operations and expenditure. In relation to how to account for government expenditure, it is necessary that attention is focused on corruption and fraud at the executive and legislative level. More common examples include (but are not limited to): payments to dummy suppliers directly from government funds, intentional overstatement of purchasing prices of government supplies and retaining commissions from government contract payments.

Many improvements should be made as preventive measures to curb corruption within a Westminster-style parliamentary system.

The basic structure should be as follows:

- The Auditor General audits government institutions,
- The Auditor General's reports are duly submitted to the Parliament and
- The Public Accounts Committees take effective and appropriate actions on the recommendations made by the Auditor General.

The following actions have been proposed by the participants of the conference to improve the operational capabilities of Public Accounts Committees and of the Office of the Auditor General:

- Training and capacity building for the Members of the Public Accounts Committee,
- Appointment of an opposition Member as the chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee,
- Statutory and legislative changes to improve the powers of the Auditor General and the Public Accounts Committee,
- PAC membership should be steady rather than having a constant turnover,
- Members need to be able to distinguish between their role as Members of their respective party and their role as a committee Member,
- A bipartisan climate can be a powerful factor in gaining credibility for the reports and recommendations of the PAC, and
- Public involvement and media coverage.

The preventing mechanisms adopted by the Auditors General and Public Accounts Committees in the Commonwealth in order to curb fraud and irregularities at the executive level seem to be adequate, although minor modifications could be made based on the requirements of individual countries.

The technical capacity of the Auditors General could also be improved. Most of the Auditors General in developing countries are using manual methods to carry out govern-

ment auditing functions. They also carry out the auditing functions by applying outdated audit methods. These functions can be improved by applying computer-based audit methodologies such as application of audit software, sampling methods and risk based audit methodologies. This would drastically improve the capacity of the offices of the Auditors General. This would improve public sector governance and transparency in government.

However, too often the Auditor General and the Public Accounts Committee in developing countries are toothless tigers in combating fraud and irregularities. Even where both institutions seem to have adequate constitutional powers and resources, some cannot easily interfere with or investigate public resource mismanagement and corruption happening at the top political level.

\* \* \* \* \*

## PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES AT A GLANCE

Current institutional and organizational arrangements in developing countries are not adequate to prevent and detect fraudulent use and mismanagement of the public funds. Participants in the conference were asked, as part of the programme, to put forward suggestions for action to be taken in their respective countries to improve the capacity and authority of PACs and the Auditor General. The actions proposed will need the political will of governments to strengthen these organizations to overcome the situation.

To further this work, a research project could be developed as a country case study to document its public sector governance, focusing on:

- The current environment of public sector governance,
- The powers and current reporting mechanisms of the Auditor General,
- The powers, current structure and activities of the Public Accounts Committee,
- The current regulatory environment to investigate the misuse of the public funds and
- What actions are needed to improve the current deficiencies in public sector governance area to have a fully responsible government in relation to the usage of public funds?

### BANGLADESH

See [www.bangladeshgov.bd](http://www.bangladeshgov.bd) for further information.

The context:

- The PAC is formed under the constitution, reports to Parliament and the Speaker can authorize debates on the report. Membership is 15, with no minority parties.
- Meetings are held in camera, but debated information is released to the media immediately after the meeting.
- The PAC establishes subcommittees.
- The Comptroller and Auditor General provides support to the PAC.
- There is no separate budget for the PAC.

- The PAC secretariat is not separate from the parliamentary secretariat.
- US\$30 million were recovered by the PAC in the last two years.
- A World Bank grant has been given to: Help with follow-up, provide support, help create a relationship between the PAC and the Auditor General, develop information disclosure and dissemination procedures and help establish a permanent secretariat and training for PAC Members and staff.

#### Action plan

- The PAC Chairperson should have sufficient powers and a mandate for a full team.
- There should be support for a regional association of PACs.
- The PAC should be strengthened by specifying constitutional powers for it, ensuring it is accountable to Parliament.
- There should be a recommendation that the PAC Chairperson should have the status of a Minister.
- The office of the Auditor General should be given the status of a government division to achieve financial and administrative independence
- The Auditor General should have authority to recruit staff as and when necessary.

#### **GHANA**

See [www.ghana.gov.gh](http://www.ghana.gov.gh) for further background information.

#### The context:

- The PAC is established under standing orders, with no more than 25 Members, chaired by the Minority Leader.
- Since 2005, the PAC includes ranking opposition Members.
- The PAC has the rights and privileges of the High Court and can examine witnesses.
- Financial management is codified in Acts of Parliament and standing orders.
- Parliament approves the budget and the use of funds through the PAC.

- Standing orders state that the executive should not oversee its own expenditure.
- There are two schools of thought regarding practices and norms: That the committee should be limited to examining only reports of the Auditor General, or that there should be far greater scope for its investigations.
- Meetings are held in camera. Though the chairperson can decide to open them to the public, thus far this has not happened.
- The Auditor General reports to Parliament and is appointed by the President (with a removal procedure method similar to that for a judge).
- Response of government officials and ministries is good but there should be greater follow-up on recommendations.

### Action plan

- PAC meetings should be open to the media. Currently, the standing orders allow the Chairperson to open up meetings to the media and the public, but this is not practiced.
- Follow up on recommendations and ask for an action-taken report.
- Review and approve the appointment of the Auditor General to ensure independence.
- Standing orders should be amended to allow independent meetings, which currently requires the Speaker's approval.
- The budget of the Auditor General should be reviewed by the PAC.
- The Auditor General should be given power to recruit staff. Currently the Auditor General needs authorization from the Ministry of Finance for recruitment, but in practice recruitment has not been authorized.
- Make recommendations and ensure timely implementation.
- Auditor General reports should be properly debated in Parliament.
- A West African association of PACs should be established.

## MALAWI

See [www.malawi.gov.mw](http://www.malawi.gov.mw) for further background information.

The context:

- The PAC has 21 Members, seven from the largest opposition party, six from the government party, four independents, and two from small opposition parties.
- The PAC needs to focus on current issues rather than older, traditional ones.
- The PAC needs to develop an internal audit.

Action plan

- A task force should be established to focus on old issues so that the PAC can deal with current issues.
- The PAC should be opened to media, which will require a change in standing orders.
- There must be a change in staff.
- Technical capacity should be improved through training.
- The Auditor General's budget allocation must be increased to fulfill its mandate.
- The Auditor General report should be tabled in Parliament and then passed to PAC for recommendations.

## NIGERIA

See [www.nigeria.gov.ng](http://www.nigeria.gov.ng) for further background information

The context:

- Bicameral system where the House and Senate have PACs. They work on similar issues, but have to concur. The Senate committee has 10 Members and the House committee is larger. Both Chairpersons are from an opposition party.
- The President, who can send three nominations, nominates the Auditor General and Parliament chooses one. Only the National Assembly can fire the Auditor General.
- The Auditor General describes the work as “managing a minefield”.
- The power of sanction can be enforced, but only since

1999 has the PAC threatened to arrest people.

- All meetings are open to the media, but sensitive issues are discussed in camera.

Action plan:

- There is a “no one size fits all” approach. There needs to be different contexts that recognize non-parliamentary systems.
- There should be timely response from government to PAC recommendations
- The PAC should have the power of sanction if witnesses do not arrive.
- Adequate funding of the committee must be secured.
- There needs to be greater focus on the audit.
- There should be greater powers in the Auditor General’s remit.
- The Legislature should ensure that the Auditor General speeds up reporting.
- A performance audit should be carried out.

## **PAKISTAN**

Please see [www.pak.gov.pk](http://www.pak.gov.pk) for further information.

The context:

- The PAC was constituted in 2004.
- The PAC is an organ of the National Assembly, and the speaker determines procedural issues.
- The PAC is composed of 19 Members: 10 from the government party and senior opposition Members. A bipartisan spirit prevails.
- There is a backlog of 26,000 paras that have taken up current year’s audit.
- Four sub-committees take up and examine old audit, and allow current paras (2001/02) to be handled.
- Pkrs4.5 billion have been recovered in four years out of Pkrs10 billion from different departments.
- The PAC has also taken up issues not referred by the Auditor General (e.g. related to the Stock Exchange).
- Proceedings are open to the media.

#### Action plan:

- There is a need to educate MPs regarding the PAC's remit
- The PAC needs to create a mechanism to ensure that its decisions are implemented.
- Plan are being made to change the rules and procedures so that the PAC can take up take action on own account.
- There should be regular interaction between federal and provincial PACs.
- A South Asian PAC network should be promoted.
- As soon as the Auditor General report is tabled, it should be posted on the Internet.
- The PAC should follow up to see if its recommendations have been implemented by departments
- There is a need to reach out to citizens through open meetings and seminars throughout the country.

## **SOLOMON ISLANDS**

#### The context:

- The PAC and Public Expenditure Committee were amalgamated in 1995.
- The Chairperson of the PAC is the Leader of Opposition.
- The PAC is established under standing orders.
- The role and function of the PAC is to examine draft estimates.
- There is a lack of executive answerability.
- The lack of resources to support Members of Parliament is identified as a significant problem.

#### Action plan:

- Since Members are taken up with constituency concerns, training Members and utilizing a development scheme to support them in their constituency duties can address the issue of attention to PAC matters.
- The government should be required to respond to the PAC and this response should be tabled in Parliament.
- There should be a recommendation to allow media to cover PAC meetings.
- The PAC should schedule meetings for presentation

to House and there should be sufficient time for review of estimates.

- The Auditor General should be given a separate secretariat to improve staffing.
- There should be more training for the Auditor General's staff, who currently do not have university degrees.
- There should be a review of the legal framework so that there is separate audit and financial funding.
- There should be a wider focus for the Auditor General in the National Audit Act to extend to their oversight to performance and environmental auditing.

## **SRI LANKA**

See [www.gov.lk](http://www.gov.lk) for further information.

The context:

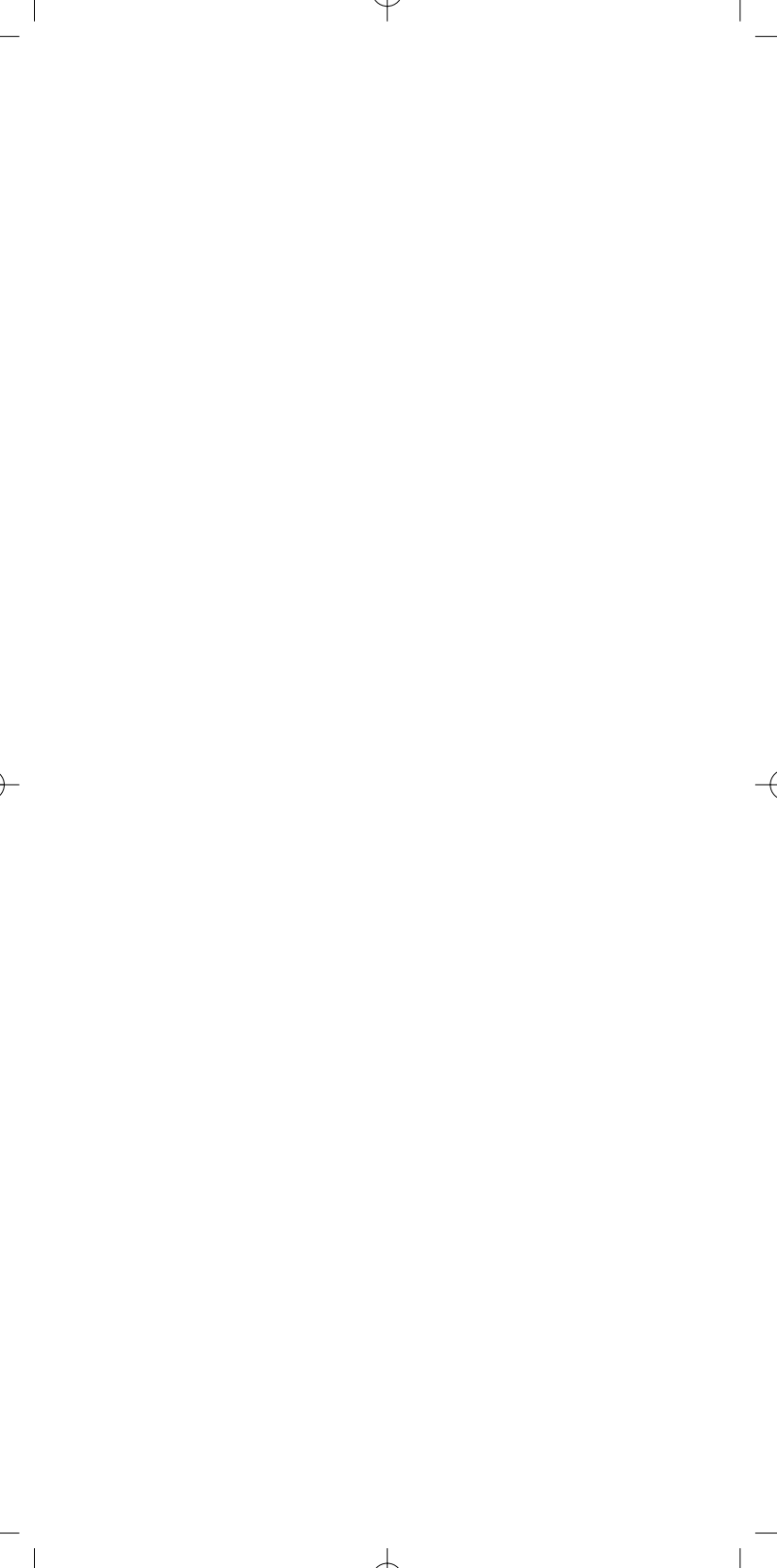
- Inherited a British system but created to separate committees, the Committee on Public Expenses (COPE) and Committee on Public Accounts (COPA), to examine public enterprises.
- The PAC cannot question policy.
- The constitution gives Parliament sole authority to make decisions on financial matters.
- Standing orders mandate the creation of COPE and COPA to examine accounts and reports of the Auditor General. It also authorizes the creation of sub-committees and gives powers to examine documents and call witnesses.
- COPE examines accounts of government corporations and semi-government institutions.
- Membership of COPE/COPA is at 19 Members.
- The chairperson is usually from the government party, but not always.
- There has been a rapid growth of government expenditure and an increase in the complexity of government funding.
- Parliamentary control mechanisms have not been updated to match changes in public financial management.
- There has been a needs assessment of COPE and COPA.
- In order to improve the quality of COPE and COPA, a training process for staff has been established.

- COPE and COPA do not have sufficient power to implement recommendations and reports are not debated in Parliament.

#### Action plan

- The committees should be open to the media and public.
- The committee chairperson should be from the opposition.
- The amendment that the Auditor General has a non-term limit position and is only removed “if seen to be mentally unfit” should be removed.
- The Auditor General’s budget is currently determined by the Treasury, but should be determined by a parliamentary committee.
- There should be a new Audit Act, which incorporates capacity building.

\* \* \* \* \*



**COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION SECRETARIAT  
SUITE 700, WESTMINSTER HOUSE, 7 MILLBANK,  
LONDON SW1P 3JA, UNITED KINGDOM.**

**TEL.: (+44-20) 7799-1460**

**FAX: (+44-20) 7222-6073**

**E-MAIL: [hq.sec@cpahq.org](mailto:hq.sec@cpahq.org)**

**WEBSITE: [www.cpahq.org](http://www.cpahq.org)**

August 2006