



PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2004-2005

Report No. 2

in the 37th Parliament

2005

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Public Accounts Committee

Annual Report 2004-2005

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Report No. 2

Presented by:

Mr J.R. Quigley, MLA

Laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly
on 22nd September 2005

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman

Mr J.R. Quigley, MLA
Member for Mindarie

Members

Mr N.R. Marlborough, MLA
Member for Peel

Mr A.D. McRae, MLA (from 25.05.2005)
Member for Riverton

Mr D.T. Redman, MLA
Member for Stirling

Dr S.C. Thomas, MLA
Member for Capel

Mr M.P. Whitely, MLA
Member for Bassendean (to 25.05.2005)

COMMITTEE STAFF

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COMMITTEE'S FUNCTIONS AND POWERS

The Public Accounts Committee inquires into and reports to the Legislative Assembly on any proposal, matter or thing it considers necessary, connected with the receipt and expenditure of public moneys, including moneys allocated under the annual Appropriation bills and Loan Fund. Standing Order 285 of the Legislative Assembly states that:

The Committee may -

- 1 Examine the financial affairs and accounts of government agencies of the State which includes any statutory board, commission, authority, committee, or trust established or appointed pursuant to any rule, regulation, by-law, order, order in Council, proclamation, ministerial direction or any other like means.
- 2 Inquire into and report to the Assembly on any question which -
 - (a) it deems necessary to investigate;
 - (b) is referred to it by resolution of the Assembly;
 - (c) is referred to it by a Minister; or
 - (d) is referred to it by the Auditor General.
- 3 Consider any papers on public expenditure presented to the Assembly and such of the expenditure as it sees fit to examine.
- 4 Consider whether the objectives of public expenditure are being achieved, or may be achieved more economically.

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the Public Accounts Committee's first annual report in the 37th Parliament. The Committee has welcomed additional portfolio responsibilities in the new Parliament, including Federal Affairs, Government Enterprises and the Premier.

The Committee has already completed one inquiry based on its new responsibility of Federal Affairs, tabling a Report on 19 May 2005 entitled, *Inquiry into the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Reform of Commonwealth-State Financial Relations*.

The Committee has also worked to build on the good work of the Auditor General's public sector performance examinations, resolving to follow up with Government agencies as they respond to the Auditor General's recommendations.

I thank the Committee members for their contribution to this point: Mr Norm Marlborough, Mr Terry Redman, Dr Steve Thomas, Mr Tony McRae and Mr Martin Whitely. The enthusiasm of members has been commendable and I look forward to working with them towards effective, efficient and accountable government in Western Australia.

MR J.R. QUIGLEY, MLA
CHAIRMAN

CHAPTER 1 COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

1.1 Introduction

The reporting period 2004-2005 encompasses two parliamentary sessions. The 36th Parliament and its Committees were dissolved in January 2005 preceding a State election on 26 February 2005 (refer to section 1.6). Table 1.1 represents the activities of the PAC in the 37th Parliament to June 2005, in which the Committee:

- Completed one inquiry:
- Held nine deliberative meetings; and
- Held one public hearing.

Table 1.1

Summary of activities of the Public Accounts Committee, 7 April 2005 - 30 June 2005

Description	Activity
Briefings	1
Deliberative meetings	9
Formal evidence hearings	1
Witnesses appearing	1
Reports tabled	1
Report findings tabled	1
Report recommendations tabled	0

1.2 Public Hearings

Pursuant to Assembly Standing Order 264, the Committee has power to send for persons, papers and records. During the period 7 April 2005 - 30 June 2005, the Committee conducted one public hearing, taking evidence from one witness to assist with its investigations (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2**Public Hearings of the Public Accounts Committee, 7 April 2005 - 30 June 2005**

Date	Witness	Position	Organisation
18.05.2005	Professor Greg Craven	Executive Director	John Curtin Institute of Public Policy, Curtin University of Technology

1.3 Briefings

In addition to gathering evidence during the formal hearing, the Committee received one informal briefing. The briefing provided information to the Committee to assist in monitoring public sector responses to reports tabled in the Legislative Assembly by the Auditor General (Table 1.3).

Table 1.3**Briefings provided to the Public Accounts Committee, 7 April 2005 - 30 June 2005**

Date	Name	Position	Organisation
04.05.2005	Mr Des Pearson	Auditor General	Office of the Auditor General of Western Australia
04.05.2005	Mr Graham Baker	Performance Review Division	Office of the Auditor General of Western Australia
04.05.2005	Mr Peter Wilkins	Business and Strategic Services	Office of the Auditor General of Western Australia

1.4 Reports Tabled

The Committee tabled one report during the period 7 April 2005 - 30 June 2005, entitled *Report on the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Reform of Commonwealth-State Financial Relations* (tabled 19 May 2005).

1.5 Work in Progress

Following the completion of its *Inquiry into the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Reform of Commonwealth-State Financial Relations*, the Committee undertook preliminary investigations into various areas of interest, including:

- local government accountability;
- Commonwealth grants to Western Australia;
- export infrastructure;
- the role of the Public Accounts Committee; and
- issues related to competition and free trade.

1.6 Work of the previous Committee

The former Public Accounts Committee was dissolved in January 2005 when the 36th Parliament was prorogued. The Committee completed two inquiries in the latter half of 2004.

On 16 September 2004, the Committee tabled a report in the Legislative Assembly in relation to its *Inquiry into Contracts Entered Into Between Consolidated Constructions Pty Ltd and Main Roads WA and the Public Transport Authority*.

The Committee's inquiry into *Developer Contributions for Infrastructure Costs Associated with Land Development* was completed when its final report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 21 October 2004.

CHAPTER 2 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Public Accounts Committee does not have its own formal budget and is funded out of the budget of the Legislative Assembly. Approval for major expenditures is required on a case-by-case basis and is entirely at the discretion of the Speaker.

The Committee's expenditure for the period 7 April 2005 - 30 June 2005 (in accordance with Standing Order 276) is detailed below:

Table 2.1

Expenditure Items of the Public Accounts Committee, 7 April 2005 - 30 June 2005

Expenditure Item	\$
Protocol	\$200.00
TOTAL	\$200.00

Notes:

- Figures rounded off to nearest \$100.
- Salaries of committee staff are not included.
- Costs of shared administrative expenses, including lease costs for committee accommodation, not included.