

Submission No. 2



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Ms Judy Middlebrook
Secretary
House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Procedure
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Ms Middlebrook

Thank you for your invitation to make a submission to the committee on the examination of estimates of proposed expenditure.

The Legislative Assembly of New South Wales in some ways has taken a different course in terms of practice for the examination of estimates than is the case in other jurisdictions.

The Legislative Assembly considers the Appropriation Bills in the same manner as regular bills, ie second reading debate (with an extra 10 minutes speaking time for members – maximum 30 minutes) and committee of the whole, with the provision on motion for the consideration of the budget estimates in committee of the whole on the Appropriation Bills.

In addition there are the provisions of Standing Order 284 relating to estimates committees (copy attached for your reference).

Previously, joint estimates committees were appointed by both Houses for the examination of proposed expenditure. However, since 1995 the practice has been for the Legislative Assembly not to participate in the estimates committee processes. Nor, in recent times, has the Legislative Assembly considered the Appropriation Bills and consequently the budget estimates in committee of the whole.

I would also like to suggest generally that a beneficial additional arm in the scrutiny of expenditure would be the most recently available annual report of a body being referred for consideration in conjunction with the estimates.

I hope this information will be useful for the committee's inquiry. Should you require further information do not hesitate to write again or telephone Leslie Gönye, Clerk-Assistant (Committees) on 02 9230 2224.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Russell D Grove', written over a large, stylized flourish.

Russell D Grove
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Estimates Committees

284. (1) During the second reading debate on the Appropriation Bill on motion of a Minister, the House may appoint Estimates Committees.

(2) The Estimates Committees shall examine and report on proposed expenditures from the Consolidated Fund for each organisational unit for each Minister listed in the tabled Estimates, and the corresponding clauses and schedules of the Appropriation Bill and the Parliamentary Appropriation Bill which shall stand referred to the appropriate Committee.

(3) The Report of each Estimates Committee shall state whether the Votes of each organisational unit in the Estimates and the corresponding clauses and schedules in the Appropriation Bill are recommended or otherwise.

The failure of an Estimates Committee to report on any part of the votes shall be deemed to be a report recommending the proposed expenditure.

(4) The Chairman of each Committee or a Member deputed by the Chairman shall, after the committee has concluded its deliberations and after the question on the second reading of the Appropriation Bill and the Parliamentary Appropriation Bill has been agreed to, present the Committee's Report to the Speaker in the House.

The Speaker shall set down consideration of the Reports in Committee of the Whole on the Appropriation Bill and the Parliamentary Appropriation Bill respectively.

(5) Consideration of a Report in the Committee of the Whole House shall be deemed to be consideration of those clauses and schedules of the Appropriation Bill and the Parliamentary Appropriation Bill referred to that Estimates Committee.

(6) In the Committee of the Whole:

- (a) The Chairman shall put the question in respect of each Committee Report, "That the Report of the (name of the Committee) be adopted".
- (b) A Member may speak for a maximum of 5 minutes and the Minister in reply may speak for a maximum of 15 minutes on each of the questions.
- (c) Those clauses and schedules of the Appropriation Bill and the Parliamentary Appropriation Bill not referred to an Estimates Committee shall be considered as one question, "That the remaining clauses and schedules of the Bill be agreed to".
- (d) At the conclusion of proceedings in Committee the Chairman shall report to the Speaker that the Committee has or has not adopted the Reports from the Estimates Committees.