

**AUSTRALASIAN COUNCIL  
of  
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEES  
“ACPAC”**

**CONSTITUTION**

As amended, 13 April 2007, 9<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference, Canberra

**1. Establishment**

The Australasian Council of Public Accounts Committees (ACPAC) is hereby established.

**2. Aims**

The aims of ACPAC are:

- 2.1 To facilitate the exchange of information and opinion relating to Public Accounts Committees and to discuss matters of mutual concern.
- 2.2 To improve the quality and performance of Public Accounts Committees in Australasia.
- 2.3 To liaise with Auditors-General so as to improve the effectiveness of both the Auditors and the Public Accounts Committees.
- 2.4 To communicate with individuals and organisations knowledgeable about matters of concern to public accountability.
- 2.5 To provide an educational service for the elected Members of Parliament, the media and the general public as to the purposes and activities of Public Account Committees.

**3. Membership**

- 3.1 Full membership of ACPAC is open to all Australasian Parliamentary Public Accounts Committees. “Australasia” is defined as Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and the Solomon Islands.
- 3.2 Associate membership of ACPAC is open to representatives of Parliamentary Public Accounts Committees which do not qualify for full membership and which are invited by ACPAC to attend its conferences.
- 3.3 Associate membership lasts for such period as the ACPAC conference determines. Eligible persons and bodies may be invited by ACPAC to reapply when their membership expires.
- 3.4 “Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee”, in the case of those jurisdictions which lack a Committee of that description, includes the Committee most resembling such a Public Accounts Committee in function and power. In the case of Western Australia, “Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee” shall be taken to refer to the Public

Accounts Committee of the Legislative Assembly and the Estimates and Financial Operations Committee of the Legislative Council. A reference in this constitution to a Committee is to a Public Accounts Committee as so defined.

#### **4. Conference**

- 4.1 ACPAC shall meet at least biennially in the form of a conference with the meeting open to members of Committees which have either full or associate membership, staff of such Committees and such other persons as may be invited by the host Committee to attend as observers in accordance with section 6.4.
- 4.2 In the case of questions to be decided at the ACPAC Conference, one vote only may be cast by each jurisdiction represented by the Chairperson, or his/her nominee, of a full member Committee from that jurisdiction. For a jurisdiction represented by more than one Committee, not less than one month before the conference the jurisdiction shall advise the secretariat of the host Committee who shall exercise that vote. Otherwise the vote of that jurisdiction shall be forfeited.
- 4.3 Associate members have the right to present papers and to participate in debates on items on the conference agenda but not to vote or to move motions.

#### **5. Mid-Term Meetings**

- 5.1 ACPAC shall meet between conferences in the form of a meeting of Chairpersons (or their nominees), Committee Members, Executive Officers and Secretaries of full member Committees. Where necessary the meeting should extend to a second day so as to allow for discussion of any outstanding issues or problems.
- 5.2 In the case of questions to be decided at the mid-term meeting, one vote only may be cast by each jurisdiction represented by the Chairperson, or his/her nominee, of a full member Committee from that jurisdiction. For a jurisdiction represented by more than one Committee, not less than one month before the mid-term meeting the jurisdiction shall advise the secretariat of the host Committee who shall exercise that vote. Otherwise the vote of that jurisdiction shall be forfeited.
- 5.3 The purpose of the mid-term meeting is to discuss and agree on an agenda for the ACPAC conference and to discuss issues specifically pertaining to Australasian Committees.
- 5.4 The mid-term meeting of ACPAC also has power to recommend changes to the ACPAC constitution. However, no such change can be recommended in the absence of agreement by all the Chairpersons of the full member Committees (or their nominees) who are in attendance at that meeting.
- 5.5 Where a change to the constitution is recommended by the mid-term meeting, a motion for its approval shall be the first item of business at the next ACPAC conference. For any change to succeed it will require the support of 75 per cent of the Committees which were full members of ACPAC before the mid-term meeting. If successful, it shall have immediate effect.

- 5.6 Mid-term meetings may also propose and approve associate memberships for the next ACPAC conference.

## **6. Host Committee**

- 6.1 Following the conclusion of each ACPAC conference the Chairperson of the Committee which is voted to be the host Committee for the next biennial conference becomes the Chair of ACPAC and the Secretary of that Committee becomes the Secretary of ACPAC.
- 6.2 Unless otherwise agreed, it is the task of the new host Committee to take control immediately following the conclusion of the biennial conference with responsibility for convening the next mid-term meeting and biennial conference, both of which are to be held in the host jurisdiction.
- 6.3 The host Committee is required to compile and update every six months a publication containing information about members of ACPAC, including names, telephone numbers, postal addresses and email addresses of Chairpersons, Executive Officers and Secretaries of full member Committees.
- 6.4 The host Committee may invite Auditors-General (or their nominees), and/or other persons, academic specialists, members of the media and other special guests to attend the biennial conference as observers and to participate in the conference, or sessions of the conference. These persons may be invited to participate in debate but have no power to vote or to move motions.

## **7. Powers of the ACPAC Chairperson**

- 7.1 The Chairperson of ACPAC is empowered to make public statements on behalf of ACPAC provided the statements:
  - (a) reflect a policy or resolution of ACPAC; or
  - (b) have been agreed to in writing by all full member Committees.