

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Mission Statement and Guiding Principles

Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick

Mission Statement

The mission of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts is to scrutinize public expenditures in a nonpartisan manner to ensure that New Brunswick taxpayers are getting value for their tax-dollar investments. To meet its mission, the Committee will use the annual reports referred to it, reports of the Auditor General of New Brunswick, recommendations from the Auditor General's Office, and Committee recommendations in order to examine the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of program delivery and performance measures as well as the adherence to government policies, directives and standards.

Guiding Principles

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts offers nonpartisan oversight to assure that public funding is invested efficiently and effectively so that services are delivered to New Brunswickers and that taxpayers are getting value for their tax-dollar investments.

As such, Members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts shall adhere to the following four guiding principles in their work with the Committee: collaboration, respect, purpose, and reporting.

1. Collaboration

To effectively scrutinize public expenditures, Members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts should remember their responsibility to collaborate in a nonpartisan way with their fellow Committee Members. The following are reminders for Members:

- a. Members should focus on examining the expenditures of the entity before them and not use the Committee as a platform to engage in political rhetoric.
- b. Members should engage in meaningful lines of questions and avoid leading or ingratiating questions.

2. Respect

To effectively scrutinize public expenditures, Members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts must demonstrate respect for one another and extend that respect to persons appearing before the Committee. The following are reminders for Members:

- a. Members should never speak over their fellow Committee Members or make comments or judgements on another Member's line of questions.
- b. Members should respect the time allotted to them for questions and avoid asking lengthy questions at the end of their allocated time with the prescribed rotation.
- c. Members should be succinct in their questions and avoid prolonged preambles to their questions.
- d. Members should direct any points of order or objections to the Chair.

3. Purpose

To effectively scrutinize public expenditures, Members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts are tasked with conducting themselves in a manner that demonstrates the seriousness with which the Committee takes the Province's finances. The following are reminders for Members:

- a. Members should focus their questions on an entity's mandate, management and operation, and any past recommendations from the Committee or the Auditor General to elicit specific actions and commitments from the entity in question.
- b. Members should use their time wisely by keeping their questions focused and ensuring the person appearing before the Committee fully answers their questions. Members should encourage the person appearing before the Committee to focus on answering their questions straightforwardly. Should the person appearing before the Committee take the Member's question under advisement, the Member should establish a timeline for receiving the answer.

4. Reporting

To foster an accountable and open environment, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts should present a report to the Legislative Assembly, with key observations and recommendations where necessary.