

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

International Conference Paper - Statement by Member for Ballajura

MR J.B. D'ORAZIO (Ballajura) [11.33 pm]: I rise to inform the House on behalf of the Public Accounts Committee that the committee has been invited to deliver a paper at an international conference in Norway. It is a biennial conference of the Comparative International Government Accounting Research organisation. The conference is expected to have more than 200 registered participants. It is an international network of senior public sector managers, scholars and practitioners involved in public sector auditing, financial reporting, budgeting and accounting. It was established in the late 1980s to promote cooperation and information exchange between scholars and practitioners from different countries working in the same fields. The theme of the conference is international trends experienced in government accounting, broad and clear accountability of public entities, performance measurement and annual and financial reporting developments. The paper the committee has been asked to present is on the role of parliamentary committees, particularly public accounts committees, in overseeing the receipt and expenditure of public moneys across the public sector. The committee will present a clear focus on the experience in Western Australia, especially on ensuring the accountability of public entities. To that degree, I inform the House that I, as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, together with the deputy chairman, the member for Stirling and the senior research officer, will present this paper in Norway.

The conference offers us a valuable opportunity to meet and exchange information and ideas with colleagues and experts from other countries working in similar areas. This will assist the committee in its new inquiry reviewing the powers and role of the Public Accounts Committee. Whilst in Norway, we also intend to meet with our PAC equivalent in the Norwegian Parliament. That Parliament is made up of 165 members, and its Finance and Economic Affairs Committee is the equivalent of our committee. This will give us an insight into a non-Westminster system country and will provide us with an opportunity to learn about its committee system and the powers and functions of its PAC equivalent. It will also help us in the review we are currently undertaking.

On the way to Norway we will stop in London and meet with the Western Australian Agent General, who has invited us to participate in the celebrations for WA Foundation Day on 2 June. We will also be meeting with the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons and observing a public hearing of that committee on 4 June, when evidence will be given by the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. We will also meet with and observe a hearing of the Public Administration Select Committee on 5 June, when evidence will be given by high-profile witnesses on the question of the honours system and its effects on public administration. We will be meeting with the United Kingdom Auditor General and Comptroller, Sir John Bourn, at the UK National Audit Office on 4 June. We will meet with senior health officials and possibly the Minister for Health in relation to the UK national health service, particularly hospital trust accounts and visiting medical practitioners, matters relevant to our Public Accounts Committee's current inquiries. The deputy chairman, the principal research officer and I will conduct this travel, which has been authorised and will occur from 1 June.

House adjourned at 11.36 pm
