

COMMITTEES

A lot of work, inquiry and research is undertaken behind the scenes of parliament and the chamber in committee meetings. They make recommendations based on their research and investigations. This includes listening to experts and the general public for their advice and opinions.

There are permanent (or 'standing') committees and others can be set up for either a session (a four year term of an Assembly) or for a particular purpose (a 'select committee') over a shorter time.

Each committee consists of members of both the government and opposition, and at times, independent members. Some members belong to more than one committee. Each committee has a chairperson elected by the committee members.

Standing Orders Committee

Ensures the rules that control the running of parliament are workable and fair. The committee recommends to the Assembly changes to the rules, for example how long members are allowed to speak in certain debates.

Public Accounts Committee

Examines how the government and government bodies spend money to make sure it is spent properly and they are accountable. Standing Order 177.

Committee of Privileges

Inquires into any reported actions which break the rules of parliament or actions by a person or organisation which are disrespectful to the parliament.

Subordinate Legislation and Publications Committee

Examines and reports on all papers that are presented to the Assembly. It also checks whether any proposed regulations - documents that provide operational details to a bill or law - are legal and do not take away people's rights. Standing Order 176.

House Committee

Makes decisions about the operation of Parliament House and related matters.

Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee

Inquires, reports and makes recommendations on constitutional and legal matters that are referred by the Legislative Assembly or the Attorney General. Standing Order 178.

Select Committees

Select Committees have investigated a wide range of issues including Euthanasia (1995), Territory Food Prices (1999), Substance Abuse in the Community (2001 - 2008), Youth Suicide (2011 - 2012), Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (2014), Government Owned Corporations Scrutiny (2014), Fuel Price Disclosure Bill Scrutiny (2014 - 2015), Ice (2015) and Port of Darwin (2015).

Sessional Committees

Over time, the Legislative Assembly has established several sessional committees. For instance in the 12th Assembly the Sessional Committee on the Northern Territory's Energy Future examined the Territory's capacity to meet its own future energy demands.