

COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES

Composition

The Committee on Estimates consists of 30 members—all from Lok Sabha who are elected by Lok Sabha every year from amongst its members according to the principle of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote. This system of election ensures that each Party/Group is represented on the Committee in proportion to its strength in Lok Sabha.

Process of Election

2. Every year a motion is moved in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, or at the commencement of each Lok Sabha and in subsequent years, by the Chairperson of the Committee, calling upon members of the House to elect from amongst themselves 30 members to the Committee on Estimates. After the motion is adopted, a programme fixing the dates for filing the nominations, withdrawal of candidatures and the election, if necessary, is notified in Lok Sabha Bulletin—Part II. On receipt of nominations, a list of members who have filed the nomination papers is put up on the Notice Boards. In case the number of members nominated is

equal to the number of members to be elected, then after expiry of time for withdrawal of candidature, the members nominated are declared elected and the result published in Bulletin—Part II. If the number of members nominated after withdrawals is more than the number of members to be elected, election is held on the stipulated date and result of election published in Bulletin—Part II.

Appointment of Chairperson

3. The Chairperson of the Committee is appointed by the Speaker from amongst the members elected to the Committee.

Minister not to be Member of Committee

4. A Minister is not elected to be a member of the Committee, and if a member, after election to the Committee, is appointed a Minister, such member ceases to be a member of the Committee from the date of such appointment.

Term of Office

5. The term of office of the members of the Committee does not exceed one year.

Association of member with Government Committee

6. A member, on getting elected to the Committee, has to communicate to the office of the Committee the particulars regarding the various Committees or bodies

appointed by Government with which the member is associated, for being placed before the Speaker. Where the Speaker considers it inappropriate that a member should continue to serve on the Government Committee, the member is required to resign membership of the Committee constituted by Government. Where the Speaker permits a member to continue to hold membership of Government Committee, the Speaker may require that the report of the Government Committee shall be placed before the Committee on Estimates for such comments as the latter Committee may deem fit to make, before it is presented to Government. Whenever the Chairperson or any member of the Committee on Estimates is invited to accept membership of any Committee constituted by Government, the matter is likewise to be placed before the Speaker before the appointment is accepted.

Functions

7. The Committee on Estimates is constituted under Rule 310 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha for examination of such of the estimates as may seem fit to the Committee or are specifically referred to it by the House or the Speaker. The functions of the Committee are (a) to report what economies, improvements in organisation, efficiency or administrative reform, consistent with the policy underlying the estimates, may be effected; (b) to suggest

alternative policies in order to bring about efficiency and economy in administration; (c) to examine whether the money is well laid out within the limits of the policy implied in the estimates; and (d) to suggest the form in which the estimates shall be presented to Parliament.

Public Undertakings allotted to the Committee on Public Undertakings either under the Rules of Procedure of Lok Sabha or by the Speaker do not come under the purview of the Committee on Estimates.

Examination of Estimates

8. The examination by the Committee of the estimates for the Ministries/Departments of Government is a continuing exercise throughout the financial year and the Committee reports to the House as its examination proceeds. It is not incumbent on the Committee to examine the entire estimates in any one year. The Demands for Grants may be finally voted even though the Committee has made no report.

Examination of Matters of Policy

9. The term 'policy' referred to in Rule 310 relates only to policies laid down by Parliament either by means of statutes or by specific resolutions passed by it from time to time. It is also open to the Committee to examine any matter which may have been settled as a matter of policy by the Government in the discharge of its executive functions.

The Committee does not go against the policy approved by Parliament; but where it is established on evidence that a particular policy is not leading to the expected or desired results or is leading to waste, it is the duty of the Committee to bring to the notice of the House that a change in policy is called for.

Selection of Subjects for Examination

10. At the beginning of its term every year, usually, at the first sitting, the Committee selects subjects concerning the estimates or any part of the estimates of a Ministry/Department of Central Government or such statutory and Government organisations subordinate thereto, as do not fall within the purview of the Committee on Public Undertakings for examination during the year.

The Committee may also select for examination matters of special interest which, though unconnected with the estimates of any particular Ministry/Department of the Government, may arise or come to light, in the course of its work which it may consider necessary to bring to the notice of the House.

Matters referred to the Committee by the House/ Speaker

11. Apart from the subjects selected by the Committee for examination, *ad hoc* subjects of public importance may also be referred to Committee for examination from time to time by the House or the

Speaker. Such references may be made either through observations made by the Speaker in the House or in the form of a communication from the Speaker to the Chairperson of the Committee.

The subjects selected by the Committee are published in Bulletin Part-II for information of the members of the House. These are also widely publicised in the newspapers and institutions, experts and the general public are invited to send memoranda to the Committee giving their views and suggestions on these subjects for consideration.

The Committee may, from time to time, appoint one or more sub-Committees/Study Groups for carrying out detailed examination of various specified subjects and for scrutiny of action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the previous reports of the Committee, and for considering procedural and general matters. The sub-Committees/Study Groups are appointed by the Chairperson of the Committee keeping in view the preference given by the Members for particular sub-Committee(s)/Study Group(s).

Chairperson/Convener of the sub-Committee(s)/Study Group(s) is appointed by the Chairperson of the Committee from amongst the Members of the sub-Committees/Study Groups.

Calling for Information from Government

12. The Committee call for, in the first instance, preliminary material from the Ministries/Departments/

Organisations concerned with regard to the subject selected by it for examination. Subsequently, detailed information covering various aspects of the working of the Ministry/Department/Organisation in relation to the subject under examination is called for by the Committee from the Ministries/Departments.

Memoranda from non-officials

13. The Committee may also call for memoranda on the subjects under examination from non-official organisations/individuals, etc. who have expertise in the field/subject under examination by the Committee.

Study Tours

14. The Committee undertakes on-the-spot study tours/visits to various places to know the working of institutions or organisations connected with the subjects taken up for examination and hold informal discussion with representatives of the concerned official/non-official organisations located at the place of visit. For the purpose, members of the Committee may be divided into Study Groups. Each tour is undertaken with the specific approval of the Speaker.

Evidence of non-officials

15. The Committee/sub-Committee may call upon eminent individuals, experts/representatives of non-official organisations and others interested in or

concerned with the subjects or who have submitted memoranda on the subjects under examination, to appear before it to give evidence.

Evidence of Officials

16. The Committee later takes oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministries/Departments/Organisations concerned with the subject under examination.

Ministers not called before Committee

17. A Minister is not called before the Committee either to give evidence or for consultation in connection with the examination of estimates by the Committee. The Chairperson of the Committee may, however, when considered necessary but after its deliberations are concluded, have an informal talk with the Minister concerned, to apprise her/him of (a) any matters of policy laid down by the Ministry with which the Committee does not fully agree; and (b) any matters of secret and confidential nature which the Committee would not like to bring on record in its report.

Report and Minutes

18. The conclusions of the Committee on a subject are contained in its report, which, after its adoption by the Committee, is presented by the Chairperson to the

Lok Sabha. The Minutes of the sittings of the Committee are compiled separately for each Report. They form part of the Report as Annexures and are presented to the House along with the relevant Report.

The reports of the Committee are adopted by consensus among the Members. Accordingly there is no system of appending minute of dissent to the report.

Action Taken Reports

19. After presentation to the Lok Sabha, the report is forwarded to the Ministry or Department concerned which is required to take action on the recommendations and conclusions contained in the report and furnish action taken notes thereon within six months.

Action taken notes received from the Ministries/ Departments are examined by the Committee/Study Group/sub-Committee and Action Taken Reports of the Committee are presented to the House.

Statements of Action Taken on Action Taken Reports

20. Replies of action taken or proposed to be taken received from Government in respect of Comments contained in Chapter-I and final replies to the recommendations contained in Chapter-V of the Action Taken Reports after Chairperson's approval are also laid on the Table of Lok Sabha in the form of Statements.

[The constitution and working of the Committee on Estimates is governed by Rules 253 to 286, 310, 311 and 312 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha and Directions 48—93, 97, 97A, 98, 99, 100, 101, 101A and 102 of the Directions by the Speaker, Lok Sabha.]

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ESTIMATES



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
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PREFACE

This Abstract is part of the Parliamentary Procedure Abstracts Series and describes the procedure regarding Estimates Committee. It is based on the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, the Directions issued by the Speaker under the Rules of Procedure of the Committee on Estimates (Internal Working). It is intended to serve as a handy guide for ready reference.

The information contained in this Abstract is, however, not exhaustive. It will, therefore, be prudent to refer to and rely on the original sources for full information.

NEW DELHI

Secretary General