

DEPARTMENTALLY RELATED STANDING COMMITTEES

During the year 1989 (8th Lok Sabha) the Rules Committee considered and approved a proposal that three Subject Committees, on (i) Agriculture; (ii) Environment & Forests; and (iii) Science & Technology might be set up for ensuring effective parliamentary surveillance over the working of the concerned Ministries/ Departments and allied Governmental organisations. The rules relating to these Committees were finally approved by the House and the Committees were formally constituted with effect from 18 August, 1989.

2. After observing the functioning of these Committees for some time there was general consensus among all concerned that the Parliament should go in for a full-fledged Departmentally Related Standing Committee System. The Reports of Rules Committees of the Tenth Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha adopted by the two Houses on 29 March, 1993 paved the way for the setting up of the seventeen Departmentally Related Standing Committees covering under their jurisdiction all the Ministries/Departments of the Union Government. These DRSCs replaced the earlier three Subject

Committees constituted in August, 1989. The 17 Departmentally Related Standing Committees were formally constituted with effect from April, 1993.

After experiencing the working of the DRSC system for over a decade, the system was re-structured in July, 2004 wherein the number of DRSCs was increased from 17 to 24. These Committees cover under their jurisdiction the following Ministries/Departments:—

Sl. No.	Name of the Committee	Ministries/Departments
1	2	3
Part I		
1.	Committee on Commerce	Commerce and Industry
2.	Committee on Home Affairs	(1) Home Affairs (2) Development of North-Eastern Region
3.	Committee on Human Resource Development	(1) Human Resource Development (2) Youth Affairs and Sports (3) Women and Child Development
4.	Committee on Industry	(1) Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises (2) Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

1	2	3
5.	Committee on Science & Technology and Environment & Forests	(1) Science and Technology (2) Space (3) Earth Sciences (4) Atomic Energy (5) Environment, Forest and Climate Change
6.	Committee on Transport, Tourism & Culture	(1) Civil Aviation (2) Road Transport and Highways (3) Shipping (4) Culture (5) Tourism
7.	Committee on Health and Family Welfare	(1) Health and Family Welfare (2) Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH)
8.	Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice	(1) Law and Justice (2) Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
Part II		
9.	Committee on Agriculture	(1) Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (2) Food Processing Industries

1	2	3
10. Committee on Information Technology	(1) Communications (2) Electronics and Information Technology (3) Information and Broadcasting	
11. Committee on Defence	Defence	
12. Committee on Energy	(1) New and Renewable Energy (2) Power	
13. Committee on External Affairs	External Affairs	
14. Committee on Finance	(1) Finance (2) Corporate Affairs (3) Planning (4) Statistics and Programme Implementation	
15. Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution	Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	
16. Committee on Labour	(1) Labour and Employment (2) Textiles (3) Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	
17. Committee on Petroleum and Natural Gas	Petroleum and Natural Gas	

1	2	3
18.	Committee on Railways	Railways
19.	Committee on Urban Development	Housing and Urban Affairs
20.	Committee on Water Resources	Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation
21.	Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers	Chemicals and Fertilizers
22.	Committee on Rural Development	(1) Rural Development (2) Drinking Water and Sanitation (3) Panchayati Raj
23.	Committee on Coal and Steel	(1) Coal (2) Mines (3) Steel
24.	Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment	(1) Social Justice and Empowerment (2) Tribal Affairs (3) Minority Affairs

3. The Committees specified under Parts I & II above work under the directions of the Chairman, Rajya Sabha and the Speaker, Lok Sabha, respectively.

Composition

4. Till 13th Lok Sabha, each of these Standing Committees used to consist of 45 members—30 nominated by the Speaker from amongst the members

of Lok Sabha and 15 members nominated by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha from amongst the members of Rajya Sabha. However, with re-structuring of DRSCs in July, 2004 each DRSC consists of 31 members—21 from Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha. Seats on each Committee are allocated to different parties and groups in the House, as far as practicable in proportion of their respective strength in the House. Suitable numbers of seats on these Committees are also allocated to independents.

Appointment of Chairperson

5. The Chairperson of each of the Committees specified in Part-I is appointed by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha and in respect of Committees specified in Part II by the Speaker, Lok Sabha from amongst the members of the Committee.

Minister not to be a Member of the Committee

6. A Minister is not eligible to be nominated as a member of any of the Standing Committees and if a member, after her/his nomination to any of the Standing Committees, is appointed a Minister, she/he ceases to be a member of the Committee from the date of such appointment.

Term of Office

7. The term of office of each Committee is one year from the date of its constitution.

Functions

8. The functions of each of the Standing Committees are :—

- (a) to consider the Demands for Grants of the concerned Ministries/Departments and make a report on the same to the Houses. The report shall not suggest anything of the nature of cut motions;
- (b) to examine such Bills pertaining to the concerned Ministries/Departments as are referred to the Committee by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha or the Speaker, Lok Sabha as the case may be, and make report thereon;
- (c) to consider annual reports of Ministries/Departments and make reports thereon; and
- (d) to consider national basic long term policy documents presented to the Houses, if referred to the Committee by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha or the Speaker, Lok Sabha as the case may be, and make reports thereon.

The Committees do not consider the matters of day-to-day administration of the concerned Ministries/ Departments.

The Committees also do not generally consider the matters which are under consideration by other Parliamentary Committees.

Procedure relating to consideration of Demands for Grants

9. After the general discussion on the Budget in the House is over, the Houses are adjourned for a fixed period. The Committees consider the Demands for Grants of the concerned Ministries during the aforesaid period and submit their report within the period without seeking any extension of time for the same. There is a separate report on the Demands for Grants of each Ministry. The Demands for Grants are considered by the House in the light of the reports of the Committees.

Procedure relating to consideration of Bills

10. The Committee consider only such Bills introduced in either of the Houses as are referred to them by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha or the Speaker, Lok Sabha as the case may be. The Committees consider the general principles and clauses of the Bills referred to them and make report thereon within the given time.

Examination of Annual Reports

11. Besides consideration of Demands for Grants and the Bills referred to them, the Committees may select other subjects for examination on the basis of Annual Reports of the Ministries/Departments within the jurisdiction of the respective Committees.

Appointment of sub-Committees/Study Groups

12. The Chairperson may appoint Study Groups/sub-Committees from amongst the members of the respective Committee with a view to making detailed study/examination of the subject selected by them, scrutinising the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their previous reports and for considering procedural and general matters.

Examination of Subjects

Calling for Information

13. The Committees call for in the first instance, preliminary material/background notes from the Ministries/Departments/Organisations concerned, with regard to the subjects selected by them for examination. Subsequently, detailed information covering various aspects of the subjects under examination is called for from the concerned Ministries/ Organisations for in-depth study.

Memoranda/Evidence of Non-Officials

14. The Committees may call for Memoranda on the subjects under examination from leading non-official organisations, individuals, etc. who are knowledgeable in the field/subject under examination by the Committees. They may also call upon individual experts/representatives of non-official organisations who have submitted memoranda on the subjects under examination, to appear before them to give oral evidence.

Evidence of Officials

15. The Committees take oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministries/Departments/Organisations concerned with the subjects under examination.

Association of Specialists/Technical Experts/Consultants, etc.

16. The Committees may associate specialists/technical experts/consultants, etc. at various stages of examination of a subject, if necessary.

On the Spot Visits/Study Tours

17. The Committees/Study Groups of the Committees may with prior permission of the Speaker, Lok Sabha or the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, as the case

may be, undertake, if necessary, on the spot study visit/ study tours of various Institutions and Establishment connected with the subject matter under consideration.

Reports and Minutes

18. The conclusions of each Committees on a subject examined are contained in its report, which after its adoption by the respective Committee and factual verification by the Ministry concerned, is presented by the concerned Chairperson to the respective Houses. The reports are adopted by broad consensus among the members. However, a member of the Committee may give a note of dissent on the report of the Committee and it is presented to the Houses along with the report.

The minutes of the sittings of Committees are laid on the Table of the House along with the relevant reports.

Action Taken Reports

19. The Reports of the Committees have persuasive value and are treated as considered advice given by the Committees. The Bills, which are reported upon by the Committees, are considered by the Houses in the light of the reports of the Committees. In respect of reports on Demands for Grants and other subjects the Ministry or the Department concerned is required to take action on the recommendations and observations contained in the report and furnish action taken notes thereon, within three months.

Action taken notes received from the Ministries/ Departments are examined by the Committees and Action Taken Reports thereon are presented to the House.

Statement by Minister on Committee Reports

20. The Minister, with regard to the Ministry concerned, shall make once in six months a statement in the House regarding the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Reports of Departmentally Related Standing Committees of Lok Sabha.

[The constitution and working of Standing Committees of Lok Sabha are governed by Rules 331C to 331N of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.]

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PREFACE

This Abstract is part of the Parliamentary Procedure Abstracts Series and describes in brief the evolution, composition, functions, term of office, powers and work procedure of Departmentally Related Standing Committees. It is based on the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, the Directions issued by the Speaker under Rules of Procedure and well-established conventions followed by the Committees from time to time. 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