

WORKSHOP ON SECTORAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEES

FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Programme

Monday 15 February 2016

Introductions, Setting the Scene, Characteristics & Administration of Sectoral Oversight Committees

0845-1030	Opening Ceremony
0845	Arrival of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition
	Arrival of the Hon. Speaker
0850	Arrival of the Hon. Prime Minister
0850-0900	▪ Lighting the oil lamp ▪ National Anthem ▪ Invitees take their seats
0900-0910	Welcome Speech by the Secretary General of Parliament
0910-0925	Address by Rt Hon. Fiona Mactaggart, MP, UK Parliament (<i>Delegation Leader</i>)
0925-0935	Address by the Hon. Leader of Opposition
0935-0945	Address by the Hon. Speaker
0945-1030	Keynote Address by the Hon. Prime Minister on Sectoral Oversight Committees

1035-1125 **Tea Break (*At Members' Guest Dining*)**

1130-1215 Session 1: Setting the Scene

This session will aim to contextualise the recent reforms undertaken by the Parliament of Sri Lanka along with key priorities for the new Parliament and will address the following:

- Overview of parliamentary reforms (from Consultative & Standing Committees to Sectoral Oversight Committees)
- What the aspirations are for the Committee System within the current Parliament
- Overview of the established powers of Sectoral Oversight Committees and Committee on Public Finance
- Role that the UK Parliament can play in supporting these reforms
- Overview of the UK Committee System (Bill Committees, Departmental Select Committees)

lead:

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

Sri Lankan Members of Parliament

Rt. Hon. Riona Mactaggart, MP, UK Parliament

Mr. David Weir, Clerk to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, UK Parliament

1215-1315 Lunch (*At Members' Guest Dining*)

1315-1400

Session 2: Balancing the Executive and the Legislative: The role of Committees in holding the Executive to account

This session will explore the following:

- Privileges, Power and Independence of Committees
- Timing of enquiries and Government responses
- Balancing party affiliation and committee work
- Resources and administration

lead:

Rt Hon. Fiona Mactaggart, MP, UK Parliament

Hon. Richard Bacon, MP, UK Parliament

Sri Lankan Members of Parliament

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

1400-1415

Tea Break (*Tea will be served in the lobby*)

1415-1500

Session 3: Managing Committee Business

This session will explore the following:

- Committee mandate
- How do Committees reach a consensus on strategy that takes into account Members' time constraints
- Subject of inquiries
- Resources available to the Committee
- Preparing for Committee meetings

lead:

Hon. Julie Elliott, MP, UK Parliament

Rt Hon. Fiona Mactaggart, MP, UK Parliament

Mr. David Weir, Clerk to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, UK Parliament

Sri Lankan Members of Parliament

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

1500-1600

Practical Session 1: How to improve the efficiency & effectiveness of a Committee

The session will be based on a scenario. Participants will be tasked to come up with suggestions based on a series of questions.

lead:

Mr. David Weir, Clerk to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, UK Parliament

Sri Lankan Members of Parliament

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

1600

End of day 1

Tuesday, 16 February 2016

Exploring Specific Issues in relation to Party Politics, Secretary & Member Relations; Reporting

0930-1030

Session 4: Role of the Chair and Committee Members

- Selection of Members
- Role of the Chair
- Relationship with other Committee Members

lead:

Hon. Richard Bacon, MP, UK Parliament

Rt Hon. Fiona Mactaggart, MP, UK Parliament

Hon. Julie Elliott, MP, UK Parliament

Sri Lankan Members of Parliament

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

1030-1045

Tea Break (*Tea will be served in the lobby*)

1045-1145

Session 5: Accountability mechanisms

- Bill Committees, Committee of the whole House, Secondary legislation, Parliamentary questions

lead:

Hon. Julie Elliott, MP, UK Parliament

Rt Hon. Fiona Mactaggart, MP, UK Parliament

Sri Lankan Members of Parliament

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

Professor J.B.Dissanayake

1145-1245

Session 6: Conducting an effective inquiry

This session will address the following:

- Timing of an inquiry
- Effective questioning
- Preparing for hearings
- How to make the best from witnesses' evidence - bridging the gap between the information needed and the information available
- Resources available – external sources

lead:

Rt Hon. Fiona Mactaggart, MP, UK Parliament

Hon. Richard Bacon, MP, UK Parliament

Mr. David Weir, Clerk to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, UK Parliament

Sri Lankan Members of Parliament

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

Professor J.B.Dissanayake

1245-1345

Lunch (*At Members' Guest Dining*)

Session 7: The role of Committees in financial oversight–

in partnership with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy

This session will explore the role of Committees in:

- Considering departmental budgets
- Interpreting financial information
- Relationship with Auditor-General
- Relationship between the Public Accounts Committee and the Supreme Audit Institution

lead:

Hon. Richard Bacon, MP, UK Parliament

Rt Hon. Fiona Mactaggart, MP, UK Parliament

Sri Lankan Members of Parliament

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

1445-1500

Tea Break (*Tea will be served in the lobby*)

1500-1600

Session 8: Committee work, people and the media

- Explore the relationship between committees, the public and the media and how the latter can be used to strengthen Parliament's role in oversight, including social media
- Explore the methods that can be used to engage the public, creating awareness of calls for evidence, committee reports and government's responses
- Report launch

lead:

Hon. Julie Elliott, MP, UK Parliament

Hon. Richard Bacon, MP, UK Parliament

Mr. David Weir, Clerk to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, UK Parliament

Sri Lankan Members of Parliament

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

1600

End of day 2

Wednesday, 17 February 2016

Committee in Action

0900–0930 **Briefing on Mock Committee Evidence Session**

lead:

Hon. Richard Bacon, MP, UK Parliament

Mr. David Weir, Clerk to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, UK Parliament

Sri Lankan Members of Parliament

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

0930-0945 **Tea Break (Tea will be served in the lobby)**

0945-1245 **Practical session 2: Mock Committee Evidence Session**

Theme

- Urban transportation in Colombo - options for transport in the Colombo Metropolitan Area

lead:

Hon. Richard Bacon, MP, UK Parliament

Mr. David Weir, Clerk to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, UK Parliament

Sri Lankan Members of Parliament

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

Mr. Nihal Somaweera, Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation

Mr.J.M. Thilakarathna Banda, Additional Secretary (Planning), Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation

The Chairman, Sri Lanka Transport Board

Mr. B.A.P.Ariyaratna, General Manager, Sri Lanka Railways

Professor Amal S. Kumarage

1245-1300 **Report-back on Mock Committee Evidence Session**

lead:

Hon. Richard Bacon, MP, UK Parliament

Mr. David Weir, Clerk to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, UK Parliament

Sri Lankan Members of Parliament

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

Mr. Nihal Somaweera, Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation

Mr.J.M. Thilakarathna Banda, Additional Secretary (Planning), Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation

The Chairman, Sri Lanka Transport Board

Mr. B.A.P.Ariyaratna, General Manager, Sri Lanka Railways

Professor Amal S. Kumarage

1300-1400 **Lunch (At Members' Guest Dining)**

1400-1500

Session 9: Producing reports with impact

Following the mock committee hearing, this session will explore best practice for report-writing and coming up with recommendations.

- Best practice for report-writing: how to create an effective committee report with tangible recommendations for Government?
- Expectations for Chair, Members and Secretary in developing committee reports
- Building consensus & agreeing recommendations

lead:

Rt Hon. Fiona Mactaggart, MP, UK Parliament

Mr. David Weir, Clerk to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, UK Parliament

Sri Lankan Members of Parliament

Mr. Dhammika Dsaanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

1500-1600

Programme review, assessment and next steps

lead:

Rt Hon. Fiona Mactaggart, MP, UK Parliament

Sri Lankan Members of Parliament

Mr. Dhammika Dsaanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

1600

End of Programme