



The Role of Parliamentary Committees: Training Workshop for Members of the National Parliament of Vanuatu

16 - 17 March 2009 | Parliament House, Port Vila

At the request of the Speaker of the National Parliament of Vanuatu, Hon. George Andre Wells MP, the Centre for Democratic Institutions (CDI) is organising this training workshop for Members of the National Parliament. The focus of the training is on the role of parliamentary committees with an emphasis on engaging the community through committee work.

The aim of the workshop is to assist the National Parliament with ensuring that its parliamentary committees can perform their proper roles effectively. Members of Parliament will gain a greater appreciation of the value of parliamentary committees as a means of 'taking Parliament to the people', thus enabling Members to be better informed about community views; of providing a bridge between Members' constituents' concerns and the broader community interest; of promoting public debate; and of scrutinising the Executive and contributing towards better government through a more informed administration and policy making process.

Mr Quinton Clements – Deputy Director, CDI, will convene the workshop, together with:

- Hon. Moses Maladina MP – Member for Esa'ala Open & Chair, Parliamentary Select Committee on the Ombudsman Commission, National Parliament of Papua New Guinea;
- Hon. Grant Mc Bride MP – Member for The Entrance & Deputy Chair, Public Accounts Committee, Parliament of New South Wales;
- Mr David Blunt, Deputy Clerk, Legislative Council, Parliament of New South Wales; and
- Mr Robert Hansen, Research Director, Parliament of Queensland.



PROGRAM - Day 1 | Monday 16th March 2009

Time	Topic	Presenter/session leader	Comments
09.00	Opening	Hon. George Wells MP, Speaker of the National Parliament	Welcome; Outline of why the workshop is being held, what benefits to individual MPs, the National Parliament and Vanuatu he expects from it.
09.10	Outline workshop	Mr Quinton Clements & Mr Lino Bulekuli dit Sacsac, Clerk of Parliament	Outlines context, purpose and structure of workshop & introduces presenters
09.25	Why do we have Parliamentary Committees?	Mr David Blunt & Mr Leon Teter, Committee Secretary	The role of a parliamentary committee & the benefits of committee work.
10.00	Case Study: The Papua New Guinea Experience	Hon. Moses Maladina	The role of Committees in the Papua New Guinea Parliament.
10.30 / Morning Tea			
10.45	Case Study: The Australian Experience	Hon. Grant McBride & Mr Robert Hansen	The role of Committees in the New South Wales & Queensland Parliaments.
Working with Parliamentary Committees I: Effective Committee Membership			
11.15	Being an Effective Committee Member <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with your Secretariat • Working with stakeholders • Working with constituents 	Hon. Moses Maladina & Hon. Grant McBride	What are the elements that underlie effective committee membership? How can you get the most out of being a member of a committee? What is the role of the Chair? How can you best work with others - the secretariat, stakeholders, constituents?



12.00	Things you need to know	Mr David Blunt & Professor Don Paterson, University of the South Pacific	The powers and responsibilities of Committees.	
12.30 / Lunch				
13.30	Working with Parliamentary Committees II: Adopting Good Practice <i>Break into smaller groups to consider and discuss allocated theme. Groups to choose spokesperson & note-taker, take notes & report back to plenary.</i>			
	Effective Committee Membership: 1. Good chairing - the role of the Chair 2. The role of Members - attendance at meetings 3. Raising issues before the committee	Discussion led by Hon. Moses Maladina with Mr Robert Hansen	What is required of a Committee Chair and Member? Issues to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring manageable workloads & keeping focus • Completing the work 	
	Operational Processes: 1. Role of the Secretariat 2. Conduct of inquiries 3. Administrative procedures 4. Preparation for Meetings 5. Broadcasting of proceedings 6. Recording evidence - hearing transcripts 7. Travel 8. The Committee budget 9. Report preparation & presentation	Discussion led by Hon. Grant McBride with Mr Leon Teter	Are the current operational processes best serving the needs of the committees? Issues to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing procedures - how suitable are these? • Existing support & resources - how adequate are these? • How to improve operational processes? 	
	Procedural Issues: 1. Sources of Committee Authority 2. Establishment Procedures 3. Appointment of Committee 4. Membership 5. Election of Chair, Deputy Chair 6. Appointment & use of sub-committees 7. Meetings procedure 9. Witness protection & confidentiality 10. Written submissions 11. Public Hearings 12. Compelling a person/	Discussion led by Mr David Blunt with Mr Lino Bulekuli dit Sacsac	Consider procedural questions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting procedure • The power of the committee • Protecting witnesses 	



	8. Initiation of inquiries	organisation to give evidence		
<i>15.00 / Afternoon tea</i>				
15.15	Review session	Mr Clements	Groups to report back - What has been learnt today and where to for tomorrow	
<i>16.30 / Conclusion</i>				



Day 2 | Tuesday 17th March 2009

Time	Topic/theme	Session leader	Comments
09.00	Establishing an inquiry	Mr Hansen & Mr Blunt	What are good Terms of Reference? What is effective inquiry planning?
<i>10.00 / Morning tea</i>			
Conducting an inquiry: Collecting information			
10.15	Advertising	Panel	Advertising your committee's work
10.45	Collecting information	All	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receiving written evidence 2. Holding public hearings 3. Witness protection - David Kelly case study 4. Procedural issues - unauthorised disclosure, privilege
<i>12.30 / Lunch</i>			
13.30	Exercise: Holding a public hearing	All	Members to plan & then role play a public hearing.
15.00	Reaching a consensus	All	Wrap-up of the mock hearing exercise and discussion on reaching a consensus view in the final report.
<i>15.30 / Afternoon Tea</i>			
16.00	Review session	Mr Clements	Feedback on all sessions, issues raised, questions and what Members now expect their committees will do.
<i>16.30 / Conclusion</i>			
<i>18.00 / Cocktail Reception</i>			



About the Presenters

Mr Quinton Clements (BA Hons, 1st Class, ANU) is Deputy Director of the Centre for Democratic Institutions at the Australian National University. Prior to taking up this position, Mr Clements held a number of positions in the Australian Public Service and in the Department of the House of Representatives, Parliament of Australia. He served as Inquiry Secretary to the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories; and acting Committee Secretary for the Parliamentary Joint Committee on ASIO, ASIS and DSD and the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works. Mr Clements has also worked in the National Parliament of Papua New Guinea as Committee Secretary to the Parliamentary Select Committee on a Pacific Economic Community. Mr Clements has consulted on issues of parliamentary strengthening and good governance in Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Island Countries for agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme.

Hon. Moses Maladina MP (Member for Esa'ala Open, Milne Bay Province, Papua New Guinea) is currently Chairman of the Special Parliamentary Select Committee on the Ombudsman Commission, having served previously as Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for National Planning. Mr Maladina is a qualified agriculturalist and has practised as a Barrister & Solicitor in the National and Supreme Courts of Papua New Guinea. Before

being elected to Parliament in 1992, Mr Maladina also served as managing director of Air Niugini, PNG's national carrier, and was PNG's High Commissioner to New Zealand. He is the founder and leader of the Rural Development Party. He enjoys sports and writing, and has had one fiction novel published in New Zealand.

Hon. Grant McBride MP, born in Sydney, was elected as Member for The Entrance in a 1992 by-election. In April 2003 he was appointed Minister for Gaming and Racing and in March 2007 appointed Assistant Speaker. His Parliamentary Service duties include Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for the Central Coast, Assistant Speaker, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Roads, and Chairman, Joint Parliamentary StaySafe Committee.

Grant has attained the following education qualifications:

- Bachelor of Science Engineering BSc(Eng)
- Local Government Engineering Certificate LGE
- Graduate Diploma in Education Grad. DipEd.

Grant lives with his wife Barbara on the Central Coast and they have 8 children.

Mr Robert Hansen is a Research Director with the Queensland Parliament's Committee Office. He has over 20 years experience supporting ministerial and parliamentary committees, 14 years of which has been working with committees of the Legislative

Assembly of Queensland. During this time, Rob has provided procedural and management advice to 20 parliamentary committees and directed 40 major policy and expenditure inquiries. For the past six years, Rob has also served as Clerk and Deputy Clerk providing procedural advice at the Table of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr David Blunt (MPhil, LLB (Hons) Sydney) is currently Deputy Clerk of the New South Wales Legislative Council (upper house). David has almost 20 years experience as a parliamentary officer, including extensive experience working with parliamentary committees as a researcher and report writer, Committee Director (including as inaugural Director of the NSW Parliament's Standing Committee on Law and Justice), and Clerk of Committees. David is also currently Clerk to the Legislative Council's Privileges Committee.

About the Centre for Democratic Institutions

The Centre for Democratic Institutions (CDI) was established by the Australian government in 1998 to support the efforts of new democracies in the Asia-Pacific region to strengthen their political systems. Our core budget is provided by AusAID, Australia's Agency for International Development, and we are located at the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra.

All of CDI's projects are aimed at improving political governance and political practice in partner countries via intensive training programs on issues of parliamentary practice and leadership, the operation of political parties, democratic institutional design, constituency representation, and other themes and issues relating directly to improving the effectiveness and quality of the work of national parliaments, parties, and of parliamentarians themselves.

In order to do this, we conduct training courses, provide direct technical assistance and undertake applied research on our core areas of parliamentary and political party development. All of this is aimed squarely at emerging leaders in our focus countries – Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. For more information on all aspects of CDI's work, visit our website at www.cdi.anu.edu.au or contact us by post, email, phone, or fax:

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