

PC Hrs 1/1/2014.

**PRESENTATION
ON PORTFOLIO
COMMITTEES'
PROCESSING
OF BUDGET
VOTES**



ПАРЛАМЕНТ
РЕПУБЛИКЕ СРБИЈЕ

STRATEGIC & ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLANS: TABLING AND REFERRAL

- A department's executive authority is responsible for tabling strategic plans and/or annual performance plans before Parliament (after the tabling of the national budget). The tabling is announced in the publication *Announcements, Tablings and Committee Reports*, commonly referred to as the ATC.
- Once tabled, the documents should be accessible via departmental websites (electronic versions) and Parliament's documentation office (hardcopies).
- After tabling, the Speaker of the National Assembly refers the plans to the relevant committees for report within a specific timeframe. Reporting is in terms of NA Rule 137, and should take place before the debate on a particular vote. A portfolio committee's report on a department/entity's budget and strategic plans should be published in the ATC before the debate on that vote.
- Budget debates take place in extended public committees (EPCs)

Extended Public committees comprise the members of the committee to which the vote had been referred, and any other members of the Assembly who attend the proceedings (NA Rule 32). It is practice that members serving on cluster committees are required to attend all cluster EPCs.

Committee Level (NA)

- Once referred to a portfolio committee, that committee must develop a programme for considering, and reporting on the budget vote and strategic and/or annual performance plans referred to it.
- The process may include public participation through advertising for comment, or invitations to specific stakeholders/interest groups e.g academic and/or research institutions; non-governmental organisations; etc.
- The process must include:
 - ✓ analyses by parliamentary research and content support;
 - ✓ political overview by the relevant executive authority;
 - ✓ briefings by the relevant accounting officers;
 - ✓ scrutiny of the tabled documents, presentations and any other input;
 - ✓ committee deliberations;
 - ✓ drafting and adoption of a committee report (comprising a summary of the process followed, observations made, and a recommendation to the National Assembly as to whether the budget should be approved or not)

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON
PROGRAMME

It is suggested that each committee secretary provides a brief overview of their individual programmes here.

The overview should be accompanied by the programme (which may be included as an annexure).

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- **Short period between establishment of committees, election of chairpersons and EPCs**
 - ✓ Departments will receive short notice of committees' programmes, and will have little time to prepare for briefings etc;
 - ✓ Members of committees will have little time to familiarise themselves with the portfolios they oversee, and with the relevant budgets, strategic plans, and their associated responsibilities;
 - ✓ Little opportunity for public comment.
- **Revival of strategic/annual performance plans that were tabled before the elections**
 - ✓ In instances where departments have been merged, the relevant executive authority may decide to table revised plans, which may cause delays in the affected portfolio committees' processes, which in turn may impact on reporting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

➤ **To address time constraints**

- ✓ the committee may consider receiving a broad overview of a department's budget vote and strategic/annual performance plans provided by the relevant executive authority and accounting officer;
- ✓ this overview may be considered along with the relevant budget vote, analyses by the parliamentary research and content support, the budgetary review recommendations adopted in 2013, and any other relevant information the committee has access to;
- ✓ the committee may, based on the above-mentioned information, adopt a report for tabling in the National Assembly (the Committee may choose to comment on the constraints it faced as far as the consideration of the budget).

➤ **Orientation and strategic planning (portfolio committees)**

- ✓ At the start of each term committees are expected to develop five-year strategic plans that will form the basis for their oversight activities. It is recommended that an orientation programme comprising, amongst others, thorough scrutiny of departmental budgets and strategic/annual performance plans be developed. Given the time constraints, and the fact that many members will be new to the portfolios they are overseeing, such scrutiny will be unlikely prior to the EPs.

Thank you

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