



## Fact Sheet

### ***Role of Standing and Special Committees of the Legislative Assembly***

The *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* provides that:

- 17(1) The Legislative Assembly may establish such committees to aid and advise it as it considers necessary.

Standing Committees perform a number of important oversight functions on the activities of the government through:

- The scrutiny of Bills;
- The scrutiny of departmental business plans and proposed estimates;
- The review of annual reports of Independent Officers of the Legislative Assembly; and
- The study of specific public policy issues.

Public hearings conducted by Committees on proposed legislation and other matters provide an opportunity for organizations and individuals to express their views and participate in the formulation of public policy. Committees report their findings and recommendations to the House for its consideration. Upon request by the Committee, the government must table a written response to a Committee's report within 120 calendar days of its presentation.

From time to time, the Legislative Assembly may establish Special Committees to examine specific issues or undertake specific mandates. These Committees dissolve at the completion of their work. The First Legislative Assembly of Nunavut (1999-2004) established a Special Committee to review the *Official Languages Act*. This Committee presented its final report to the House in the fall of 2003.

Standing Committees of the Legislative Assembly have the ability to exert more influence on government than in most Canadian legislatures. For example, Standing Committees review the government's annual business plans, capital estimates and main estimates in draft form prior to formal introduction in the House. This provides Regular MLAs with the opportunity to recommend changes to spending plans and program initiatives before they are finalized. Standing Committees also have the opportunity to review legislative proposals for new laws before they are formally introduced in the House in the form of a Bill.

Members of the Legislative Assembly's Standing Committees are appointed by motion of the House on the recommendation of the Striking Committee, which is required by the *Rules of the Legislative Assembly* to be established at the first sitting of the Legislative Assembly after a general election. Standing Committees elect their own Chairs and Co-Chairs.

For further information concerning the Standing Committees of the Third Legislative Assembly of Nunavut, including reports and government responses, please visit: <http://www.assembly.nu.ca/standing-special-committees>