

FACT SHEET

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE AMENDMENT BILL 2009

- The *Public Works Committee Amendment Bill 2009* amends the *Public Works Committee Act 1914*.
- The Public Works Committee Act is amended to increase the limit above which public works must be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, from the current \$2 million to \$5 million.
- The Public Works Committee Act is also amended to expand the scope of the Public Works Committee to include scrutiny of any capital project exceeding \$5 million, by removing reference to a public work as being characterised as a work funded out of the Loan Fund (Consolidated Fund) and replacing the characteristic of a public work with one that is proposed to be undertaken by a general government sector body.
- The amendments also:
 - provide for a definition of what is meant by a “general government sector body” to clarify that it includes a Government department within the meaning of the *State Service Act 2000* and it also includes any State authority classified in the Treasurer’s annual report as an entity within the general government sector;
 - remove reference to the submission of a proposed public work to Parliament after referral of the proposed public work to the Committee, as this does not occur in practice. (Once Cabinet approval is given to an agency’s budget submission, the Appropriation Bill is submitted to Parliament. Thereafter, an agency will submit a relevant matter to the Committee via the Governor and once approved by the Committee, will advertise for contractors to undertake the works.);
 - change the threshold under which the House of Assembly may, by resolution, refer any public work to the Committee for scrutiny from the current \$2 million to \$5 million; and
 - include a transitional provision to make it explicit that any work currently under scrutiny by the Committee is still required to be reported on by the Committee, even if the amendments to the Act would otherwise cause that work to no longer be covered by the Act, ie a project of a value between \$2 million and \$5 million.