



PUBLIC SECTOR ACCOUNTING FORUM TERMS OF REFERENCE AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Objective

1. The objective of the Public Sector Accounting Forum (the Forum) is to discuss issues related to financial accounting and reporting in the South African public sector in the context of the:
 - Standards of GRAP which, for the purpose of this Forum, encompass Standards, Interpretations, Directives and Guidelines issued by the Accounting Standards Board (ASB); and
 - “generally recognised accounting practice” as determined by the National Treasury for entities which currently do not apply Standards of GRAP.
2. The accounting and reporting issues discussed should be of reasonably widespread importance and not only of concern to one or a limited group of entities. No transaction or event specific issues, or issues that have resulted, or may result, in a difference of opinion between auditors and auditees will be discussed.
3. The purpose of these discussions is to:
 - Arrive at a common understanding on accounting and reporting matters between the members of the Forum, with the objective of promoting consistency and comparability in public sector entities’ financial statements.
 - Assist the ASB and National Treasury to identify whether the existing Standards of GRAP and guidance deals with particular issues sufficiently and appropriately and, if not, recommend appropriate action.
 - Obtain members’ views on any suggested actions to be taken by the ASB, National Treasury or Auditor-General of South Africa (if applicable) to address accounting and reporting matters discussed at the Forum.
 - Disseminate information on discussions held at the Forum (where appropriate) to finance practitioners (see paragraph 15). Monitor, communicate and share developments in accounting and reporting both locally and internationally.

Membership

4. Membership of the Forum comprises:
 - a. representatives of the ASB, National Treasury and the Provincial Accountant-Generals, and the Auditor-General South Africa;
 - b. professional bodies; and
 - c. practitioners with an interest in public sector financial accounting and reporting, including preparers, auditors, users, consultants and academics.



5. The Forum is open to all those interested in public sector financial accounting and reporting. Due to the nature and size of the Forum, the number of members at physical meetings should be kept to a reasonable size. Wherever possible, organisations should limit the number of representatives at physical meetings to one representative.
6. All members participate in the Forum in their personal capacities and are not purported to represent or convey the views of their representative organisations and/or employers. Views reached among members at the Forum are therefore not binding on the organisations represented at the Forum.

OPERATING PROCEDURES

Administration

7. The Forum is administered by the Secretariat of the ASB.

Frequency of meetings

8. Meetings are to be held monthly. This may however be varied during peak and off-peak periods during the year, and will be based on members' needs.

Format of meetings

9. Meetings are to be held virtually with Microsoft Teams. Based on members' needs and availability of hosts, hybrid meetings may be held with an option to attend in-person.

Agenda

10. The agendas are set by the Secretariat of the ASB in consultation with members of the Forum. Members should suggest agenda items to be considered by the Forum.
11. Proposed agenda items should be submitted in the prescribed format and should, at a minimum, include a short description of the issue, including a discussion of suggested solutions and relevant documentation (if any).

Minutes of meetings

12. Minutes are kept as a record of the discussions held at each meeting. These minutes record the discussions of the Public Sector Accounting Forum. The views expressed in the minutes do not reflect those of the ASB or other organisations represented on the Forum. Conclusions reached on issues are based on specific facts and circumstances presented to the Forum. Care should be exercised in applying these conclusions to other transactions and events as circumstances may differ.
13. These minutes are confidential and are not intended for distribution other than to members of the Forum. Members' views expressed in the meeting should not be quoted or associated with the members outside the meeting. The recording of meetings by members is not permitted in any form.
14. The PSAF query log summarises the technical discussions at the meeting. The query log is not intended for distribution other than to members of the Forum.



Publications

15. The Secretariat of the ASB may publish summaries of discussions and recent developments at the Forum on its website and in other media when deemed necessary by the Forum.

Confidentiality

16. Members should respect the sensitive nature of the discussions at the Forum and treat any information obtained as confidential unless indicated otherwise.

Date reviewed: September 2023

Adopted by Forum: September 2023