2011 Summer Residential Program for Public Accounts Committees
Melbourne & Beechworth | 6-12 February

Rationale
Strengthening the accountability role of parliaments has always been and remains a strong theme in CDI’s work. A central element in this work has been to work with parliaments in the region to enhance their capacity to scrutinise the performance (especially the financial management performance) of Governments and their agencies.

As part of its commitment to these issues CDI has, over the last five years, co-sponsored the annual Summer Residential Program for Public Accounts Committees (SRP).

SRP is a one-week residential program for members and staff from Parliamentary Public Accounts Committees in developing countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific which aims to:
- improve participant understanding of the processes of parliamentary scrutiny;
- improve participant understanding of the work of Auditors-General.

Activity
In 2011 CDI sponsored the participation of a delegation from the Indonesian Parliament’s Badan Akuntabilitas Keuangan Negara (BAKN) to the 6th SRP, held in Melbourne and Beechworth from 6 to 12 February.

CDI’s sponsorship of a delegation from BAKN is part of a continuing program of assistance to the committee, which is a relatively new body in the Indonesian parliament and is still establishing its profile and standing.

CDI convened an introductory workshop on parliamentary financial scrutiny for BAKN (and other Indonesian officials) in February 2010 and is currently working with the committee to devise a series of further training activities to support the committee’s consideration of reports from the State Audit Commission (Badan Pemeriksa Keuangan or BPK).
In addition to the CDI-sponsored delegation, the 2011 SPR involved participants from Bangladesh, Tuvalu, Tonga, Uganda, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan and the Maldives.

The program involved presentations from international experts on the role and history of public accounts committees; on interpreting government financial reports; on good practice in public accounts committee operations and practice; and on the relationship between public accounts committees and Auditors-General. CDI Deputy Director Grant Harrison presented a session on the role of public accounts committees in scrutinizing performance audit reports from Auditors-General, focusing on the operations of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit in the Australian Parliament.

Outcome
As in previous years, participants at Summer Residential Program developed and presented Jurisdiction Action Plans, which identified the strengths and weakness of the public accounts committee operations in their jurisdictions and proposed strategies for improving the impact and effectiveness of their committees.

The Jurisdiction Action Plan prepared by the CDI-sponsoreed participants from BAKN will be an important resource as the CDI works with BAKN to develop a program of continuing support for the committee.

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