

Standing Committee on Rural Development

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Introduction

A full-fledged system of Departmentally related Standing Committees by covering under their jurisdiction all the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India was formally created *w.e.f.* 8 April, 1993. The Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development was one of the 17 Departmentally related Standing Committees. The Standing Committee system was re-structured in July 2004 whereby the number of DRSCs was increased from 17 to 24. The Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development was bifurcated into two Committees (i) The Standing Committee on Urban Development and (ii) The Standing Committee on Rural Development. Thus exclusive Standing Committee to give focussed attention to the issues related to rural development was created for the first time on 5 August, 2004 under rule 331 C of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. The following Ministries/Departments are under the jurisdiction of the Committee –

- (i) Ministry of Rural Development
 - (a) Department of Rural Development, and
 - (b) Department of Land Resources
- (ii) Ministry of Panchayati Raj

Composition of the Committee

The Committee consists of 31 members; 21 members from Lok Sabha, nominated by the Speaker, Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha nominated by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha. A Minister is not nominated as a member of the Committee. The Chairman of the Committee is appointed by the Speaker from amongst the members of the Committee from Lok Sabha. The term of office of the members of the Committee does not exceed one year.

Functions of the Committee

The Committee transacts the following functions with respect to the aforesaid Ministries/Departments under its jurisdiction:-

- (a) to consider the Demands for Grants and make Reports on the same to the Houses;
- (b) to examine such Bills as are referred to the Committee by the Speaker, Lok Sabha or the Chairman, Rajya Sabha as the case may be, and make Reports thereon;

- (c) to consider Annual Reports of the concerned Ministries/Departments and make Reports thereon; and
- (d) to consider national basic long term policy documents presented to the Houses, if referred to the Committee by the Speaker, Lok Sabha or the Chairman, Rajya Sabha as the case may be, and make Reports thereon.

Reports and Minutes

The Observations/Recommendations of the Committee on subjects examined are contained in their Reports which after adoption by the Committee and factual verification by the Ministries/Departments concerned, are presented to Lok Sabha/laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha by the Chairman or the authorized Member of the Committee. The Minutes of the sittings of the Committee are also presented to the House alongwith the Reports.

Proceedings, Draft Reports and Minutes of the Committee are treated as confidential until the concerned Reports are presented to Parliament.