

## TERMS OF REFERENCE<sup>1</sup>

### A. MANDATE

The Working Group on Public Debt's (WGPD) original goal is: "to publish guidelines and other informational materials to be used by Supreme Audit Institutions to encourage the proper reporting and sound public debt management"

#### Mission Statement

To advance the highest standards in public debt auditing and promote sound practices for debt management and appropriate data disclosure standards by sharing knowledge and experiences among members.

#### Vision Statement

For the Working Group on Public Debt to be recognized by Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI) as the leading forum on public debt audit practices and debt management issues for its excellence in analyses, research, and capacity building projects as well as its publications.

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<sup>1</sup> The present Terms of Reference were endorsed by the members of the INTOSAI Working Group on Public Debt | WGPD, during their meeting held in Kyiv, Ukraine (October 2009).

## Objectives

- To prepare and publish guidelines and other materials to be used by SAIs in order to encourage the proper reporting and sound management of public debt;
- To identify and report to the Chair of Goal 3 Steering Committee, to Goal 3 Main Committee, to the INTOSAI Governing Board and the INCOSAI on key issues and matters to be addressed for the development of responsibilities and procedures for auditing and evaluating public debt commitments;
- To prepare papers examining matters related to public debt definition, reporting and auditing for their distribution and discussion during meetings of the Goal 3 Steering Committee, Goal 3 Main Committee, the INTOSAI Governing Board and the Congress;
- To establish and maintain contact, and exchange knowledge with other institutions or international organizations dealing with public debt-related matters, as well with research or study groups focusing on issues surrounding public debt, and
- To promote the preparation of studies and specialized papers related to the Working Group's mandate, so as to encourage governments' proper reporting and sound public debt management.

## Strategic Goals

### ■ Goal 1: Capacity building and enhancing SAI expertise

Build the capacity and professional capacities of the Working Group through collaborative arrangements; the production of innovative research, studies, and guidance; and the dissemination of knowledge through an active publication and capacity building program that is tailored to the needs of the SAI community.

### ■ Goal 2: Strengthening the Working Group's capabilities and measuring its impact

Promote active participation of members and efficient communication between members and the INTOSAI community, and survey the impact of the Public Debt Working Group.

## B. RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS

Below you will find a list, by categories, of the WGPD's responsibilities and rights:

### ■ WGPD Chair

1. To initiate, plan and coordinate the WGPD activities and projects on Public Debt auditing. The WGPD Chair will focus, in the activities planning and coordination, on keeping the WGPD activities aligned with the INTOSAI Strategic Plan's Goal 3.

2. To manage invitations among WGPD member SAIs to integrate the specialized sub-groups required, making the necessary arrangements to define the respective project leader.
3. To promote initiatives to periodically evaluate the WGPD's work, as well as the validity of its products, terms of reference and Strategic Plan, in order to improve the Working Group's performance and contribution for the benefit of the INTOSAI community and for the achievement of the Organization's Strategic Goal 3.
4. To coordinate with any project or investigation leader, its development, timely report and related activities execution, monitoring its alignment to the WGPD Strategic Plan and working plans in force. In this regard, to provide guidance and due assistance to the project leader.
5. Taking into account each project's terms of reference defined by the respective project leader, to integrate a comprehensive WGPD work plan and supervise, in coordination with the project leaders, the correspondent progress.
6. To inform WGPD members in relation to any updates and relevant information regarding public debt auditing that might have an impact on WGPD work, and that might arise within INTOSAI context, in other bodies and in the international arena.
7. To promote the information exchange, both internally and externally, through information technologies, specifically the WGPD Website and electronic communications. The Chair will also promote the use of electronic forums and videoconferences among its members.
8. To provide timely response to any information requests from WGPD members or from the international audit community, regarding the Working Group's work and products.
9. To coordinate activities with other INTOSAI bodies, so as to avoid the overlapping of activities on matters of common interest.

10. To participate, on behalf of the WGPD, in INTOSAI Governing Board meetings, as well as in those of the KSC Steering Committee, the KSC Main Committee and the INTOSAI Congress. To represent WGPD before other INTOSAI bodies and/or other external organizations.
11. To prepare an annual report to both the INTOSAI Governing Board and the KSC Steering Committee Chair in relation to the WGPD activities carried out, current initiatives, ongoing products and projects planned for the upcoming years.
12. To prepare a triennial report, to be presented before the KSC Main Committee and the INTOSAI Congress on the WGPD activities carried out, current initiatives, ongoing products and projects planned for the upcoming years.
13. If necessary, to request the KSC Steering Committee Chair to render the Working Group's report to the INTOSAI Governing Board and Congress, as well as to the KSC Main and Steering Committees.
14. To make the necessary arrangements for the WGPD projects to be endorsed by the INTOSAI Congress as official INTOSAI products. The WGPD will take into account the appropriate INTOSAI procedures for the drafting, revision and withdrawing of ISSAIs.
15. To maintain communication and coordination with the KSC Steering Committee Chair (Goal 3), and also with the SAI responsible for the ISSAI Framework, in relation to those products endorsed by the INTOSAI Congress, or those subject to approval for public exposure and comments from the INTOSAI community.
16. To coordinate with the SAI responsible for the INTOSAI Journal and also with the INTOSAI General Secretariat, on the WGPD's information disclosure (including notifications of scheduled meetings, news to the INTOSAI community, outstanding outcomes, endorsed products and general information), through these bodies' official Websites.

17. To provide the WGPD Website (<http://www.wgpd.org.mx>) with the corresponding Web hosting and maintenance. The latter includes the information organization and contents' constant updating.
18. To coordinate, in collaboration with the meeting host SAI, the meeting's logistics and technical organization.
19. In coordination with the meeting host SAI, to distribute meeting's communications, and to publish on the WGDP's Website, the technical documents to be discussed during the meeting, as well as the corresponding logistics and relevant information.
20. To chair and moderate the Working Group's meetings, fostering the members' debate, initiatives presentation and attending SAIs' active participation, as well as the SAIs' feedback needed to improve or direct the projects presented before the membership for their analysis.
21. During WGPD meetings, submit for members consideration and approval, the papers distributed and the proposals provided; to assure the proper program and agenda fulfillment, and to resolve proceeding matters that might arise during the debates.
22. Along with the host SAI, to prepare the meetings draft minutes, to coordinate the integration of SAIs' comments and publish the final draft on the WGDP's Website. The minutes must specify the meeting's discussions, resolutions, agreements, recommendations and responsibilities assumed to undertake the follow-up activities.
23. To inform the INTOSAI General Secretariat, the KSC Steering Committee's Chair (Goal 3), the INTOSAI Governing Board and the INCOSAI on any change related to the WGPD membership.
24. To evaluate, together with KSC Steering Committee's Chair, INTOSAI General Secretariat and Finance and Administration Committee (FAC), the possibilities for external funding, depending on the particular subject, the need for specialized research or the development of a specific public debt audit-related project. In this regard, the requirements for SAIs'

Independence must be taken into account; previous arrangements made – such as the Memorandum of Understanding between the INTOSAI and the Donor Community-, must be the corresponding framework.

### ■ Project Leaders

1. To initiate, plan and coordinate specific projects and research topics regarding public debt auditing.
2. To define the respective project's or research theme's terms of reference, at least shall include: objectives, scope, methodology, member SAIs, responsibilities assigned, expected outcomes and project timeframe.
3. To coordinate and supervise the individual progress of the corresponding subgroup's member SAIs, providing them with guidance and due assistance.
4. To inform the subgroup's member SAIs in relation to the project's terms of reference, agreements achieved, requirements or relevant information provided by the WGPD Chair.
5. To make use of information technology (e-mail, WGPD Website forums, videoconferences, et.al.), in order to guarantee efficient and effective communication among subgroup's SAI members.
6. During each project's planning and execution, to maintain constant communication with the WGPD Chair, informing on established terms of reference, progress attained and other relevant information.
7. In agreement with the WGPD Chair, to coordinate activities with other WGPD subgroups, whose investigation theme or outcomes could be linked or could impact the referred project.
8. To participate in WGPD meetings, presenting a progress report to its members about the activities undertaken, progress attained or results obtained. In case of not being able to attend a WGPD meeting, to agree with

the WGPD Chair, or with other subgroup's SAI member, the corresponding report presentation.

9. To invite to subgroup's personal or virtual meetings and only when necessary. In case of virtual meetings, to take advantage of the discussion forum available at the WGPD Official Website, or any other IT defined by the investigation theme or project leader.
10. To make the necessary arrangements before the WGPD Chair for the draft versions, previously endorsed by the subgroup's member SAIs, to be subject to WGPD members' analysis and feedback, for later comments incorporation and final presentation of the guideline, draft project, investigation, plan or any other related issue.
11. By own behalf or at the Chair's or any other members' request in a working meeting, to establish the mechanisms and work plan needed to evaluate the validity of the undertaken project, in order to guarantee the validity of products and investigations published by the Working Group. The controls in relation to WGPD's products validity revision of the WGPD official products must take into account the appropriate INTOSAI procedures for the drafting, revision and withdrawing of ISSAIs.

#### ■ **Hosting SAI at the Annual Meeting**

1. To organize the meeting in coordination with the WGPD Chair.
2. To prepare and submit the meeting invitations and registration form, as well as the corresponding relevant information (including advertisement for visa for entry to the host country).
3. In coordination with the WGPD Chair, to publish the meeting date, venue, general information, technical papers, discussions and minutes on the WGPD Website.

4. To define, in coordination with the WGPLD Chair, the meeting agenda and program.
5. To manage the meeting participants' registration. In coordination with the WGPLD Chair, to submit notifications, for missing information to the member SAIs.
6. To define the venue for the participants' accommodation, making a group reservation in order to count on sufficient rooms for the attending delegates.
7. To define the working venue (including the corresponding contracting procedures). The meeting could be held either in the host SAI's premises or in the hotel selected for the participants' accommodation.
8. To prepare the meeting working material and to distribute among the participants at the beginning, as well as to coordinate any documents distribution during the meeting.
9. To provide any technical, administrative and logistics assistance, that might be required by the WGPLD Chair or the attending SAIs.
10. To provide the sound interpretation equipment, working material, and IT equipment, that might be needed for the meetings successful celebration.
11. To plan and coordinate the delegates' reception at the international airport, and their transportation from the airport to the venue hotel and vice versa, as well as the transportation needed to the working venue and for the social programs.
12. To provide the delegates with the simultaneous interpretation and translation services into English, if these are needed, particularly when the host SAI's official language is different to that of the WGPLD.
13. To plan and coordinate any alternative social programs, which could be offered to both participants and accompanying persons.
14. To prepare the meeting minutes in coordination with the WGPLD Chair, unless other attending SAI offers to do so. The meeting minutes must include the meeting discussions, conclusions and responsibilities in relation to follow-up activities.

15. To bear the meeting direct expenses, namely those stemming from the meeting organization, social programs, working binders, preparation, sound and IT equipment, working venue, courtesy meals, local transportation, excursions and others.
16. To take into consideration the Handbook for the WGPL meeting, developed by the Chair, for the meeting planning and organization.
17. To provide the WGPL Chair with any suggestions to improve the Handbook for WGPL meetings, thus ensuring the exchange of experiences among host SAIs.

#### ■ Member SAIs

1. To submit, for the Chair's analysis and the WGPL members' approval, any proposals to develop specific projects or investigations related to public debt auditing.
2. To take part, actively participate in working sub-groups and, in some cases, lead sub-groups or task forces, which might be established to develop specific projects or investigations.
3. To timely present to the WGPL Chair, on own behalf or due to a general agreement, any comments or amendments corresponding to documents, reports, working plans, meeting's agenda and minutes, and projects developed by member SAIs, and to WGPL products, terms of reference, strategic plan and Website contents.
4. To cooperate in an efficient and effective manner with project or investigation leaders, according to the tasks and responsibilities entrusted. The terms established in the corresponding working plan must be considered.

5. To timely present to the project leader, on own behalf or due to a sub-group's task forces initiative, comments or amendments in relation to the respective sub-group's documents and projects.
6. To obtain from the WGPD Chair updates and relevant information related to public debt auditing, which might impact WGPD's mandate, and might arise within the INTOSAI context, from other organisms or in the international arena.
7. To obtain from the project leader information on the respective project terms of reference, agreements, requirements or relevant information provided by the WGPD Chair.
8. To make the most from IT provided by the WGPD Chair, such as Website, electronic forums, e-mail, among others, in order to exchange information with other member SAIs in relation to international best practices on public debt auditing.
9. To present to the WGPD Chair or to the respective project leader the progress report on entrusted tasks, as well as any requests for information; likewise, to request the WGPD Chair or project leader any information, clarifications, guidance or assistance in relations to the WGPD's activities.
10. To attend WGPD's ordinary meetings and extraordinary meetings, collaborating for their successful execution and taking part in technical discussions and decisions demanding the members' consensus or simply majority.
11. To timely receive the meetings official invitation and registration form, related communications, general information and technical material in order to plan their delegates participation and logistics arrangements.
12. To timely and completely provide the host SAI with the requested information for their representatives' registration.
13. To bear the costs related to their delegates' participation in working meetings (travel expenses, accommodation, meals not offered by the host SAI, among others).

14. To pay for simultaneous interpretation and translation services into languages different to English or to those offered by the host SAI. These services must be coordinated with the host SAI.
15. To count on the working material and equipment needed, including technical, administrative and logistics assistance provided by the host SAI during the meeting.
16. To actively participate in working meetings, providing their comments and experiences in relation to the discussed projects. Likewise, to approve or to express the own point of view in relation to the papers and proposals presented by the WGPLD Chair.
17. To present to the WGPLD Chair themes proposals to be discussed during the next meeting and, in a given case, to propose to lead or to present the respective theme proposal.
18. To inform the WGPLD Chair on paradigmatic audits and outstanding case studies related to Public Debt auditing, for their publication on the WGPLD Website and on that of the INTOSAI Journal.
19. To inform the WGPLD Chair on any updates or amendments needed in the WGPLD directory, which includes modifications to the respective SAI address and contact details, positions held within INTOSAI, and contact information of head of SAI, INTOSAI liaison officer, WGPLD contact and the expert(s) in Public Debt auditing.

### **C. MEETINGS**

The WGPLD members meet annually in an ordinary meeting, unless some specific task requires an extraordinary meeting in a given year, or an occasion takes place which facilitates attendance at an extraordinary meeting.

The venue for a WGPD meeting is selected during the previous meeting, taking into account proposals presented by SAI members, who manifest interest to host the meeting.

The host SAI, in coordination with the WGPD Chair, is responsible for the meeting invitations.

The INTOSAI General Secretariat and the International Journal of Government Auditing (INTOSAI Journal) will be notified by the WGPD Chair when meetings are scheduled.

The Working Group's meetings duration has usually been one day and a half. Occasionally, one or two additional half-days might be necessary if a special issue is discussed.

When a task can be broken down into subprojects, each subproject is undertaken voluntarily by two or more members, who might choose to meet at Working Group's meetings or at other times. These meetings could even take place in a virtual way, either via teleconference, taking advantage of the discussion forums - which the WGPD Chair will launch-, or using any other information technologies, which must be defined by the project or investigation leader.

A quorum has not been set yet, but attendance to WGPD meetings has been over 75%. Issues are always sought to be approved by consensus, which sometimes calls for extensive discussions.

The meeting minutes are usually a responsibility of the host SAI in coordination with the WGPD Chair, unless other members offer to prepare them. Once drafted in the official working language, the WGPD Chair will deliver the minutes to the members in order to receive their feedback and to draft the final version of the

minutes, which must be disclosed on the WGPL Website and rendered to Goal 3 Steering Committee's Chair.

#### **D. REPORTING**

In line with INTOSAI Handbook for Committees, the Handbook for INTOSAI Congresses, the Terms of Reference for the Knowledge Sharing Committee (KSC, INTOSAI Goal 3) and the INTOSAI 2005-2010 Strategic Plan, the WGPL Chair will report annually to the INTOSAI Governing Board and the KSC Steering Committee on the overall Working Group's activities, current initiatives and planned projects. Besides, the WGPL Chair will report triennially before the INTOSAI Congress and during the Main Knowledge Sharing Committee's meeting. If agreed with the WGPL Chair, the KSC Chair or Goal 3 Liaison could report on the WGPL activities to the INTOSAI Governing Board and to the INCOSAI, as well as to the KSC Main and Steering Committees.

The Goal 3 Liaison and Chair of the Knowledge Sharing Committee, Comptroller and Auditor General of India, is expected to be in permanent contact with the WGPL Chair and to send him his comments on the elaborated papers.

The WGPL products, draft papers and materials will be available on the WGPL Website. The WGPL products, once endorsed by the INTOSAI Congress, and also the exposure drafts for comments from the INTOSAI community will be posted on the ISSAI Website [ [www.issai.org](http://www.issai.org) ]. Brief news, specialized articles prepared by the WGPL and relevant information could be included in the International Journal of Government Auditing (*INTOSAI Journal*).

#### **E. WORKING LANGUAGE**

English is the working language of the Working Group on Public Debt. The host SAI is responsible for providing simultaneous interpretation and translation services into English when these are needed, particularly when the host SAI's official language is different to that of the Working Group.

The simultaneous interpretation and translation services into any other language different to those offered by the host SAI, must be paid by the requesting SAI. The need for these services must be informed and coordinated with the host SAI.

## **F. FUNDING**

All costs, including those on account of participation in meetings (such as travel expenses, accommodation and meals not offered by the host SAI) are covered by the respective attending delegates. The direct meeting expenses alone (those related to the organization, social programs, binders / folders, sound and equipment, venue, meals by invitation, transportation service, excursions and others) are covered by the SAI that hosts the meeting. The costs of the interpretation and translation services must be paid according to what is stated in the section "Language".

The possibilities of external funding are to be considered by the WGPL Chair together with the KSC Chair, the INTOSAI Secretary General and the Finance and Administration Committee, taking into consideration the INTOSAI's independence requirements, and depending on the particular subject, need for specialized research or particular project on Public Debt-related matters.

As reference framework, special attention must be paid to arrangements previously made, such as the Memorandum of Understanding between the INTOSAI and the Donor Community.

## **G. COMMUNICATION**

The e-mail is the preferred means of communication among WGPLD members. Additionally, the WGPLD Website is used for distribution of documents and other relevant information. The use of Web Forums should be used for maximizing efficient communication among the Working Group members.

[www.wgpd.org.mx](http://www.wgpd.org.mx)

This Website is aimed at disseminating the WGPLD official products, activities projects, guidelines, study cases, paradigmatic audits, debates, databases, analysis and publications, as well as information regarding membership, meetings and participation in special events. Besides, the website has the purpose of enhancing the communication and the knowledge and experience exchange among members, in order to improve the WGPLD's performance and contribution to the INTOSAI community, and the goals of its Strategic Plan.

All activities report and technical material presented in the working meetings as well as reports presented by INTOSAI authorities (KSC Chair, INTOSAI Governing Board and INTOSAI Congress) are available in the WGPLD's website.

## H. MEMBERSHIP

The Working Group on Public Debt (WGPD) is based on open and voluntary membership, which consists of SAIs with expertise, experience and/or interest in Public Debt matters.

The WGPD is integrated by 23 member SAI and one collaborating organ, the INTOSAI Development Initiative, IDI.

### **Members:**

Mexico (Chair) • Argentina • Austria • Brazil • Bulgaria • Canada • Chile • Egypt • Fiji • Finland • Gabon • Jordan • Korea • Lithuania • Moldova • Portugal • Russian Federation • Sweden • Ukraine • United Kingdom • United States of America • Yemen • Zambia.

The WGPD Chair will inform the INTOSAI's General Secretariat, the Chair of the Knowledge Sharing Committee and the INCOSAI on any changes related to the WGPD membership.

The WGPD should ideally have a balanced representation of the INTOSAI membership, taking into account SAIs from all INTOSAI Regional Working Groups and the diverse audit systems.