

Scottish Parliament Building Project

Statement to the Audit Committee 2 September 2003

Members will recall that at the meeting of the Committee on 17 June, I indicated my intention to make a further report on the Holyrood project at some point. It might be helpful for the Committee if I now provide a more detailed outline of my intentions.

I will examine and report on the management of the Holyrood project using my existing, wide statutory powers to have access to documents and make a report on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.

This report will build on my earlier reports which I made in September 2000 and December 2002, and it will also draw upon the report of the Audit Committee of December 2000.

It would currently be my intention to make my report in the summer of 2004, since by that point the project should be nearing completion and most of the expenditure will have been incurred. I shall be keeping an open mind regarding the exact timing of my report. However, preliminary work will commence soon.

My examination will include the following areas:

There will be an updated assessment of the procurement strategy, together with an updated assessment of the project management, control and governance arrangements

Secondly, there will be a full and detailed audit of the contract management and controls, and related value for money issues

Thirdly, there will be an analysis of delivery of contracts against targets, and the reasons for the increases in costs and the delays

Finally I intend to draw some conclusions and highlight the lessons that seem to me to be important for the future.

My report will, of course, be made to Parliament in the normal way and will be made available to the public. It would then be appropriate for the Audit Committee to consider my report and decide whether to take evidence.

I have discussed my intentions with Lord Fraser of Carmyllie who is about to start an inquiry at the request of the First Minister and the Presiding Officer. Taken together, my three reports along with the report to be prepared by Lord Fraser should present a full and accurate record of the costs and what went wrong, and there should also be lessons for constructing public buildings in the future. I will use my statutory powers to report on contract management and value for money. Lord Fraser is in a position to look at matters that involve policy.