

PUBLIC FINANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY (SCOTLAND) ACT 2000

EXPLANATORY NOTES

THE ACT

Section 20: Consolidated Public Accounts

General Purpose

100. This section gives the Scottish Ministers powers to prepare consolidated accounts and also to obtain financial information from bodies outwith the Scottish Administration.

Subsections (1) and (2)

101. These provides that the Scottish Ministers may prepare for any financial year consolidated accounts for the Scottish Administration as a whole, or the Scottish Administration together with other bodies and office-holders – or a class of bodies or office-holders - who appear to the Scottish Ministers to exercise public functions or be entirely or substantially funded from public money. The format of any consolidated accounts will be directed in writing by the Scottish Ministers.

Subsection (3)

102. This subsection makes provision for the preparation of financial information by those bodies or office-holders, or a class of such, designated by the Scottish Ministers.
103. A class or individual body or office-holder which is designated must prepare financial information in the form and manner directed by the Scottish Ministers. Such bodies or office-holders must also arrange for this information to be audited so far as the Scottish Ministers require, and the information must be sent to the Scottish Ministers, together with any required explanation, by such time as they direct.

Subsections (4) to (7)

104. Accounts prepared under subsection (1) must be sent with the Scottish Ministers' determination under that subsection to the Auditor General. The Auditor General must then examine such accounts, prepare and send to the Scottish Ministers a report on whether the accounts have been prepared in accordance with the determination. The Scottish Ministers must lay a copy of the accounts and the report before the Parliament.
105. Subsection (7) ensures that the Auditor General, in examining accounts under this section and in preparing a report, will have access to information as set out in section 24 (1) and (2) of this Act.