

Improving Audit Committee Effectiveness

Delegates serving on an audit committee should understand what membership in the committee entails, and how they can personally help maximise its impact. This programme will give them the skills they need to play their part in making the governance of your organisation as effective as possible. They will also benefit from being able to discuss and air any concerns they have, and share their own perspectives.

Aim

To provide participants with a clear understanding of:

1. Relationships between the accounting officers, audit committees and other key parties
2. The organisation and structure of meetings
3. The membership of the committee
4. What can be done to make audit committees as effective as possible, and the ways in which accounting officers, auditors and the NAO work together

Methodology

The training approach to be used, which governs the design and delivery of the training is based on the following principles:

- To actively involve the participants throughout the training
- To enable participants to share their thoughts and enquiries
- The training is designed based on the needs and expectations of the participants that are reflected in the pre-training questionnaire

Workshop methods and tools

In order to achieve the objectives of the training, the following tools and methods will be utilised:

- **Presentations:** presentations will be used in order to provide the background of each subject and create discussion and questions.

- **Discussions:** throughout the training, participants will be encouraged to contribute to discussions and share their experiences and thoughts with the rest of the group. The discussions will be facilitated and coordinated by the facilitator in order to maintain the focus in the key areas of interest

- **Group work:** group work will be used in order to facilitate practical understanding of the issues and in order to enhance team working, team building and cooperation amongst participants.

Sample programme

09.30 Welcome and introductions

Quick overview of the role of audit committee

Best practice for audit committees and recent developments

Refreshment Break

Roundtable discussion

- An opportunity for participants to share their views on what worries them most about the position of their organisation
 - The challenges it faces
 - What can throw it off course

Potential discussion topics (upon agreement by participants during the session):

- The role of risk assessment – the importance of proper horizon scanning and how does the audit committee ensure this
- The capability to identify the risks posed by new cases as they are reported (e.g. whistle blowers)
- The role of internal audit
- Leadership
- Pitfalls – people, process, culture and assumptions
- Public accountability

13.00 Conclusion and close