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1. FOREWORD

Recruitment and selection (R&S) is a critical part of human resource management and can have a real effect on the effectiveness and efficiency of the Samoa Public Service. The purpose of this handbook provides the policy process for recruitment and selection of all Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and Contract Employees in the Samoa Public Service. This Handbook is derived and repackaged from the current Recruitment and Selection Manual 2014 which sets out the standards, internal procedures and good practice carried out by the Office of the PSC.

The focus of the Handbook:

- Highlights the different phases of the recruitment and selection for senior executives within the public service employed under contractual basis;
- Sets the guides to the Recruitment and Selection (R&S) process and explains what you need to understand for each key step of the process;
- R&S process is based on fundamental principles of merit and procedural fairness.

The Public Service Commission is responsible for administering the R&S process for employment of CEOs and contractual employees under the Public Service Act 2004. For CEO recruitment, the Commission is instrumental in managing the R&S process and reports to the Prime Minister for its decision making. Recruitment and selection for contractual employees are managed and approved by the Commission in line with the process and procedures.

Administration and implementation of the recruitment and selection of CEOs and Contract Employees in the Samoa Public Service is managed by the Senior Executive Services Division of the Public Service Commission.

Chairman
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
2. **GLOSSARY**

**Additional Assessment Tool**
Pre-interview testing to further examine an applicant’s cognitive and behavioural attributes in a particular situation. This is carried out online or onsite and complies with section 67 (Examinations) of the PS Act 2004.

**Appointing authority**
This refers to any person or entity with the power to make an appointment. In this case:
- Head of State may on the advice of Cabinet appoint a person to be a CEO
- Commission makes appointment for Contract Employees after consulting with the relevant CEO

**Applicant**
A person who has shown interest by submitting an application to an advertised position

**Cabinet**
The Cabinet of Ministers which is empowered with Executive power by Article 32 of the Constitution.

**Chairman**
The Chairman of the Public Service Commission appointed under Article 84(2) of the Constitution.

**Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**
The Head of Department of a Ministry and includes the head of a Constitutional authority.

**Circular**
Public Service Official Circular referred to in section 71 of the Public Service Act 2004.

**Commission**
The Public Service Commission constituted under Article 84 of the Constitution.

**Competency Framework**
A model that broadly defines competencies in alignment with merit components such as:
1. Skills and Abilities
2. Personal Attributes
3. Experience
4. Qualification
The competency framework enables the right recruitment and monitor effective performance

**Conflict of Interest (COI)**
A conflict of interest exists where an employee’s private interests, both financial and personal, could conflict with their official duties such that an independent observer might reasonably question whether the professional actions or decisions of that person are influenced by their own interests.

**Contract of Employment**
A legally binding agreement specifying the terms and conditions under which a person consents to perform certain duties and responsibilities pertaining to a position designated to be under such agreement in return for a specific salary.

**Contract Employee (CE)**
An employee employed in a contract position under section 30 and 31 of the Public Service Act 2004.

**Contract Position**
A position determined to be a contract position under section 29 of the Public Service Act 2004.
These positions are (but are not limited to)
- Assistant Chief Executive Officers
Delegate
Person to whom the Commission or the CEO has delegated authority to exercise the Commission’s or
CEO’s powers under sections 10 and 16 of the Public Service Act 2004

Detail Sheet
A detailed summary of an applicant’s personal details, academic background, employment history,
referees and any additional information to assist the Selection Panel with the recruitment and selection
process.

Incumbent
Person that currently occupies a contract position.

Job Description (JD)
The written document detailing the tasks, duties, responsibilities and working conditions assigned by
the CEO, pursuant to the Act, which are required to be performed by an employee.

Merit
Section 36 of the Act provides that the merit of a person in relation to a position must be assessed on
the basis of:
(a) the skills and abilities;
(b) educational qualifications;
(c) experience and past work performance; and
(d) personal attributes of the person that are relevant to the selection criteria for the position.

Ministry
A Ministry specified in the Schedule to the Ministerial and Departmental Arrangements Act 2003
(other than the Ministry of Police, Prison and Fire Service) and includes a Constitutional authority.

Procedural Fairness
The concept of procedural fairness has two fundamental principles:
- A person directly affected by an impending decision must be afforded a fair hearing prior to
that decision being made;
- The decision maker needs to act without bias in exercising his/her responsibilities.

Public Service (PS)
The public service constituted by Section 20 of the Public Service Act 2004.

PS Act 2004
Samoa Public Service Act 2004

Prime Minister (PM)
The Prime Minister of Samoa

Public Service Commission (PSC)
The Public Service Commission of Samoa is the central authority for HR related matters for
government ministries under the Public Service Act (2004).

Qualification
The minimum level of formal education or experience, including recognition by or registration with a
professional organization, that a person must possess to enable them to be employed at a particular
classification or designation level.
Recruitment and Selection (R&S)
Refers to the merit based process that consists of different steps, all designed towards recruiting and appointing the most meritorious applicant.

Relevant CEO
In relation to an employee or a position, means the CEO of the Ministry in which the employee works, or the CEO of the Ministry in which the position is located.

Remuneration Tribunal
The Remuneration Tribunal as established by Section 4 of the Remuneration Tribunal Act 2003.

Responsible Minister
In relation to a Ministry means the Minister for the time being responsible for that Ministry

SES
The Senior Executive Services of the Office of the Public Services Commission manages and administers the Recruitment and Selection Handbook.

Selection Criteria
The selection criteria must include skills (interpersonal or functional) knowledge, experience, formal qualification and professional affiliations. A person is required to meet the above to enable them to perform the duties of that particular job. The importance of each criterion should be weighted according to the job requirements and must reflect the primary objectives and specific responsibilities and duties of the job.

Selection Panel
Individuals selected to assess and determine upon recommendation to the Appointing Authority the applicant who best meets the merit factors of the contract position.

Vacancy File
A compilation of all the applications received upon closing of advertisement together with relevant information pertaining to the position that is made available to the members of the Selection Panel for their information and assessment.
3. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

3.1. Legislation
The legal mandate guiding and providing the Office of the PSC with the authority to administer the R&S of Senior Executives of the Public Service is the Public Service Act 2004.

Other relevant legislative and policy decisions apply to the process from time to time:

- Public Service Regulations 2008
- Remuneration Tribunal Act 2003
- Prime Minister and Cabinet Directives

3.2. R&S policy (merit based)
The R&S process is set out in accordance to Section 36 of the Public Service Act 2004. The process must promote and enforce a culture of Merit-based selection throughout the Samoa Public Service. In facilitating this, Merit is clearly defined and entrenched as the basis of assessment in the recruitment and selection process for any position in the Public Service on the basis of the following ‘merits’:

(a) Skills and abilities;
(b) Educational qualifications;
(c) Experience and past work performance; and
(d) Personal attributes.

For the assessment of Merit to be effectively managed, the following strategies should be considered:

- All components of Merit are essential and must be equally considered for a balanced and fair assessment.
- In the avoidance of bias and subjectivity, panel members must disclose any conflict in the process or proceed to withdraw from the process when there is a direct or personal interest.
- Selection Panel must always collectively discuss, define and set the parameters of how each Merit factor is to be assessed.
- The assessment of Merit is to be comprehensively done based on all information gathered from the assessment tools and overall process.
- For transparency and accountability, document the whole process particularly how each applicant was comparatively assessed. Reporting also should not just be on the interview but an assessment of all information.
- The assessment of Merit should be evidence-based. Any unaccounted incident that the selection panel may choose to include in the assessment of Merit must be made known to the applicant. Natural justice in relation to a chance to be heard must be applied to minimize any bias in the assessment of Merit.
- The assessment of Merit must be done right from the outset. Any position to be processed under the Recruitment and Selection system must be thoroughly reviewed so that it reflects the relevant key roles, duties, responsibilities, competencies and descriptors that would support the organisation’s needs and priorities.

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2 SPS Merit Policy Guideline 2016
3.3. **Principles And Values Guiding Recruitment And Selection**

The R&S process must follow principles of Procedural Fairness and uphold the PS values of the Samoa Public Service.

**I. Merit s.36 and s.18(a)**

- Appointments to contract positions are to be made on the basis of merit as stated in Section 18(a) and defined in Section 36 of the Public Service Act 2004.

**II. Fairness s.18(b)**

- Decisions on employment matters must be made fairly and properly.
- The use of an independent member on the Selection Panel in addition to the relevant CEO or delegate and the PSC Chairman or PSC Member

**III. Impartiality s.17(b)**

- Acting without fear or favor when making recruitment decisions.
- Making decisions based on merit.

**IV. Respect s.17(d)**

- Treating members of the public with respect.
- Not giving a person special treatment of favors because of their social status.

**V. Transparency s.17(e)**

- Being clear and open in decision making and reasons on which those decisions were based.
- Being able to share organizational information without disclosing confidential information.

**VI. Accountability s.17(f)**

- Knowing what you are responsible for delivering.
- Being prepared and able to explain the reason for actions taken and responsibility for those actions.

**VII. Efficiency and Effectiveness s.17(g)**

- Making good recruitment selection decisions to achieve the Ministry’s objectives as set out in Corporate and Management Plans.
- A recruitment and selection process that takes minimum amount of time whilst maintaining procedural fairness ensuring that the ‘right’ person for the job is selected.
4. **TABLE OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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| **Cabinet** | • **Determine** a CEO appointment.  
• Decide on the next course of action if the Offer of Employment is declined by the initial appointee or in rare circumstances whereby the due date of the appointee’s response to the offer has lapsed and the appointee could not be contacted. |
| **Head of State** | • **Appointing Authority** for CEO positions  
• Confirms appointment and signs the Warrant of Appointment for CEO positions. |
| **Office of the Public Service Commission/ Senior Executive Services Section /Human Resource Management Division** | • Ensure that the whole R&S process is carried according to the policy in a fair and transparent manner based on merit to avoid any claims of unfairness.  
• Consult the Prime Minister/PSC Minister, Responsible Minister regarding the requirement of the vacant positions.  
• Review Job Description for vacant positions and send to Responsible Minister/Ministry CEO to provide input for review JD.  
• Develop Key Deliverables of Senior Executive Positions  
• Informs the incumbent of plans to proceed with advertisement of the CEO position and remind of his/her end of contract date.  
• Advise Responsible Minister upon request on changes proposed against the Job Description, terms and conditions and other related details relating to the CEO position.  
• Advise responsible CEO upon request on changes proposed against the review Job Description, terms and conditions and other related details relating to contract position.  
• Prepares the advertisement of CEO and Contract positions and bears all costs incurred.  
• Make decision on re-advertisements  
• Leads and manages the recruitment process from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment phase.  
• Determine appointment of Contract Employee.  
• Confirms the Commencement Date.  
• HRM review the Job Classification System (JCS) changes to the JD proposed by a CEO and submits a recommendation for a Commission decision on a new contract position.  
• Prepare contract template for contract signing for CEO & ACEO position. |
| **Prime Minister/Responsible Minister/PSC Minister** | • Provide input into the draft Job Description for CEO position  
• Confirms the Job Description as a basis for selecting a suitable candidate for appointment.  
• If changes are requested and warrants Cabinet approval, the Responsible Minister is to put through a request to Cabinet and for PSC and Remuneration Tribunal to provide advise if required.  
• Endorse the advertisement of the CEO position. |
| **Remuneration Tribunal** | • Advises Cabinet (if required) on any changes proposed against the CEO position which affects position salary.  
• The Remuneration Tribunal Chairman is one of the Panel Members for CEO interview. |
| **Selection Panel** | • Conduct short listing of applicants.  
• Conduct Reference checks of applicants when required.  
• Conduct the interviews.  
• Prepare and present an Interview Report to Cabinet with **recommendation** of top three ranked nominees for an appointment of CEO position.  
• Prepare and present Interview Report for Commission's consideration for an appointment of Contract Position. |
| **Chief Executive Officer** | • Input comments/amendments on the JD review from PSC on contract positions.  
• Comment on adequacy of pool of applicants.  
• Proposes the commencement date for the appointee.  
• Attend the contract signing for the appointee. |
| **Attorney General** | • Endorse changes made on Contract of Employment for CEO and Contract Positions |
5. **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS OVERVIEW**

5.1. **PRE-ASSESSMENT PHASE**

The Pre-assessment phase is the first of the 3 phases of the R&S process, and consists of a set of steps/procedures that mark the commencement of the recruitment process. These important steps are:

(a) Vacancy Review  
(b) Review of Position  
(c) Advertise Position  
(d) Receive Applications  
(e) Late Applications  
(f) Re-Advertisement

1. **Vacancy Review**

When a vacancy is identified by way of new position, end of term or resignation, PSC is to review accordingly. This is the part of the process where the CEO and Contract positions are reviewed for the necessity of the post and its duties, responsibilities and salary grade before advertising the job vacancy. The opportunity is accorded to the Minister of the respective ministry to make changes or comments on the vacant CEO JD. For contract employees, the responsible Ministry CEO provides comments or changes on a contract position before advertisement. It is not only a succession plan in terms of making sure the duties and targets of one contract employee flows into another but also a plan to guarantee that the work of the Ministry or Division is not hindered/interrupted due to delays in the process. Ultimately, the position duties and responsibilities must be clear, accurate and reflect the current objectives and direction of the Ministry / Organisation.

2. **Review of Position**

The review of a position identifies the functional aspects of the position and is dependent on changes made by a Minister or CEO of a responsible Ministry before advertisement. CEO and Contract positions are reviewed to assess whether the J.D is still relevant in terms of the needs of the Ministry, the sector and government. PSC will ensure that before the position is advertised, the duties, criteria and key deliverables must be specific and reflective of what the Sector/Ministry/government needs/requires of the position. At the end of the review, the following guidelines are met:

- Duties and responsibilities are relevant and accurate;  
- Selection Criteria and key competencies are aligned with the Competency Framework (refer to appendix 7.1)  
- Reflect equality, opportunity and encourage an open and competitive R&S process.  
- Key Deliverables of the position are reflective of the direction of the position / ministry for the duration of the contract term.

3. **Advertisement**

Advertising the position is vital as to attract a sufficient pool of interested applicants. Therefore, PSC is to ensure that positions are advertised through various modes such as the Public Service Official Circular, media, social networks etc. In addition, information on advertised positions such as application packages and advice (via letters, emails and telephone calls) are assured to be accessible and accurate for applicants. The advertisement of a vacant CEO position is four (4) weeks and a Contract position is for two (2) weeks from the date of the advertisement.

To advertise a position, the following must be available and clear:

- Application Package is made available and accessible;  
- “How to Apply” guide available;  
- Address to be delivered / mailed / emailed to;  
- Due date and any other submission requirements
4. **Receive Applications**

Upon receiving applications for both CEO and Contract positions, all applications are handled with the utmost care to ensure accuracy and confidentiality. It is important at this stage to determine the next phase of the process, dependent on the number and quality of applications received.

For applications received, the following guidelines are met:

- Check if all requirements of the Application are complete;
- Acknowledgement of individual applications;
- Prepare Vacancy File to Commission for decision on next step;
- Prepare detail sheets.

5. **Late Applications**

Acceptance and inclusion of a late application can be made prior to the short listing. Applications received after the due date will not be considered unless there are exceptional circumstances, for example, if a low number of application forms have been received, a late application may be accepted by the Chairman for CEO positions and the Commission for contract positions based on following conditions:

- Cover letter providing reason of delay;
- Date of submission.

6. **Re-advertisement**

Re-advertising the position is dependent on the number of applications received. The Chairman makes the decision for CEO positions while the Commission has the discretion of re-advertising a contract position. It is mandatory to re-advertise the position if only one (1) application is received at the first round of advertisement.

- If two or more applications are received, it is at the discretion of the Chairman to re-advertise a CEO vacant position.
- For contract positions, it is at the discretion of the Commission to re-advertise the position.
- The relevant Minister and Ministries are duly informed of the outcome of advertisements and decision on re-advertisements.
- Applicants are duly informed of the re-advertisement.

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3 Refer to Managing Confidential Information guideline
PRE-ASSESSMENT PHASE STEPS

VACANCY REVIEW

- PSC initiates the R&S process six (6) months for CEO before current term of the position ceases
- PSC initiates the R&S process four (4) months for Contract employees before current term of position ceases
- PSC initiates process when position is created or vacant

- PSC review JD and send latest JD for comments to
  - PM, Responsible Minister, Minister of PSC for CEO positions
  - CEO for Contract Positions

- Comments (if any) are to be submitted to PSC
  - 5 working days (dependent on Individual/s)
  - PSC proceed if comments are not received by date

- Changes to be checked and endorsed.
  - PSC incorporates changes
  - PSC endorses and informs relevant authority of final JD

- Inform incumbent (if position is occupied) of R&S process
  - PSC informs incumbent that position will be advertised
  - PSC informs incumbent of cessation date of contract

REVIEW OF POSITION

- In cases where changes to JD or Selection Criteria affect the:
  - Terms of the contract
  - Designation
  - Salary

- PSC provides advice to Cabinet through the Minister on the matter for CEO positions
- PSC provides advice to CEO on the matter for Contract positions
- Cabinet and Commission may seek Remuneration Tribunal advice for salary related matters

ADVERTISEMENT

- PSC to advertise the position with all relevant documents including Application Packages for CEO

- Advertise CEO position for 4 weeks on a Special Advertisement Issue of the PSOC
- Advertise Contract positions for 2 weeks on Issue of the PSOC
- Advertise widely in other forms of media and social forums.
RECEIVE APPLICATIONS

- Applications submitted must be addressed to the Chairman of the PSC
- Applications submitted electronically must be accompanied by hard copies to PSC
- Any application received after due date must be accompanied by a valid explanation for the late submission and is subject to the Selection Panel’s discretion
- PSC to:
  - Ensure that applications are compiled and filed correctly in a Vacancy File
  - Assess that requirements in the application are completed
  - Acknowledge the receipt of individual applications

Refer applications to Chairman / Commissioners of PSC and seek advice
- on whether to re-advertise the position
- on notification of the Panel Members

PSC to:
- inform responsible minister that CEO position will be re-advertised also to responsible CEO that contract position will be re-advertised.
- For Contract positions, PSC to inform responsible CEO that position will be re-advertised.
- PSC to invite Panel Members

LATE APPLICATIONS

Late applications are considered based on justifications / reasons provided

- SES to assess justification of late application(s)
- Chairman make decision on late applications for CEO positions
- Commission make decision on late application for contract positions
- Selection Panel and/or Applicant informed of decision to accept or otherwise

RE-ADVERTISEMENT

Applications are to be sent to PSC and addressed to the Chairman, for both CEO and contract positions.

- SES to assess whether applications are complete and then acknowledge accordingly.
- SES to advise Minister for re-advertisement of CEO positions
- SES to advise Ministry for re-advertisement of contract positions
5.2. ASSESSMENT PHASE

This part of the process is whereby the Selection Panel makes a recommendation on appointment based on all relevant information of all applicants submitted through their application forms, reference checks, and assessment, through an online test/assessment and the interview process. The assessment phase is guided by the following steps:

(a) Short Listing
(b) Reference Check
(c) Additional Assessment
(d) Interviews
(e) Panel Decision

1. Short Listing

The conduct of short-listing is to ensure a good R&S practice. Applicants are assessed only on their demonstrated ability to meet the position’s competencies detailed in the application and supporting documents. Only those applicants who meet the selection criteria of which have been agreed as measurable from the application documents are short listed. In practice, the following guides are observed:

- A preliminary meeting by the panel to short-list and prepare for the interview procedure including questions etc.
- Assess the applications received whether applicants have demonstrated their ability to satisfy the selection criteria and competencies of the position through their applications.
- The Selection panel has the discretion to shortlist applicants who do not meet merit factors if they foresee a limited pool of interested applicants after numerous re-advertisements. Evidence / justifications for short listing and not shortlisting certain applicants are required.
- Selection panel members will set an interview date, time and venue based on their availability in order for PSC to inform shortlisted applicants.
- An appropriate period of 3 working days minimum is required after informing applicants before their interview date.
- Shortlisted applicants and unsuccessful applicants are notified at the same time.

PSC to prepare all information relating to the vacant position and applicants to assist with the short listing process.

2. Reference Checks

The purpose of a reference check is to obtain information about an applicant’s behaviour and work performance from prior employer/s and is critical to decision making, regardless of their skills, knowledge and abilities. References provide the Selection panel clarification on applicants’:

- Previous work performance
- Skills and Knowledge of the applications
- Experiences and behaviour of the applicant
- Any and all possible disciplinary action or breach of Values or Code of Conduct

For CEO positions, applicants must provide 3 written references from previous employers valid within a 12 months period.
All applicants to Contract level positions require 3 professional referees.
Requirements on references may vary depending on nature of the position and are set out in the “How to Apply” guide.
3. Additional Assessment Tools/Test

PSC is authorised to pursue further assessment to test each applicant’s competencies under the merit components of the position. This will assist the Selection Panel in making their final decision on appointment.

- Online test or on site examinations before the interview are used to identify applicants’ skills that cannot be determined in an interview process.
- Testing aptitudes using cognitive ability tests such as abstract thinking and reasoning through scenarios can measures various abilities such as problem solving, critical thinking and aptitude to learn certain tasks.
- It focuses on the following (but not limited to):
  - Problem solving,
  - Strategic thinking
  - Critical thinking
  - Writing skills
  - Basic computing skills

4. Interviews

The Interview process is a verbal test to gather and assess additional information on each finalist’s knowledge, experience, abilities, skills and traits that will be used to perform the job.

- For the interview process the Selection Panel is to assess applicants based on the answers given during the Interview and assess the relevancy of each merit an applicant has to the position duties and goals.
- A range of standard questions has to be agreed to by the Selection Panel to assess the ability of candidates based on the position duties and competencies,

### INTERVIEW TIPS

It is important that the questions cover requirements of the Position (duties & key deliverables) in order to assess applicants on all of the essential criteria needed for the position. There should be both open and closed questions as well as practical exercises/tests where necessary. Consideration should be given to the number of interviews held in one day as well as the appropriateness of the venue for the interview.

The following tips can be observed by the Selection Panel for an interview:

- The Chair to introduce the Selection Panel and explain the format of the interview and lead the interview.
- Ensure all candidates are asked the same core questions
- Ensure all questions are framed accordingly with the JD, key deliverables, competencies or any professional questions related to documents / information available to the Selection Panel.
- Bring the interview to a close and provide (if needed) the next process, confirming the periods, notifying them of decision.
- Acknowledge the applicant for attending the interview
- Give the applicant the opportunity for any questions relating to the process
5. Panel Decision / Recommendation

In making final assessment and recommendation, the Chairperson on behalf of the Selection Panel prepares report of each applicant’s interview performance. The interview assessment forms can also be used to further reflect assessment based on merit.

- For CEO positions, the Selection Panel members will present their findings and recommendation in an interview report to the Prime Minister and Cabinet for a final decision on who to appoint to the position of CEO.
- As for contract positions the findings and recommendation will be in an interview report from the Selection Panel members for the Commission’s final decision on who to appoint for the position.
ASSESSMENT PHASE FOR CEO & CONTRACT POSITIONS STEPS

**SELECTION PANEL**

- PSC to deliver vacancy file with the following documents to Selection panel members for preparations:
  - Detail Sheet
  - Job Description
  - Flowchart of R&S process

- Panel Members confirmed availability and already declare conflict of interest

- Confer a time for shortlisting and contact all Selection Panel members for shortlisting

- PSC to schedule shortlisting once date and time confirmed by 3 Selection panel members.

* The Chairman has to determine the nature of the COI – whether it is actual, apparent or potential before replacing that Selection Panel member. Managing issues of COI is guided by the Managing Conflict of Interest Policy 2016

**SHORTLIST APPLICANTS**

- On the set date of shortlisting, the Selection Panel meet to carry out the short listing process
  - Select applicants who meet and satisfy the 4 merit factors for interview

- PSC to notify applicants shortlisted by Selection Panel, also notify unsuccessful who do not get shortlisted

**ASSESSMENT TOOLS**

- For Shortlisted Applicants of Contract Positions only

- Compulsory to sit an online / on site test, 2 days before the interview date as per Additional Assessment Tool
INTERVIEW

- PSC to organize logistics of the interview i.e., allocate a room, provide stationary to Selection Panel members if needed, ensure no disturbances during the interviews as well as ensuring applicants are on time for their interviews.

On the set date of interview, the selection panel to conduct interview for the shortlisted applicants.

PANEL DECISION

Chair of the Selection Panel to prepare Interview Report detailing selection assessment and recommendation

PSC to deliver interview report for CEO position to the Prime Minister / Cabinet for final decision

Commission makes decision on appointment based on interview report for contract positions
5.3. POST ASSESSMENT PHASE

The final phase of the R&S Process comprises finalizing assessment and making an official appointment of the applicant with the most merit. Decision on appointment is made by Cabinet for CEO positions and Commission for Contract positions. This part of the process is guided by the following steps:

(a) Appointment
(b) Offer of Employment
(c) Commencement date
(d) Signing of Contract of Employment

1. **Appointment**

The Selection Panel makes recommendation:
- For CEOs, the appointing authority is the Head of State on the advice of Cabinet.
- For Contract officers, it is the Commission on the advice of a Selection Panel committee.

In making a decision on appointment, the following is observed:
- Concur with the Selection Panel and approve the recommendation;
- Whereby a unanimous decision cannot be reached, a Minority report to be provided/included in the Interview report;*
- Disagree with the Selection Panel’s recommendation and decide otherwise;
- Re-advertise the position to further acquire a wider pool of applicants for selection.

For Contract Positions, if the Commission makes an appointment differently from the Selection Panel’s recommendation, the relevant CEO is consulted for views as per Section 31(1) of the Public Service Act. Once a mutual understanding is reached, the Commission will decide on the way forward for this position.

2. **Offer of Employment**

The Offer of Employment is given to the appointee once an appointment has been confirmed and approved by the responsible Appointing Authority which is the Head of State on the advice of Cabinet for CEO positions and Commission for Contract positions. The Offer of Employment comprises of:

- Official Offer Letter – letter informing the appointee of the job position offered to him/her and notify the Commission whether to approve or decline the offer
- The JD, setting out the duties and responsibilities of the position.
- Contract of Employment – states terms and conditions of employment, salary and benefits/entitlements so that a contract employee will reach an agreement.
- Unsuccessful applicants are informed of the outcome of the interview and individual feedback is provided by the Selection Panel upon written request.

*In the case where an Offer of Employment is declined, the Commission will decide the next course of action in line with current policies for Contract position and the responsible Minister will decide the next course of action for CEO positions.*

1. Separate report presented by member of a Selection Panel who disagrees with the majority
3. **Commencement Date**

The commencement date confirms the effective starting date of the appointee to the position. This arrangement is negotiated between the appointee, the relevant Minister / CEO and the PSC. The commencement date is facilitated and endorsed by the Commission based on consultation with CEO and the Appointee. Negotiations are made to accommodate the circumstances of both parties and once the commencement date is final, the PSC will officially notify the appointee through a letter and arrange for the Contract signing. The salary for the position will be effective on the commencement date.

4. **Signing of the Contract of Employment**

This is the final stage of the R&S process. This is to officialise the appointment of the appointee approved to the position. The Contract of Employment is signed between the appointee and the Commission, who acts on behalf of Government. Prior to signing the Contract of Employment, SES ensures that the appointee agrees to all terms and conditions of the Contract of Employment.

The Contract of Employment for CEOs is signed between the Chairman, a Government solicitor and the appointee. For all other Contract positions, the parties are: the Chairman, the appointee, Government solicitor and the relevant CEO.

*Where the CEO cannot attend a Contract signing, he/she must ensure to provide a written delegation of powers to his/her representative to be made available to PSC prior to the Contract signing. This does not apply where the CEO’s representative is approved by the Commission to be the Acting CEO.*
POST-ASSESSMENT PHASE STEPS

SELECTION DECISION
- Cabinet makes appointment on CEO positions on the advice of the Selection Panel;
- The decision is conveyed through a FK/ Cabinet Directive.
- Commission makes decision on Contract Employee on the advice of the Selection Panel;
- Commission consults with the CEO of the relevant Ministry before making an appointment different from the Interview Report recommendation.

COMMENCEMENT DATE
- Commencement date for CEO is confirmed in consultation with the relevant Minister and appointee
- Commencement date for Contract Employees is confirmed in consultation with the relevant CEO and the appointee

OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT
- Offer Of Employment to successful applicant
- Contract of employment to include JD, Commencement date and relevant documents.
- Facilitate Commencement date once Offer is accepted
- Unsuccessful applicants are notified

SUCCESSFUL APPLICANT TO SIGN CONTRACT
- Successful applicant to sign contract
- SES facilitates the contract signing and prepare all relevant documents
- Appointee signs contract
- Chairman signs on behalf of Government of Samoa as the Employer
- SES makes four (4) copies of the contract for PSC, AG, Appointee and the Ministry.
6. FLOWCHART

6.1. RECRUITMENT & SELECTION FLOWCHART

If the Offer of employment is declined by the recommended applicant, the Commission is notified immediately and direction of next course of action is sought.
## 7. APPENDICES

### 7.1. COMPETENCIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Merit</th>
<th>Chief Executive Officer</th>
<th>Assistant CEO or Consultant Specialist or similar</th>
<th>Contract Employees (Special Grade)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills &amp; Abilities</td>
<td><strong>STRATEGIC THINKING</strong></td>
<td><strong>STRATEGIC THINKING</strong></td>
<td><strong>STRATEGIC THINKING</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Drives the organization’s vision and long-term direction.</td>
<td>▪ Recognizes impact of organization’s direction and role within the government and community.</td>
<td>▪ Understands organizational direction and sets work tasks that align with the strategic objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Articulates a clear vision of the organization and inspires a sense of shared purpose and direction.</td>
<td>▪ Understands organizational direction and aligns / translates strategic objectives into operational activities.</td>
<td>▪ Understands the relationship between self and organizational goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Provides advice to government based on analysis of a broad range of issues and whole-of-government agenda.</td>
<td>▪ Provides advice to government based on analysis of a broad range of issues.</td>
<td>▪ Recognize impact of operational work on organization’s direction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of political, social and economic factors affecting the organization.</td>
<td>▪ Considers multiple perspectives when assessing impact of key issues and identifies viable solutions.</td>
<td>▪ Considers wide issues when assessing the impacts of issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Considers emerging trends and multiple perspectives when assessing impact of key issues and identifies long-term opportunities and viable solutions.</td>
<td>▪ Applies intellect and knowledge to weigh up information and identify critical factors and issues.</td>
<td>▪ Undertakes objective, critical analysis and draws conclusions or weighs up options based on evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Demonstrates determination in meeting organizational goals and is ambitious to continue in the face of changes.</td>
<td>▪ Demonstrates determination in meeting organizational goals and is ambitious to continue in the face of changes.</td>
<td>▪ Determined and passionate in meeting operational goals and possesses a positive attitude towards change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BUILDING AND SUSTAINING RELATIONSHIPS / COMMUNICATIONS
- Builds and sustains relationships within the organization, with the Minister, across the public service, across agencies and with a diverse range of external stakeholders.
- Drives a culture of collaboration, participation and values diverse viewpoints to enhance operations.
- Recognizes importance of consultation, stakeholder engagement and fostering teamwork.
- Encourages and maintains a performance culture ensuring regular feedback and recognition of achievement.
- Empowers, mentors and engages in activities to sustain morale.
- Communicates the big picture clearly to a wide range of internal and external audience with precision, confidence and in an articulate manner.

BUILDING AND SUSTAINING RELATIONSHIPS / COMMUNICATIONS
- Commits to client service, builds and sustains relationships within the organization, across the public service, across agencies and with a diverse range of external stakeholders.
- Consults broadly to obtain buy-in and draws on knowledge of key stakeholders and fosters teamwork and cooperation through sharing information.
- Capitalizes on diversity and harnesses different viewpoints to enhance the operation of the organization.
- Encourages and motivates people to engage in continuous learning and empowers them by delegating responsibility for work.
- Mentors, provides constructive feedback, recognizes success and engages in activities to sustain morale.
- Communicates with precision and confidence, clearly and in an articulate manner harnessing the most appropriate methods of communication.
- Adapts communication style and message to meet needs, has a strong grasp of key issues and presents a convincing and balanced rationale.

BUILDING AND SUSTAINING RELATIONSHIPS / COMMUNICATIONS
- Commits to client service, builds and sustains relationships within the organization and across the public service.
- Facilitates cooperation and fosters teamwork through reciprocal sharing of information with key stakeholders.
- Capitalizes on diversity and supports interactions from different perspectives to enhance interactions at the divisional level.
- Encourages and motivates people to engage in continuous learning and in activities to sustain morale.
- Communicates in a clear, concise and articulate manner.
- Possesses a strong grasp of the key issues and presents a convincing and balanced rationale.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills and Abilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DELIBERS / ACHIEVES RESULTS / OUTCOMES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Drives activities that support organizational sustainability, operational efficiency and flexible resource management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Engenders a culture of accountability and transparency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Optimizes professional expertise to improve overall performance and delivery of organizational outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Drives and steers the change agenda and demonstrates understanding of the complex range of factors which effect change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Drives a culture of achievement and commitment to achieving outcomes beyond expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Drives an efficient and effective system of reporting progress, monitoring and evaluating of results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DELIBERS / ACHIEVES RESULTS / OUTCOMES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Focuses on activities that support organizational sustainability and streamlines processes to seek operational efficiency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Monitors and manages resourcing pressures for optimum outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Oversees the implementation of multiple change initiatives with a focus on the desired outcomes. Defines high-level objectives and ensures translation into practical implementation strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Fosters a culture of achievement and ensure planned targets / projects are realistic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Ensure planned targets are monitored and measured and achieves expected outputs / outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DELIBERS / ACHIEVES RESULTS / OUTCOMES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Explores ways to improve effectiveness by harnessing technology and implementing continuous improvement activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Responds flexibly to changing circumstances and deploys resources wisely and identifies optimum resourcing combinations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Adopts a planned approach to the management of programs and defines high-level objectives and supports translation into implementation strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Supports a culture of achievement and ensures planned projects / targets are monitored to achieve expected outputs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Strives for quality and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.2. ROLE OF SELECTION PANEL

The Selection Panel carries out the R&S assessment through short listing and interviews and afterwards recommend to the Appointing Authority a decision on the appointment based on Merit. The Selection Panel is comprised of:

A. For CEO positions
   - Chair - Chairman of PSC
   - Panel 2 - Chairman of Remuneration Tribunal
   - IPM - Member from the Private Sector

In the absence\(^5\) of the Chairman of PSC from the Selection Panel, a Commission Member may step in on their behalf whilst Chairman of RT assumes the Chairmanship of the panel. In the absence of Chairman RT, a member of the RT may step in place.

B. For Contract Positions
   - Chair - Commissioner of PSC
   - Panel 2 - CEO of Ministry
   - IPM - Member from the Private Sector

In the absence of any of the Commissioners of PSC from the Selection Panel, an ACEO (PSC) may step in on their behalf whilst CEO of the relevant Ministry is extended the courtesy to assume Chairmanship of the panel. In the absence of the employing Ministry CEO, an ACEO\(^6\) may step in on their behalf.

\(^5\) Absence by way of COI, illness, leave, and any unfortunate situation that affects participation

\(^6\) Acting CEO or relevant ACEO
The Selection Panel also have an obligation to disclose any possible Conflict of Interest before being involved in any decision making. The Managing Conflicts of Interest Policy provides a practical direction for managing actual, apparent or potential conflicts of interest.

MANAGING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There is no right or wrong way to identify every conflict of interest situation. However, here are some questions to ask when in doubt:

- Do I have a personal/private interest that may conflict, or be seen to conflict with my public, professional duty?
- Could there be benefits for me now or in the future that could cast doubt on my objectivity?
- Do I stand to gain from being involved in the decision making?
- How will my involvement in the decision making be perceived by others?
- Would my involvement in the decision making appear fair and reasonable in all circumstances?
- What are the consequences if I ignore a conflict of interest?
- What if my involvement is questioned publicly?
- Have I made any promises in relation to the decision making that I am involved in?

STRATEGIES TO MANAGE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- Record the disclosure of a conflict of interest in a final/outcomes report. It may be necessary to assess the conflict of interest and determine whether one or more of the following strategies is required.
- Restrict a public servant or official’s involvement in the matter by refraining to take part in the discussions, abstain from voting on decisions or restrict access to information relating to the conflict of interest.
- If it is not practical to restrict a public servant or official’s involvement, an independent third party may need to be engaged to participate in, oversee or review the integrity of the decision making process.
- Alternatively, remove the public servant or official’s involvement in the matter.
- Renounce all private interests that may possibly conflict with a public duty.
- Being open and transparent in responses to the public on addressing a conflict of interest situation i.e., complainant must be informed on the steps and measures taken to address, manage and resolve a conflict of interest that arose.

Immediate Family Relationship is as follows:
- Grandparents (including adopted and step grandparents);
- Parents (including adopted and step parents);
- Spouse (including de facto spouse);
- Children (including adopted and step children);
- Siblings (including adopted and step siblings);
- First cousins;
- Spouse’s immediate family; and
- Any other relative living in the same household as the decision-maker.

Close Relationship is as follows:
- Family relationship other than that described above;
- Titles relationship (i.e., matai titles)
- Friendship;
- Longstanding relationship established through business or employment; or
- Any other prior dealings.

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7 Managing Conflict of Interest Policy 2016.
7.3. ROLE OF THE CHAIR

The chairperson of the Selection Panel is responsible for the overall administration of the interview. This includes the following:

- coordinating the Selection Panel
- lead the short listing process
- allocation of questioning areas depending on the Selection Panel’s area of expertise and expectations of the position in question
- Reminding the Selection Panel of their roles in upholding the reliability of the process with regards to confidentiality
- leading the discussions on which candidates to appoint,

7.4. INDEPENDENT PANEL MEMBERS SELECTION GUIDELINES

The IPM is the third member of the Selection Panel for the R&S process that plays a crucial role in relation to the recruitment process as it provides a balance and stability to the Selection Panel. The intention is to compose a stable, balanced and consistent panel that can deliberate on decisions transparently and provide an objective merit based recommendation for appointment. The IPM, being a member of the private sector, contributes to the achievement of this intention as they represent the views and interests of not only the private sector but as well as the general public, offering an outside perspective. It is imperative therefore that the identification and subsequent selection of an IPM for a position is a task to be given the utmost priority and careful consideration.

In view of the high number of technical positions at the senior executive level, PSC through SES develops and maintains an “IPM database” to record a pool of suitable candidates for IPM, categorized based on each sector. Candidates vary based on the level of contract employment (CEO & Contract Employees).

The PSC, through its Senior Executive Services, carries out the identification and selection of IPMs with emphasis on:

- The suitability and relevance of the IPM in terms of relevant experience and extensive related technical expertise, as opposed to limiting selection based only on their availability.
- IPMs are considered based on their current position within their respectable organizations, and are preferred to be of a higher level than that of the position being recruited. For instance, for recruitment of ACEO positions, the CEO/President of a relevant stakeholder NGO/ SOE is invited. For CEO positions, prominent figures of the same sector are invited.
- Outside advisers that provide balance to the panel in terms of gender and professional background.

In light thereof, certain steps and measures are taken in order to ensure that the most suitable IPM is secured for the position.

1. A suitable IPM is first identified by referring to the IPM database and selection is based on relevancy.
2. An invitation is prepared and then sent to the selected IPM, giving them 5 working days to respond on agreement to be an IPM and availability.
3. If an IPM confirms availability, then SES to proceed to arrange short listing meeting and prepare necessary documents:
   - Vacancy File
   - Detail Sheets
   - Job Description
   If the IPM declines the invitation, then go back to Steps 1 & 2.
4. After interviews, once an appointment is finalized, then SES to prepare an acknowledgement letter and liaise with the Corporate Services Division to begin processing IPM’s Allowance.
The IPMs are selected from a pool of professionals within the Private sector and NGOs for the following Sectors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIORITY AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.5. MANAGING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Confidential information is privileged communications / information relating to a specific decision making process and shared only amongst individuals involved.

Any information relating to R&S decisions are privileged and confidential. All parties involved, directly or indirectly, must not in any way disclose confidentially privileged information. They need to understand their responsibilities related to the security of information handling, use and storage in any form whether electronically or physical.

The mismanagement of confidential information relating to R&S is a serious breach of trust and confidence in the integrity of the process.

To manage information, the following must be observed:

1. All parties involved in the R&S process have a responsibility to handle with extreme care and caution the confidential information to protect the privacy of the information and to safeguard all related information for legitimate use by authorized personnel involved in the process:
   - Members of the Commission
   - Appointing Authorities
   - Panel Members

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8 Involved means either as the officer responsible for the recruitment and selection of a position, a member of the Panel or the officer carrying out the independent analysis on the Selection Outcome Report
2. Intentional misuse and negligent handling use of confidential information puts the entire R&S process into disrepute. Some examples are as follows
   a) **Misuse**
      - The disclosing, discussing and/or providing confidential information to any individual not authorized to view or access;
      - Using information viewed or retrieved from the process for personal or any other unauthorized or unlawful use outside the R&S spectrum.
      - The modification of any information without authorization
   b) **Negligence**
      - The reckless, careless, or improper handling, storage or disposal of confidential information, including electronically stored and/or printed documents and Interview reports containing confidential information
      - Intentionally or unintentionally Generating and/or disseminating false or misleading information

3. All parties involved in the process and have access or manage confidential information bear the responsibility of preserving and protecting the complete confidentiality and privacy of such. Public Servants can be held liable under specific legislations on ethical conduct. Here are some examples of Confidential Information:
   - Applicants’ personal information
   - Identity of the applicants applying to a position
   - Identity of the applicants shortlisted to be interviewed
   - Information relating to the content of Additional Assessment Tools
   - Information relating to the content of the Interview and inherent discussions
   - Information relating to the Decision on the appointment of an applicant to a position;
   - Information relating to the Panel members’ assessment and scoring
   - Interview Report details

4. All parties who have access to confidential information are expected to take measures to protect the confidentiality and privacy of the information:
   - Ensure all printed material are marked **CONFIDENTIAL**
   - Ensure all information are kept within the confines of the Office
   - Ensure all information are disposed in a way that will preserve confidentiality
   - Ensure all information have proper clearance either for disclosure or non-disclosure

5. Members of the Selection Panel outside the scope of the Public Service are required to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement to reinforce their obligation and duty to the R&S process to keep and maintain the proper handling of confidential information by non-disclosure.