

BUSINESS PLAN 2014-15

THEME ONE: To be firm on principles but pragmatic on process	
Objective	Performance Indicators/Targets
We will introduce the new Recruitment Principles, support Departments in understanding them, monitor how well they are understood and implemented, and take action as required. This will include a review of the exception relating to Extended Ministerial Offices (EMOs) after 12 months of operation.	EMO Review completed by December 2014 <i>[See also targets for awareness training under Theme Three.]</i>
We will conduct an in-depth review of the use of exceptions to the requirement for selection for appointment on merit following fair and open competition, to assess the need for further guidance.	Enhanced compliance monitoring data collection in place, April 2014 Review completed, Dec 2014 New guidance produced (if necessary), by end March 2015.
Through our compliance monitoring contract, we will conduct a pilot of real-time data collection in 3-6 departments, with a view to future extension to all departments.	Terms of pilot agreed and introduced by April 2014 Review of pilot effectiveness, by Oct 2014 Systems and guidance in place to manage roll-out, by end March 2015.
<i>We will ensure that we meet the urgent business needs of Departments by responding flexibly and promptly to requests for exceptions to the normal arrangements for recruitment on merit following fair and open competition.</i>	<i>95% of requests for exceptions to be turned round within five working days or less (average response time < 48 hours) and to a standard that no reconsideration requests are required.</i>

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THEME TWO: To work with the Civil Service to improve recruitment practices and help achieve better outcomes	
Objective	Performance Indicators/Targets
We will work with organisations to improve the standard of recruitment below the senior level, as assessed by the compliance monitoring process.	All data reviews involving Departments using CSR completed by September 2014. Board to consider emerging trends from compliance monitoring data, ongoing.
We will develop tailored programmes of support for high-risk departments to help improve their compliance and capability.	At least one support visit for each 'red' or 'amber-red' Department during 2014-15.
We will work with Civil Service Resourcing (CSR) and Civil Service Employment Policy (CSEP) to develop guidance on particular aspects of recruitment, taking account of the issues that departments find most confusing/difficult to manage.	Areas requiring guidance identified, by July 2014 (earlier if possible). Guidance agreed by Board and published, by end March 2015 (rolling programme).
We will work with CSR and HR Directors on best practice in senior recruitment, improving our understanding of what works in, for example, the use of psychometric assessments and use of search consultants.	By March 2015, improved Commission understanding of best practice in using psychometric assessments and search consultants, shared and, if possible, agreed with HRDs and CSR.
<i>We will maintain close working relationships with those responsible for recruitment within departments, to ensure that the Commission is, and is seen as, a facilitator for improvement in outcomes.</i>	<i>Link Commissioners/Secretariat teams to hold at least one round of meetings with each set of departmental contacts. Chief Executive to hold at least quarterly meetings with CSR contacts.</i>
<i>We will handle all complaints made under the Recruitment Principles in line with published guidance.</i>	<i>Acknowledge receipt within three working days. Complete initial assessments (whether in scope) within 15 working days. [Targets to be reviewed following review of complaints system – see 'Building Our Capability']</i>
<i>As agreed with the Cabinet Office, we will continue to review the recruitment practices of accredited NDPBs [on a three-yearly-cycle].</i>	<i>One third of accredited NDPBs to be reviewed by March 2015.</i>

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THEME THREE: To improve understanding of the Commission's purpose and approach	
Objective	Performance Indicators/Targets
We will conclude implementation of the 2013-14 review of the Commission's website, and consider again whether and if so how best to make use of social media to enable departments and members of the public to interact with us.	Increased traffic on website Review implemented by August 2014. Consideration of best use of social media by August 2014.
We will run a series of training workshops for Departmental staff to increase understanding and awareness of the new Recruitment Principles, introduced on [1 April 2014].	6 workshops run by end May 2014 At least 3 (but no more than 6) follow-up workshops run by end October 2014 Feedback to indicate increased understanding among attendees.
We will develop a decision tree with clear elimination criteria for complaints to help complainants and to reduce the number of out-of-remit complaints received.	Decision tree on website, by June 2014
We will organise at least one on-line virtual Open Week.	Open Week held by March 2015.
<i>We will act as a source of advice and expertise on recruitment within the Civil Service and on the Civil Service Code and values.</i>	<i>Respond to 95% of departmental queries about Commission policies within three working days (average response time < 24 hours). Provide information, as required, to members of the public and representatives of non-UK bodies.</i>
<i>We will publish regularly information about the Commission's work.</i>	<i>Annual Report & Accounts published and laid in Parliament by summer recess 2014 and in the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly in similarly timely manner. Monthly update of transparency data on website (covering the outcomes of competitions chaired by Commissioners, the details of senior exception appointments approved by the Commission and the outcome of Code and Recruitment Principles complaints). Publication of compliance results shortly after reviews take place. Regular publication of Board minutes and papers (where appropriate).</i>
<i>We will respond to requests for information in line with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998 and in accordance with Information Commissioner guidance.</i>	<i>Acknowledge receipt within 3 working days. Respond to request within 20 working days unless extra time needed to consider the public interest under one of the relevant exceptions. If required, to complete consideration of public interest and provide a response within a further 20 working days.</i>

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THEME FOUR: To support an effective and diverse Civil Service that reflects and has the confidence of the people it serves	
Objective	Performance Indicators/Targets
Through our chairing of senior competitions, we will encourage Departments to improve the diversity of the fields of applicants in competitions for the most senior posts within the Civil Service and the proportion of applicants completing diversity returns.	Regular monitoring of the diversity of the applicant pool and the successful candidates in senior competitions with the aim of supporting Departments to achieve year on year improvement in both the diversity of their appointments and the proportion of candidates completing diversity returns.
Through our compliance monitoring audit, we will assess the diversity of applicant fields, and the state of diversity monitoring, in competitions below the level chaired by Commissioners	Assessment complete and further action agreed by March 2015.
We develop and support (with Cabinet Office) an effective network of Nominated Officers in departments dealing with Civil Service Code cases, and ensure that the information on our website meets their needs.	Implement a package of measures to support Nominated Officers, ongoing to March 2015. Arrange at least one roundtable discussion between members of the Code Committee and Nominated Officers, by November 2014. Results of Civil Service Staff Survey questions on Code indicate continuing or improving awareness of the Code and confidence in the way it is upheld.
<i>We will handle all complaints made under the Civil Service Code in line with published guidance.</i>	<i>Acknowledge receipt within three working days. Complete initial assessment (whether it is within scope) within 15 working days. [Targets to be reviewed following review of complaints system – see ‘Building Our Capability’]</i>

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BUILDING OUR CAPABILITY	
Objective	Performance Indicators/Targets
We will review our governance structures and implement the outcome, including looking at the way we manage the interface between Civil Service recruitment and Public Appointments work.	Reviews completed and recommendations implemented by September 2014.
We will work closely with the Cabinet Office in their Triennial Review of the Commission's purpose and governance, expected to occur during 2014-15.	Review team content with quality of information provided. Outcome of review consistent with Commission's assessment (or offers positive new insight and opportunity for development).
We will work with Cabinet Office to agree a revised Memorandum of Understanding/Framework Document.	New MoU/Framework Document in place following the Triennial Review.
We will review the need for further Commissioner recruitment, with a view to moving to achieving a better balance between continuity and regular turnover.	Forward recruitment programme (moving to more regular recruitment, over a period of years) agreed, by June 2014. New Commissioner(s) to be recruited, if required.
<i>Review our internal systems for dealing with Recruitment Principles and Civil Service Code complaints to ensure greater efficiency and improved standards.</i>	<i>Review completed, by July 2014 Recommendations implemented, by December 2014</i>
<i>Maintain appropriate continuous professional development and peer support for Commissioners to share best practice and ensure consistency of approach across competitions.</i>	<i>At least three sessions in-year, with each Commissioner attending at least one.</i>
<i>We will comply with the requirements in the MoU with regard to staff development.</i>	<i>Full compliance.</i>
<i>We will use our funds appropriately and efficiently, and account for it accurately and transparently, in line with the 2010 Act, Managing Public Money, and the MoU.</i>	<i>Comptroller & Auditor General signed off 2013-14 accounts without qualification. Audit & Risk Committee, auditors and Sponsor Department Finance Director content with financial management.</i>