

Independent Offices Joint Operations Committee

Terms of Reference

Purpose

1. The Civil Service Commission (CSC), the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (ACOBA), and the Commissioner for Public Appointments (CPA) are three distinct independent organisations sponsored by the Cabinet Office and collectively known as the Independent Offices. The CSC Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as Accounting Officer, provides secretariat and corporate functions for ACOBA and CPA.
2. The purpose of the Joint Operations Committee (JOC) is to oversee the shared corporate functions of the Independent Offices and its shared secretariat.

Core objectives

3. The JOC takes responsibility for:
 - a. agreeing cross-organisational strategy for the Independent Offices;
 - b. overseeing and mitigating operational and cross-cutting risks and audit, assuring that a transparent system of governance is in place and is consistent with best practice;
 - c. advising on the allocation of staffing and human resourcing, including responses to the People Survey, exit surveys, staff development and performance management, and recruitment and retention;
 - d. reviewing regular financial and management information concerning the management of the Independent Offices and approving budgeting and business planning positions; and
 - e. monitoring of sponsorship arrangements.
4. The JOC may consider other issues escalated to it as appropriate.
5. The JOC does not set, scrutinise or provide assurance in relation to policy or performance in the individual offices. These areas are reserved for local governance arrangements put in place by the CSC; the ACOBA and the CPA.
6. The JOC will be supported by an Audit and Risk Committee (ARC). The ARC will be chaired by a Commissioner and will be responsible for scrutinising the systems of internal control, risk management and corporate governance. The JOC will be updated by the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee at each meeting.

Membership

7. The membership of the JOC is comprised of:
 - a. the First Civil Service Commissioner (FCSC) (Chair);
 - b. the Chair of ACOBA, or a representative nominated by the Chair;

- c. the CPA, or a representative nominated by the Commissioner;
 - d. three Civil Service Commissioners, including the ARC Chair; and
 - e. the CEO and Accounting Officer.
8. The FCSC will agree with Commissioners who is best placed to represent the CSC on the JOC (as at 7d). Selection should give due regard to relevant skills (specifically human resources, government finance and risk management).
9. The JOC will be quorate if at least one member from each of the three Independent Offices and the CEO are present.
10. New or changed conflicts or potential conflicts of interest must be declared to the Chair at the beginning of each meeting and shall be recorded in the minutes.

Meetings

11. The JOC will meet three times per year. Agendas will be agreed by each of the three Independent Offices and the CEO.
12. A summary of the activity of the JOC will be published on the CSC website. The Cabinet Office sponsor team will be formally updated on the activity of the JOC following each meeting. It is the responsibility of the FCSC, ACOBA Chair and the CPA to ensure that staff and office holders within their respective organisations are updated on discussions at the JOC.

Secretariat

13. The secretariat is responsible for meeting logistics, preparing and distributing papers at least three working days in advance of a meeting, taking and circulating minutes and actions, and paying reasonable travel expenses in line with guidance incurred as a result of attending the JOC.

Review

14. The current arrangements will be reviewed in 12 months, with Terms of Reference updated, as appropriate.

Last updated: October 2024