

Dear Permanent Secretaries,

As you will be aware, the Civil Service Commission was asked to undertake an audit of the departmental handling of the Business Appointment Rules (the Rules) for civil servants at SCS2 and below, and special advisers at Pay Band 3 and below.

First, we want to thank departments for their constructive engagement with the audit; all 17 departments involved cooperated fully with the audit, providing a detailed overview of their processes and producing a wide range of supporting documents.

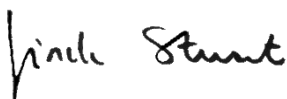
The review identified a range of good practice and some areas in which further focus would be beneficial. The Commission found that processes were in place within all audited departments to manage applications under the Rules. However, there were some areas of improvement identified, notably regarding awareness raising of the Rules to ensure that all former employees whose subsequent employment meets the triggers under the Rules are making an application.

The Commission has made a set of recommendations to support greater consistency and improvements in practice. It is important that departments take the risk of non-compliance with the Rules seriously, and that your departmental board considers the findings of the audit. In early 2027, we will follow-up on progress made to implement these recommendations.

The Commission is currently planning its approach to the delivery of future audits of departmental activity in relation to the Rules from 2027/28. We look forward to working with your departmental leads as we develop this in the coming months.

The full audit report is now available on our website.

Yours sincerely,



Gisela Stuart
First Civil Service Commissioner