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REVIEW OF EXPENDITURE ON POLICY ADVICE: HEADS OF PROFESSION (HoP) GENERIC DESIGN

Background

The Review of Expenditure on Policy Advice identified a number of significant issues with the cost, quality and management of policy advice and made various recommendations to the Government. As a result of the Review, Cabinet directed central agencies to investigate a model of appointing Heads of Profession. It has been agreed that a Finance Head of Profession will be trialled using the following model. Enquiries on Heads of Profession project can be emailed to: policyexpenditurereview@treasury.govt.nz.

Purpose and critical success factors

The purpose of the Heads of Profession trial project is to test the concept of professionalising policy advice across the state sector by appointing Heads of Profession to set expectations for analytical and advisory competencies, lead professional networks, and develop professional learning programmes. The trial is one of the projects responding to the findings of the 2010 Review of Expenditure on Policy Advice. The generic design is flexible so as to accommodate the range of professional groups that provide input to policy advice.

Critical success factors include:

- Support through a champion for the initiative, and an influential and committed Steering Group of Chief Executives.
- Agreed work programme with cross-agency objectives and deliverables that are measured.
- Choice over who to nominate as the person who will be the Head of Profession.
- Buy-in from the membership / practitioners (build from the ground up).
- Flexibility in trialling and refining the role.
- A host agency that provides support and funding.

Design of the Heads of Profession trial

Key aspects of the design to meet this purpose and success factors are:

- **A department to oversee (administer) the trial** and take responsibility for identifying Head of Profession candidates, recruitment, appointment (in consultation with the employing department) and on-going evaluation of the trial and its design. This role will be fulfilled by the State Services Commission (SSC), given SSC's role in providing leadership to the State Services. It is also proposed that the State Services Commissioner would champion the

- scheme, including jointly announcing (with the host agency CE) the people chosen as Heads of Profession, and inviting chief executives for the Steering Group (see below).
- **The Host Agency** (ie the agency that employs the person selected as Head of Profession), which will provide the bulk of the support to the Head of Profession.
- **The Head of Profession**, who has been assessed as having the requisite attributes, seniority, capability and capacity to undertake the role.
- **The Steering Group members**, who are invited by the State Services Commissioner to oversee the Head of Profession's annual work programme. The Steering Group includes the chief executive of the Host Agency and other invited influential and committed chief executives. The Steering Group's role is to provide advice and support for the Head of Profession, including feedback on the annual work programme, monitoring progress against milestones within the work programme, and reporting to the Commissioner on matters arising from the work programme (if any).
- **The members of the professional group or discipline** are the State servants who form part of the Head of Profession programme by virtue of their skills, roles and the agencies in which they work. The membership have input into the annual work programme and are expected to actively participate in initiatives.

Details of the generic design are provided below.

Generic Design

Each of these constituent parts of the design of a Head of Profession (HoP) model, are detailed below.

Administering Department	
Administering department	The State Services Commission.
Role of administering department	Oversight of the HoP trial, including responsibility for candidate identification, recruitment, appointment and on-going evaluation of the trial and its design.
Appointment of a Steering Group	The chief executive of the administering department appoints a Steering Group that includes the Host Agency Chief Executive to provide feedback on the work programme, monitor progress against milestones (quarterly), provide advice and support for the work of the HoP.
Steering Group membership	The Steering Group are invited by the State Services Commissioner to oversee the Head of Profession's annual work programme. The Steering Group includes the chief executive of the Host Agency and other invited influential and committed chief executives. The Steering Group's role is to provide advice and support for the Head of Profession, including feedback on the annual work programme, monitoring progress against milestones within the work programme, and reporting to the Commissioner on matters arising from the work programme (if any).
Funding	The administering department will fund the support and oversight function from within its baseline.
Model review	The design of the HoP model and its continued suitability will be reviewed at the conclusion of the trial, and then as required, but at a minimum every three years.

Host Agency	
Host agency	The host agency is the agency that employs the HoP and is a State Services agency.
Employer	The Board / Chief Executive of the Host Agency is the employer of the HoP. If a HoP changes employer, this triggers a discussion/negotiation re the HoP role, which includes the new employer.
Staff support	A HoP is expected to already be employed in a position within the Host Agency support for their HoP role is required. This is expected to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full time, high level analytical support (ie competency level is manager / principal advisor) - Analytical support (skills required and time commitment to be determined for each HoP in relation to the work programme) - Administrative support. A Host Agency can enter into funding / support arrangements with other agencies.

The membership of the professional group or discipline	
Membership	Are the State servants who form part of that profession by virtue of their skills and role. An individual may be part of more than one profession. The membership have input into the annual work programme and are expected to actively participate in initiatives.
Agency Networks	HoPs are expected to work with agencies "heads of profession" where they exist.

Role, attributes and conditions for a Heads of Profession	
Function of an HoP	<p>Heads of Profession are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a vision and direction for the profession within the state sector; and • Professionalise analytical capability for that profession. Key ways for that to occur are through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. providing advice on core competencies and standards; b. developing measures to define, build and embed stronger professional disciplines; c. developing a programme of peer learning and continuing education; d. building professional networks outside the public sector; e. building cross-agency professional networks; and f. creating advisory boards of experts to peer review policy research, analysis and advice (if appropriate). <p>The potential areas of endeavour (a to f inclusive above) for a HoP would be prioritised for development as best fits the profession, the need, and value for money. In short, a HoP's functions will be case dependent. Accordingly, it is anticipated that HoP's will vary in the scope of their functions. The nature of their activities will be detailed in an agreed work programme.</p>
Attributes required by an HoP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject matter expert. • A member of that profession and credible within the professional group. • Passionate, having a clear vision for moving the programme in the agreed direction • Willing to commit time. • A communicator with impact. • A strong ability to influence others.
Seniority of HoP	From second tier or above in an agency, or reporting to a Chief Executive for the HoP role.
Time Commitment	<p>Must be agreed with the employer (Host agency).</p> <p>As the HoP role is on top of a current role the time commitment a suggested maximum for the HoP role is 20%, however, the employer and HoP can agree a higher amount.</p>
Work programme	An annual work programme designed by HoP in consultation with the profession, and agreed with the appointed Steering Group which includes the Host Agency Chief Executive.
Reporting line of a HoP	<p>The reporting line for the role the person is already employed in continues as per status quo.</p> <p>For the HoP aspect of the role, the reporting line is the Host Agency Chief Executive and the State Services Commissioner.</p>
Reports	Brief quarterly reports on progress against the work programme are to be provided to the Steering Group.
Remuneration	If the HoP role is on top of a current role, unless agreed otherwise with the Host Agency the salary remains the same for the person appointed as the HoP. Recompense is gained from having the status of being recognised as an expert with a professional designation.
Tenure	<p>Tenure is for a fixed term. Elements to be taken into account when deciding on tenure include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The identified need for an HoP for a professional group or discipline • The scope of the HoP for a particular professional group or discipline • The time and resource constraints of a proposed candidate and that of a Host Agency; and • Advice from the candidate, members of the professional group or discipline.

Role, attributes and conditions for a Heads of Profession	
	Indicative tenure would form part of the invitation issued by the State Services Commissioner and Board / Chief Executive of the proposed Host Agency.
Removal	<p>The SSC Commissioner and the employer can remove a person from an HoP role, by written notice, for any of the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious misconduct • Unsatisfactory work performance • Redundancy of person • Illness or incapacity • Disestablishment of HoP role/function.
Role description	Each HoP role will have a role description based on the HoP design.
Resignation	An individual can resign a HoP position at any time in writing to their Chief Executive/Board and the State Services Commissioner.

Appointment Process	
Appointor	The Host Agency Board / Chief Executive with the State Services Commissioner.
Nominations to have an HoP role established	<p>Anyone can nominate to the State Services Commissioner a professional group to have a HoP. The nomination needs to include the value proposition for the establishment of a HoP role and how that role could improve the quality of policy advice (where relevant). State Services Commission will assess the need for the establishment of a HoP.</p> <p><i>The criteria for that assessment needs to be developed.</i></p>
Identification of candidates for an HoP position.	<p>The process of identification has two options:</p> <p>Option One: where there is not a clear candidate for a head of a particular profession a nomination and consultation process be undertaken with the relevant profession and chief executives to identify candidates, followed by an interview and agreement with the employer of the candidate; OR</p> <p>Option Two: where there is a strong candidate, the viability of that candidate is tested with the profession and agreement of relevant chief executives, including the employing chief executive (e.g., if the legal area were to be developed a strong candidate would be the Solicitor-General, and if the statistics area was to be developed a strong candidate would be the Chief Statistician). If the option 2 process does not result in agreement that the candidate proposed for HoP is appropriate, option one would then be instituted.</p>
Due diligence process	<p>The due diligence process in assessing candidates needs to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of candidate suitability. • Undertaking interviews where appropriate with nominated candidate(s). • Confirmation of role scope, funding and support. • Confirmation of “Host” agency and support to be provided to a HoP if established. • Identification of “Host” Agency and support to proposed HoP.
Offer of	An offer of appointment to a candidate is made in writing (letter or email) by the Host Agency Board / Chief Executive and the

Appointment Process	
Appointment	State Services Commissioner. This is to include a role description. The candidate must accept / decline the offer in writing (letter or email).
Publicising appointment	Appointments to be announced by the State Services Commissioner and Host Agency Chief Executive and placed on their respective websites and the PSI or other such platform that has been set up for the State Services.

High level generic evaluation criteria (to be refined)	
Competencies, measures and standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides tools and guidance on competences and standards, whether developed by the HoP with agencies, or endorses competences and standards for the professional group as developed elsewhere. • Uptake by agencies and feedback. • Agencies keen to engage on expectations / competences for recruitment and review. • Encourages that standards and competencies are implemented in agencies. • Develops the brand for the standards and competencies.
Peer learning and continuing education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates that they have provided opportunities for peer support and learning within the profession • Demonstrates effective working relationships with tertiary course providers • Gaps in professional activities are identified and a plan to influence change has been developed and implemented with support from Public Service peers.
Building professional networks outside the public sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates establishment of a credible network. • Demonstrates that they have provided opportunities for networking. • Individuals in the profession are active in the network. • Community expectations set and meet. • High penetration of the network across the profession – i.e. network recognition.
Building cross-agency professional networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates establishment of a credible network. • Demonstrates that they have provided opportunities for networking. • Individuals in the profession are active in the network. • Community expectations set and meet. • High penetration of the network across the profession – i.e. network recognition.
Creating advisory boards of experts to provide peer review (if appropriate).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews provide information that is useful for developing.