



## Chapter 4 - Area of Selection

### A CHECKLIST FOR AREA OF SELECTION

#### Decisions within the context of merit, values, legislation, policies

The purpose of an area of selection is to identify a target population for a selection process that will ensure a proper balance between the caliber of potential candidates and the cost of the process while respecting the fairness, equity and transparency values and the merit principle. For non-competitive processes, the area of selection will determine who will have appeal rights against the proposed appointment.

Consider:

- Merit: the area of selection must identify a reasonable pool of candidates to ensure a meritorious selection process;
- Equity: efforts have been made to provide equal access to employment opportunities, to remove artificial barriers and to include a representative number of employment equity group members to reflect the labour market;
- Fairness: the decision is objective so as not to give an unfair advantage for appointment to any particular candidate or group(s) of candidates;
- Transparency: the area of selection is worded in a way that is easily understood by prospective candidates;
- Flexibility: the area of selection is described in a way that will allow for effective selection even if the candidate pool is not well known;
- Efficiency: the position needs to be filled within a reasonable timeframe;
- Cost: accountability to the Canadian public for the judicious administration of public funds.

#### Departmental business needs

It is important to know the department, its corporate culture and available human resources. The departmental human resources plan may need to be reviewed and colleagues or other managers as well as other appropriate human resources areas such as training and development may be consulted.

Consider:

- The human resource goals and needs of the organization (e.g. in terms of employment equity) and how this staffing activity can contribute to the overall strategy

- The size and mandate of the department
- The geographic location of the position
- The number of positions being staffed and the typical / forecasted attrition
- The objectives and the specific circumstances surrounding this particular staffing activity
- Whether there are similar positions in the organization and if so, how many
- What additional organizational information is available to help determine who is available in the department's resource pool.
- Whether there are any special training programs in the department (there may be departmental secondment and assignment programs, special training programs or other development programs such as [Career Assignment Program](#) and so forth)
- How the approach (e.g. national versus local, generic versus specific positions) will impact on the establishment and subsequent use of the eligible list

### **Corporate HR goals and interests of the Public Service**

The Public Service, in an effort to renew itself and meet the needs of the Canadian population, continuously seeks to attract and sustain a competent, motivated and representative workforce. In doing so, it must balance the provision of employment opportunities with the provision of career development opportunities and it must develop and implement measures that will help increase representativeness. It must also balance efficiency considerations with enhanced mobility within and from outside the Public Service, since increased mobility contributes to the development of individuals and ultimately, to enhanced competency, in addition to achieving organizational goals.

Deputy heads are encouraged to consider mobility issues when they exercise their authority with respect to area of selection, within broad principles such as cost-effectiveness and their organization's needs and business objectives, the interests of employees and the objectives and interests of the Public Service

### **Employment Equity**

Consider:

- Whether initiatives have been undertaken by the department and how this staffing activity may fit in
- Whether an employment equity program exists (or should exist) in the department that allows for an area of selection that is restricted to one or more of the employment equity groups
- Whether it would be desirable to expand the area of selection for some or all of the employment equity groups, to increase the potential number of

applicants from these groups

- Where the potential employment equity candidates are and how the expanded area of selection should be described so as to include them

## Mobility

Consider:

- the provisions related to mobility in the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#) (Charter), the [Agreement on Internal Trade](#) (AIT) and the [Social Union Framework Agreement](#) (SUFA)
- Present and future needs, in order to determine the best interests of the Public Service, and whether internal mobility or recruitment from outside should be considered
- Whether the wording of the area of selection will inadvertently restrict the eligibility to 'employees' when the expression 'persons employed' would be desirable in terms of allowing potentially well qualified individuals from other parts (e.g. separate employers) of the Public Service to apply.
- Whether there are other organizations within the Public Service that can potentially provide a similar labour pool, for example, not limiting an area of selection that extends beyond the department to a single organization, where several other organizations also have employees who are likely to have the required skills. The following questions may help guide the decision:
  - *Is this a good opportunity to target specific Public Service organizations (e.g. some departments subject to the PSEA, some separate employers, and perhaps designated outside organizations) in order to access the best pool of candidates?*
  - *Does the department have a natural affiliation to other organizations in the Public Service (e.g. scientific mandate)?*
  - *Has the organization entered into reciprocal agreements with other organizations for the purpose of closed competitions, to provide expanded opportunities for mobility to employees?*
- The needs of smaller Public Service organizations, small occupational groups, and widely dispersed occupational groups and whether the employees involved would be likely to have the required qualifications
- How to give notice to prospective candidates, where the area of selection includes Public Service organizations outside the appointing authority of the PSC and whether contacts need to be established to verify what communication vehicles are available to their staff
- The lifeline provisions that apply to the National Energy Board and Veterans Affairs, if the area of selection is open to the Public Service in the NC

## Career Aspirations of Employees

While it is important for departments to achieve their corporate and business objectives, the needs and career aspirations of employees must also be considered.

Consider:

- In the case of an appointment without competition
  - whether the individual proposed for appointment is within the area of selection
  - whether the area of selection is meaningful in terms of appeal rights and whether those most affected by the appointment are included in the area of selection
- Whether there is a sufficient number of potentially qualified and available candidates for the position and where they are likely to be found
- The impact of the area of selection on appeal rights
- Whether this would be an opportunity for career advancement
- Whether the area of selection takes into account the learning plans and/or interests of staff, at various levels of the organization
- What employees would normally expect with respect to area of selection for this type of position or occupational group and level

## Employee representatives

One of the principles of delegation is that Deputy Heads will actively seek the participation of employee representatives in the development and revision of staffing practices.

Consider:

- The department's policy with respect to the participation of employee representatives in the determination of areas of selection (e.g., some departments consult at the national level when developing national policies; decentralized organizations may consult locally; some organizations consult on a case-by-case basis). In view of the organization's policy, determine what action, if any, needs to be taken with respect to this specific selection process.

## Accountability

Managers need to be able to substantiate, if required, why the area of selection chosen is justified for that particular selection process. The appropriate choice of an area of selection, given the selection process undertaken, is critical.

Consider:

- Whether the area of selection is so restrictive that it may not identify any potential candidates: if so it may be unproductive or could be seen as unfair.
- Whether the area of selection is so wide that it will likely result in a competitive process which is unmanageable, too time consuming and less cost efficient than it might have been if the area of selection had been chosen more wisely
- Whether a sliding area of selection should be considered, if the pool of candidates is unknown (for example, using a narrow geographical criterion such as a local area, with the indication that a larger area, which is also specified, may be used if insufficient candidates from the smaller area apply)
- Whether an area of selection has been determined prior to conducting an inventory search, to ensure that only those candidates who meet the established area of selection criteria are retained (or referred in the case of an open inventory) for further consideration
- Whether, in the case of a non-competitive process, the area of selection is so restrictive that the employees most affected by the appointment will be denied their appeal rights
- Whether, in the case of a non-competitive process, the area of selection is so restrictive that it is meaningless (e.g. there are few if any employees in the area of selection)
- Whether, in the case of a non-competitive process, the area of selection is so wide that time and efforts may be spent on an appeal process which should not have taken place.
- Whether the staffing advisor has been consulted in terms of the options available and their consequences, to help in making make an informed decision.

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[http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca/staf\\_dot/pol-guid/chap\\_04/8\\_e.htm](http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca/staf_dot/pol-guid/chap_04/8_e.htm)

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