

Creating a public service senior executive role

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Employer

Under the GSE Act, unless otherwise provided in legislation, a Secretary is the employer of senior executives in their Department and in executive agencies related to the Department while the head of a separate agency is the employer of senior executives in their agency.

As the employer of senior executives, the Secretary and heads of separate agencies should ensure that senior executive roles:

- are classified according to the NSW Public Service Senior Executive Work Level Standards (WLS)
- have a role description developed in accordance with the NSW Public Sector Capability Framework (Capability Framework) and the Role Description Development Guideline (RD Guideline)
- have remuneration determined in accordance with the Framework as updated from time to time.

Determining the band – using the Work Level Standards

The WLS are the classifying tool for determining the band for a new Public Service senior executive role. The WLS indicate, in broad terms, the work expected to be performed at senior executive bands 1 to 3.

Key principles for band structure

Secretaries and heads of separate agencies are responsible for determining the organisational structure for their Department or agency. The structure should have the appropriate mix of roles necessary to enable the organisation to deliver on its strategic and corporate objectives. This includes decisions on the number of executives, the level of those roles and whether those roles are ongoing or term. The following key principles apply to the senior executive band structure:

- Generally, there should be no more than three executive reporting layers below the Secretary or agency head.
- Intra-band executive reporting, where a senior executive within one of the three bands reports to a senior executive within the same band, should be avoided but can be accommodated in special circumstances. For example, it may be needed where a specialist is engaged to provide specific expertise or conduct a time limited project and that role reports to a senior executive manager in the same band.
- A broad band structure can accommodate a mixture of designs, for example an agency may have bands 1, 2 and 3 senior executives reporting to a Secretary, or a combination of bands 1 and 2 senior executives reporting to a band 3.

Creating the role description

The role description for a sector or agency-specific senior executive role is to comply with the following principles:

- be developed in accordance with the RD Guideline
- describe the role in terms that are consistent with the WLS descriptors for the selected band
- incorporate the relevant levels for all capabilities from the Capability Framework including any relevant occupation-specific capabilities. The focus capabilities should be identified prior to recruitment action. The set of focus capabilities can change for subsequent recruitment based on current priorities and/or team mix.

Placing the senior executive role at a point within the band using a role evaluation methodology

Once the band is determined for a new senior executive role using the WLS and the role description finalised, a role evaluation (Mercer/CED, Hay or OCR) is used to determine the work value points (WVP) and place the role within the band.

In the event that the WVP for a role falls above or below the points range for the band, the role does not get reclassified to the higher or lower band. Rather the outcome of the role evaluation indicates only that the remuneration for the role would be at the higher or the lower end of the band range.

The WVP is used in the Framework formulas to calculate the base remuneration point for each senior executive role or group of roles (see part 3).

Re-evaluation of roles within a senior executive band

Roles within a band may be re-evaluated where there is a substantial change in the work value. This can be initiated by either the employer or the senior executive.

Many factors influencing work value include: capabilities required for the role; budget/employee management responsibility; decision making authority; scope/breadth of the role; and complexity of the role. Changes in any of these areas, or a combination, could potentially constitute a substantial change.

Agencies may use their discretion as to whether a change in the role is such that it warrants a re-evaluation. A consistent policy and approach should be adopted across the agency regarding when and in what circumstances a senior executive role should be re-evaluated. The policy should also factor in the potential impact of the re-evaluation in the context of other senior executive roles in the particular work area or in the agency as a whole.

The employer will need to determine the most appropriate approach to filling the re-evaluated role which could include subsequent assignment of the incumbent or another senior executive, transfer, secondment, agency EOI or external advertising.