

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee —Additional Estimates Hearing—February 2017

Answers to Questions on Notice

Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services

Topic: Recruitment policy
Question: 26
Hansard Reference p 35-36; 27 February 2017

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 13 April 2017

Senator BERNARDI: The information that I have—I will just get attachment B up here—in announcing this says, 'The updated policy aims to provide clearer guidance for panels and delegates conducting recruitment in DPS, including in relation to options to consider before filling a vacancy in DPS.' This one is an important one because I know you have just taken some advice: 'Conflict of interest declarations relating to recruitment will now be managed by the selection panel chair in consultation with the delegate.' That does not seem consistent with conflicts of interest having to be declared and managed externally to the panel.

Ms Croke: I have done several recruitments in the last six months. I might need to clarify that because recruitment have chased me for those conflicts and we have provided them. I will check that.

Senator BERNARDI: You have just taken advice—I know you have taken advice, Ms Croke—when I specifically asked about whether conflicts of interest were declared and managed externally to the panel; and yet DPS advice, the most recent one that I have, says, 'Conflicts of interest relating to recruitment will now be managed by the selection panel chair.'

Ms Croke: Yes.

Senator BERNARDI: That seems to contradict the earlier process.

Ms Croke: I will check that because, as I have just said, I have done numerous recruitments in the last six months. In each case where I have been the panel chair and have got the conflicts of interest, recruitment, as a routine, have sent those out to the committees and have been following up on that.

Senator BERNARDI: So they are managed by the selection panel chair—

Ms Croke: But recruitment follow that up. Let me take that on notice.

Senator BERNARDI: in consultation with the delegate. That is what it says: 'And managed by the selection panel chair', which is you—

Ms Croke: Yes.

Senator BERNARDI: Even though this committee in 2011-12 said they should be declared and managed externally to the panel.

Ms Croke: And the process for sending them back to recruitment. If there are any issues, that is where recruitment and the delegates in that area and above can look at any conflicts and raise it with the panel chair. We have had panels change where we have known there is a conflict.

Senator BERNARDI: Ms Croke, 'managed externally to the panel' means something different to me than 'managed by the selection panel chair'.

Ms Croke: Okay.

Senator BERNARDI: Does it mean the same thing to you?

Ms Croke: They do say different things, but what I am saying to you also is that recruitment are still playing an active role. Can I come back to you on that?

Answer

The process for managing recruitment conflicts of interest is detailed below:

- Applications close for an advertised vacancy.
- The Recruitment Team email the Selection Panel, advising of the requirement to complete a Conflict of Interest (COI) declaration prior to the shortlisting of any applications.

- Recruitment Team provides the Selection Panel members with the list of applicants to confirm whether any applicant is known to them.
- Selection Panel members are required to complete the COI declaration and return via email to the Chair.
- The Chair is responsible for ensuring all panel members complete a COI declaration form and is also responsible for uploading all COI declarations to the eRecruitment system.
- The DPS Recruitment Team confirm that the COI forms are uploaded to the eRecruitment system and that they comply with the COI policy. This includes providing advice to the panel on how any conflicts (whether real or perceived) should be managed. If a real or perceived conflict is declared, it is at the discretion of the panel, in consultation with the Delegate, as to how the declared conflict is managed.
- After these steps are taken, the Recruitment Team then release applications to the Selection Panel to commence shortlisting.