

# National Guidelines on Recruitment

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PURSUANT TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1982 (Cth)  
INFORMATION PUBLICATION SCHEME (IPS)

# 1. Disclosure and compliance

This document is classified **OFFICIAL** and is intended for internal AFP use.

Disclosing any content must comply with Commonwealth law and the [AFP National Guideline on information management](#).

This instrument is part of the AFP's professional standards framework. The [AFP Commissioner's Order on professional standards \(CO2\)](#) outlines the conduct expected of AFP appointees.

Inappropriate departures from the provisions of this instrument may constitute a breach of AFP professional standards and be dealt with under Part V of the [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth).

## 2. Guideline authority

This guideline was issued by Assistant Commissioner People and Culture Command (ACPCC), using power under section 37(1) of the [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth) as delegated by the Commissioner under section 69C of the Act.

## 3. Introduction

This national guideline applies to AFP Band 1 to AFP Band 8 and executive-level employees.

Although Senior Executive Service (SES) recruitment is not covered by this national guideline, the principles should be considered.

The [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) prohibits patronage or favouritism in relation to decisions relating to all AFP employees, including decisions relating to engagement.

The [Australian Federal Police Regulations 1979](#) include the values on which employment decisions must be based, namely:

- impartiality and professionalism
- merit
- freedom from discrimination
- openness and accountability
- fairness
- equity in employment
- effectiveness.

## 4. AFP recruitment processes

When a vacancy arises and prior to filling, the following questions should guide considerations:

- Is this position funded?
- What duties need to be performed?
- Is there still a requirement for the role?
- How does the role fit with the [Future Workforce Model](#) (i.e. does this need to be filled permanently, temporarily, casually or by a contractor)?
- Is the classification at the right level? (See section 10.1 – role sizing.)
- Does the role need to be filled full-time? Is part-time or casual employment an option?
- Is the role suitable for a flexible work arrangement?
- Can the vacancy be filled using affirmative measures (for example, limiting applications to women only)?
- Is this role funded as part of a national policy initiative – which may mean that non-ongoing employment is more appropriate?

### 4.1 Filling a vacant position

A vacant position can be filled in any of the following ways:

- transfer (at level) of an existing AFP employee
- through a merit-based process (ie an external or internal advertisement, or an Expression of Interest process)
- engagement of a non-ongoing employee
- procurement of a contractor (if the role is temporary and requires a special skill set).

As a principle, where there is no nominated end date for the role, it should be filled on an ongoing basis.

### 4.2 Recruitment sourcing options

Prior to initiating any recruitment action, the delegate must consider whether a recruitment action is the most appropriate course of action and whether the vacancy is fully funded. Once confirmed, the delegate must decide which sourcing option (outlined in the [Future Workforce Model](#)) is the most appropriate.

The three options are:

- **core** – job roles that are performed by ongoing AFP employees with mutual investment in development and career pathways
- **contingent** – job roles that can deliver additional capacity or unique capability for a fixed period of time, e.g. up to four years
- **partnerships** – formal arrangements with external organisations to deliver an outcome, service or capability in support of AFP strategic priorities.

To initiate any recruitment action, a business area must complete and submit a recruitment requisition and receive approval from the respective delegate through [MyCareer](#).

Before approving, the delegate should also consider [role sizing](#) to ensure the role is classified at the appropriate level (see section 10.1 Role sizing below) and whether funding is available.

### 4.3 Options for filling vacant positions

**Expression of interest (EOI)** may be used internally to fill:

- temporary vacancies for assignment of duties at level or on higher duties usually for a period of up to 24 months

or

- permanent vacancies if the employee is at the same substantive band level as the advertised position.

Only AFP employees are eligible to apply for an EOI. An employee cannot be advanced or promoted through an EOI process.

**Merit-based process** is used to advertise and/or fill a vacancy, either internally or externally, for an ongoing or non-ongoing period. Only AFP employees are eligible to apply for internally advertised vacancies.

**Direct engagement** is where an external applicant (including a former AFP employee) is engaged as an employee without a merit selection process. Direct engagement must be in accordance with section 69 of the [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth) and satisfy the requirements of direct engagement in accordance with this guideline.

**Register of interest (ROI)** is a register that is used to record interest for a particular role, band level and/or recruitment process. An ROI is not a merit selection process. Where a business area, function or command wishes to run an ROI, they should email [AFPRecruitment@afp.gov.au](mailto:AFPRecruitment@afp.gov.au) to discuss whether this is an appropriate option.

**Executive level processes**, including advancement and engagement, must be approved by ACPC with initial approval from the relevant functional assistant commissioner / national manager / SES Band 2.

**Short-term vacancies** – advertising short-term vacancies at the AFP Band 1–8 levels in a specific geographic function or command may occur outside of MyCareer subject to the following principles:

- Applications will only be accepted from those who substantively hold a position within the specific geographic function or command.

- The merit selection requirements and timeframe restrictions of an EOI outlined in this guideline must be adhered to.

Where the delegate determines that an EOI is open to more than one geographic function or command, a requisition must be created in MyCareer and the process will be managed by AFP Recruitment.

A short-term vacancy cannot be used to facilitate the promotion or advancement of an employee.

## 5. Selection and advancement principles

Filling vacant roles must be undertaken without patronage or favouritism, in accordance with section 69 of the [AFP Act](#) and the values set out in section 6 of the [AFP Regulations](#), which includes merit.

A decision to engage, promote or advance a person is based on merit if:

- all eligible applicants are given a reasonable opportunity to apply
- an assessment is made of the relative suitability of applicants, using a competitive selection process
- the assessment is based on the applicant's work-related qualities against those genuinely required to perform the relevant duties
- the assessment focuses on the relative capacity of applicants to achieve outcomes related to the relevant duties
- the external market has been 'tested' (for example by advertising externally)
- the assessment is the primary consideration in making the employment decision.

A selection process is deemed to be applied fairly when all the applicants for the same vacancy are assessed against the same selection requirements, using the same selection methodology.

Selection methodologies must be determined by the panel chair prior to advertising.

The delegate may choose to consider relevant organisational specific information, such as a Professional Standards integrity check and performance development agreement ratings, in determining applicant suitability.

All parties to selection processes and employment decisions (including applicants) are required to observe the principles of confidentiality and privacy as outlined in the [AFP National Guideline on privacy](#).

## 6. Notification of vacancies

All vacancies for periods of six months or longer, whether ongoing, non-ongoing or temporary, must be advertised internally (concurrently with external advertising, where appropriate). Only in exceptional circumstances can the delegate give approval to extend a period of higher duties beyond

the six-month maximum when the vacancy has not been advertised. Further information is contained in the [Better Practice Guide on higher duties](#).

## 7. Employment and eligibility restrictions

Eligibility criteria should be clearly defined for all advertised roles. This includes roles requiring particular experience/qualifications such as, but not limited to:

- clearly established experience, knowledge and training (if articulated as a Job Family requirement)
- qualifications and specialist skill sets outlined in the Job Family Model

Further eligibility requirements can be attached to an advertised role including:

- that only AFP employees or other specified categories of persons, or non-ongoing employees can apply
- that the prerequisites for an approved role under the [Technical Specialist Framework](#) are met
- that residents of a specific geographical region and/or AFP function only can apply
- special measures limiting who can apply (for example, a specific employment program)

## 8. Former Commonwealth and AFP employees

Former Commonwealth or AFP employees who have received a redundancy payment cannot be employed by the AFP either permanently (ongoing), for a fixed term (non-ongoing) or as a casual or be engaged as a contractor for a period equivalent to the redundancy benefit period. For example, if an employee receives a redundancy payment of 12 weeks' pay, they cannot be re-employed with the AFP for 12 weeks from the date of their cessation.

Former AFP employees who have received a workforce renewal payment cannot be employed either permanently (ongoing), for a fixed term (non-ongoing) or as a casual or be engaged as a contractor for the term nominated within their contract of separation unless otherwise approved by ACPC.

Former AFP employees are required to undergo the same selection gateways and any other mandatory assessments required in the recruitment process as other external applicants.

## 9. Publication and advertising

Recruitment processes are advertised in accordance with the delegate's decision and in a manner consistent with the [Whole of Australian Government Recruitment Advertising Policy](#).

AFP recruitment processes will also be advertised on the AFP intranet ([Hub](#)) and/or the AFP internet ([afp.gov.au](http://afp.gov.au)), as appropriate. External vacancy processes will also be advertised in the Australian Public Service Employment Gazette ([APS Jobs](#)).

Advertisements for vacancies and EOs should be open for a minimum of 14 calendar days. This is to enable a good applicant field to be established. The delegate may approve a process to be open for a minimum of seven calendar days where deemed appropriate. All external costs associated with advertising the role must be met by the relevant business area advertising the position.

AFP Recruitment can assist a business area in tailoring advertising to best suit roles and attract desirable applicants.

## 10. Role scope and selection criteria

All role descriptions must include:

- an outline of the scope and responsibilities of the role, essential requirements (if applicable) and any demonstrated work-related qualities genuinely required and critical to performing the role
- selection criteria or other selection methodology (see Attachment B)
- any role restrictions – for example, whether the role requires police or protective service officer powers.

Selection criteria or other selection methodology relevant to the role are provided to applicants at the time of advertising. All selection criteria must be assessed equally within the selection process unless the delegate has approved weighting of the criteria. In this case, applicants must be advised of the weighting in the role advertising documentation.

[Technical Specialist Framework](#) roles must have clear role descriptions that detail the technical expertise, tertiary qualifications and essential qualifications and experience required for the role. A Technical Specialist Framework role has no leadership or management expectations and is not a sworn role.

### 10.1 Role sizing

Role sizing assesses the appropriate classification level of a position against the [AFP work-level standards](#). Role sizing is conducted to ensure that roles across the AFP are appropriately classified and to ensure consistency, fairness and equity for all. Prior to commencing the recruitment process, role sizing should be undertaken when:

- allocating a band level to a newly created role
- reviewing a role which has substantially changed (e.g. due to a new policy proposal or a restructure or reorganisation within the AFP)
- the vacant role has not been assessed for more than two years to determine whether the role has changed over time

- reallocating and organising duties occurs across business areas.

AFP senior executive may mandate that role sizing is undertaken at any time. For further information, refer to the [Better Practice Guide on role sizing](#).

## 10.2 Work-level standards

The [AFP work-level standards](#) describe the skill, responsibility and behavioural expectations relevant to each AFP band. Each AFP band has its own relevant work-level standards. These standards apply to AFP appointees in both operational and non-operational roles classified in the same AFP band.

## 10.3 Minimum eligibility requirements

All applicants must be Australian citizens and gain and maintain an AFP security clearance. Under very limited circumstances, as outlined in the [AFP Commissioner's Order on security \(CO9\)](#), these requirements may be waived by the Commissioner.

Any other minimum requirements are outlined on the vacancies section of the [AFP website](#).

# 11. Recruitment gateways

Mandatory gateways – the stages that applicants must go through to determine employment suitability – apply for all recruitment processes. Where appropriate, additional optional gateways may be included within a recruitment process. Where an optional gateway is included, all applicants must meet the gateway requirements to progress in the process.

All mandatory and optional gateway options can be found at Attachment A.

## 11.1 Employment character standards

All external applicants undergo pre-employment screening by completing an employment suitability questionnaire assessed against the [AFP Character Guidelines](#). AFP Recruitment facilitates this gateway in collaboration with AFP Professional Standards.

The applicant will be advised via email if they are unsuccessful in meeting the employment suitability gateway.

Where gateways are being undertaken concurrently (i.e. interviews are held at the same time that employment suitability is being assessed), AFP Recruitment will advise the selection advisory committee (SAC) chair if an applicant has been deemed unsuccessful at this gateway and arrangements will be made for making contact with the applicant prior to the formal notification being issued.



## 11.2 Medical or psychological health gateway requirements

The inclusion of any organisational health (medical or psychological) gateway/s must be endorsed and facilitated in conjunction with AFP Organisational Health.

## 11.3 Failure to meet gateway requirements

If an applicant does not attempt a gateway within the specified timeframe and does not receive an extension prior to the gateway being conducted, they may be withdrawn from the process.

If an applicant attempts a gateway but does not meet the standards for the gateway, they will be deemed unsuccessful and will not progress any further in the process. The applicant will be advised accordingly via email.

## 11.4 Validity of gateway results

Some assessment methods may have standard exclusion periods. The initial assessment remains valid until the exclusion period expires. Until that time, an applicant will be unable to reattempt the gateway assessment. AFP Recruitment will provide advice to the SAC chair of any exclusion periods specific to assessments at these gateways.

Some gateway outcomes may have a limited validity period. If a previously completed assessment is no longer valid, the applicant will be required to complete the assessment again in order to continue their application. In circumstances where the validity of an assessment is not the fault of the applicant, the SAC chair may choose to consider the prior assessment.

# 12. Selection advisory committee

A SAC must be formed for all advertised vacancies. Members of a SAC must ensure they possess the skills, knowledge and impartiality to perform their role in accordance with this guideline and are required to have completed the SAC iAspire training. A delegate is required to approve the composition of the SAC and, in doing so, must be satisfied that all members have completed the required SAC training in iAspire.

## 12.1 Forming a SAC

For AFP Band 1–8 and executive-level (non-broadbanded) roles:

- the SAC chair must be substantively at least one level above the advertised role

- all SAC members must be substantively at least at, or above, the band level of the advertised role
- the relevant delegate must approve the composition of the SAC
- the SAC must comprise a minimum of two panel members and must have a gender balance, and one member must report to a different manager/commander from where the vacancy exists ('independent SAC member').

The SAC chair may engage an external provider to scribe and prepare the delegate report. A scribe can also perform the role of the independent SAC member. All costs must be met by the business area advertising the vacant position.

For broadbanded roles:

- the SAC chair must be substantively at least one level above the top classification of the broadbanded role
- all SAC members must be substantively at least at, or above, the top classification of the broadband.

For technical specialist roles:

- the SAC panel chair must be at least a substantive executive-level employee
- all SAC members must be substantively at least at, or above, an AFP Band 8.

Exemptions on panel composition may be granted for roles that require a SAC member to have a specialist skill and/or knowledge. Exemptions to the above principles may only be approved by the SAC report delegate. The SAC Chair must ensure that they have obtained the delegate's approval in writing to the composition of the SAC prior to any applicant assessment.

## 12.2 Conflict of interest declaration

An AFP appointee must not be on a SAC where an applicant is a spouse, partner, family member or close friend.

All AFP appointees that form the SAC must complete the Conflict of Interest declaration and submit this form to the SAC chair or the delegate for review prior to final formation of the SAC (refer to [AFP National Guideline on conflicts of interest](#)). Where there is an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest, the SAC chair or relevant delegate must find a suitable replacement.

## 12.3 Role of a SAC

The function of a SAC is to recommend to the delegate the applicant(s) most suitable to fill the advertised vacancy or EOI and to create an order of merit and/or merit pool.

SAC members, including the independent SAC member, must have an equal contribution to the process and assessments.

SAC members are required to:

- understand the requirements of the role(s)
- have the skills necessary to conduct a valid and fair assessment of each applicant's relative suitability using an appropriate combination of selection tools
- use unbiased selection methods that provide for transparent and effective decision-making
- be able to make a selection recommendation to the delegate that is capable of withstanding independent scrutiny
- observe privacy obligations
- make decisions based solely on the evidence acquired from the assessment process, and:
  - according to merit
  - independently and impartially
  - in accordance with the principles of fairness and relevant legislative requirements, including anti-discrimination legislation
  - as quickly as possible whilst maintaining the standards referred to in this guideline.

The SAC chair must:

- ensure availability of SAC members to ensure timely recruitment outcomes
- determine whether there are any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest for SAC members
- lead the selection process and manage SAC members
- perform the role of the contact officer or identify an alternative subject matter expert for the duration of the recruitment process
- make the decision on whether to accept late applications and/or extension requests (prior to commencing shortlisting)
- liaise between the delegate and SAC members
- confirm that the applicant possesses any prerequisite requirements.

SAC members must assess the suitability of applicants for the advertised role, order of merit and/or merit pool and make a recommendation to the delegate. The SAC must ensure that any recommendation provided to the delegate clearly demonstrates the suitability of the applicant(s) to perform at the advertised classification.

If a SAC determines that there are no suitable applicants identified, the vacancy or EOI may be readvertised. It is recommended that AFP Recruitment be engaged where this occurs.

If a SAC member is unable to complete their SAC duties at any stage due to personal leave or other unexpected circumstances, the delegate must nominate a suitable replacement, ensuring that the SAC still meets the requirements outlined in this guideline. The new SAC member must review all actions that have been undertaken to date. If the new SAC member does not agree with the findings, then the delegate should be consulted on a way forward.

## 12.4 Role of the scribe

The role of a scribe is to document the recruitment process and to perform other administrative tasks such as referee checks. If the scribe is not an AFP appointee, they must complete a Form 7: Handling AFP Information prior to commencing work. This can be found in the [Scribe Information Factsheet](#).

## 13. Direct engagement

The direct engagement of an external applicant, including a former AFP member, may be appropriate in the following circumstances:

- re-engagement of a former AFP member within two years of separation from the AFP
- where an advertised selection process has failed to produce a field of suitable applicants
- engagement of a non-citizen (see section 19 of this guideline)
- where the delegate is satisfied that the required skill set cannot be sourced internally and is in limited supply externally.

A proposal for direct engagement should satisfy the delegate in relation to:

- application of the selection and advancement principles
- evidence that the external market has been tested in the previous 12 months
- satisfactory performance and integrity of the individual identified for direct engagement
- prior performance, integrity, skills and knowledge and internal referee comments for a former employee separated from the AFP for a period of less than two years.

To ensure the delegate can make an informed and appropriate decision, the minute requesting the direct engagement should also:

- outline whether the engagement is:
  - non-ongoing
  - ongoing
- contain evidence to confirm that the required skill set for the role has been unable to be sourced through any previous recruitment processes (excluding an EOI process)
- If the position hasn't been advertised, provide rationale and justification.

Salary will be at the base of the relevant band in accordance with the [Australian Federal Police Enterprise Agreement 2017–2020](#) or the [Australian Federal Police Executive Level Enterprise Agreement 2019–2021](#) (as appropriate) unless a business case demonstrates why this is not appropriate.

## 14. Reasonable adjustment

It is recognised that there may be circumstances that preclude an applicant from attempting a gateway or that may require a reasonable adjustment to be made.

The SAC chair is responsible for checking whether any applicant has indicated they have a disability as part of their application and for actioning any reasonable adjustment that may be required.

For further information regarding reasonable adjustment, please refer to the factsheet: [Reasonable adjustment](#).

## 15. Recruitment selection methodology for SAC processes

Applicants must be assessed against the selection criteria unless alternative assessment criteria have been provided during advertising. Assessment against the work-level standards for the AFP band level aligned to the advertised role(s) is also required. Although the SAC may determine the specific selection methodologies, each applicant must be assessed on merit and suitability for the role(s) through the evidence acquired during the assessment process only and using the AFP recruitment rating scale provided in the SAC pack.

The SAC must undertake all mandatory selection methods required for the process in Attachment B.

The SAC must ensure that any applicant rated as suitable, or above, has demonstrated the skills and competency to fully perform the role at the assessed level.

Where, at any selection gateway, an applicant is rated as 'Requires Development' (RD) or is 'Unsuitable' (US) against one criterion, they must be found as RD or US overall.

### 15.1 Shortlisting

The SAC must use the relevant work-level standards to ensure a consistent approach for SAC members to determine whether applicants meet requirements prior to shortlisting. The SAC may only have regard to elements detailed in the advertisement, such as:

- role scope/responsibilities
- selection criteria or alternative assessment criteria
- work-level standards / work-related qualities
- skill requirements or essential qualifications / industry experience
- any other considerations referenced in the advertisement
- any pre-screening questions.

The outcome of the SAC shortlisting assessment must determine whether an applicant proceeds to the next stage (gateway) of the selection process.

After shortlisting has concluded and been agreed by the SAC, assessments of written applications must not be modified.

Prior to commencing the next assessment gateway, the SAC must update applicant outcomes in MyCareer and advise AFP Recruitment when this has been finalised. It is the SAC's responsibility to ensure that applicants are notified, through MyCareer, that their application has not progressed to the next phase and are invited to receive feedback.

Further information on how to progress applicants through a process can be found in the MyCareer reference guides on the [Recruitment Page](#) on the AFP Hub.

## 15.2 Online testing

The purpose of online testing is to assess an applicant's abilities and skills, generally prior to inviting them to an interview or assessment centre. The SAC may determine, and the delegate must approve, the type of assessment that is best suited for the advertised vacancy. If online testing is used, it will be considered a selection gateway and a 'passing' benchmark must be determined against the work-level standards applicable to the role. AFP Recruitment can assist with this and it can be considered in place of a written application.

## 15.3 Physical competency assessment

The physical competency assessment is a requirement for some specialist sworn roles. The physical competency requirements for specialist sworn roles may vary, depending on the requirements of the advertised role. Applicants should be advised of any physical competency assessment requirements in the role advertisement.

## 15.4 Assessment centre

The delegate may approve the use of an assessment centre to evaluate applicants' abilities and skills. This is highly desirable for large bulk rounds.

Applicants must be provided with at least two days' notice of the requirement to attend an assessment centre. If an applicant is unavailable to attend or participate in the assessment centre during the timeframes provided, the SAC chair or delegate may elect to withdraw the applicant. The SAC must take all reasonable steps to accommodate the applicant. The applicant must undertake the same assessment exercises as other applicants (e.g. if there is a group exercise, the applicant must be in attendance in order to participate).

## 15.5 Interview

The purpose of conducting interviews is to afford an applicant the best opportunity to further enhance their claims for the role and to provide the SAC with the opportunity to clarify claims made during the application process or other selection gateways.

Applicants must be provided with a reasonable amount of time, usually at least two days' notice, for a scheduled interview. If an applicant is unavailable for the initial interview time, the SAC must consider reasonable steps to facilitate an alternative date and/or time; however, where a SAC is unable to accommodate an alternative date (e.g. due to the availability of the SAC members or for bulk recruitment processes), the SAC chair may elect to withdraw the applicant.

The SAC must endeavour to ensure all applicants feel comfortable during the interview. Questions asked within the interview must be relevant to the advertised position and role scope and responsibilities and be assessed accordingly. Applicants should address interview questions and provide examples in an unclassified manner. At the conclusion of the interview, the SAC must use the assessment of all selection criteria to determine the applicant's overall suitability.

## 15.6 Referee reports

The purpose of obtaining comments from a nominated referee is for the SAC to confirm their assessment of a candidate by gaining further information on an applicant's employment history, qualifications, experience or attendance behaviour relevant to an assessment of the applicant's suitability for the role. It is not mandatory that referee comments be obtained.

Comments from a referee can take the form of a written statement provided by them or may be given verbally. In the latter case, the comments must be documented by the SAC and then verified, in writing, by the referee.

Referees should generally be a current or previous supervisor or someone who is in a position to establish the applicant's job suitability for the relevant position. The SAC must only use referees nominated by the applicant or advise the applicant prior to making contact with someone else.

If a SAC chooses to obtain referee reports, they should clarify the applicant's referee contact details and any potential sensitivities prior to contacting them. This can be done during the interview, if appropriate.

For an EOI process, a referee report may be used as an optional selection methodology. If utilised, the SAC must consider referee reports in conjunction with all mandatory gateways to determine an overall process outcome. This means that a referee report should not be the sole reason an applicant is rated as RD or US.

Where the chair or a member of the SAC is a nominated referee for an applicant, they must submit a written referee report to the SAC chair or member/s prior to commencement of shortlisting.

The SAC may ask the referee subsequent questions and/or verify claims made by the applicant. Any subsequent questioning must align to the selection criteria.

## 15.7 SAC recommendations

The SAC report must be sent to AFP Recruitment as soon as possible following the conclusion of the process. AFP Recruitment is responsible for submitting the report to the delegate for approval following the outcome of any review (if the process is reviewable).

The SAC must ensure the report is endorsed by the SAC chair and all SAC members and it must clearly outline the recommendations, including preferred applicant(s), if applicable. It is preferred that SAC members provide 'electronic endorsement' (such as e-signature or email endorsement) of the SAC report to help expedite the delegate review and approval process.

If agreement on applicant outcomes cannot be reached by the SAC, the report must include the details and areas of disagreement, including in relation to the outcomes, to allow the delegate to determine that either a:

- selection decision is to be made based on the evidence/material provided by the SAC
- new SAC is to be convened and the selection process recommenced.

The report for a SAC process must include any relevant selection methodology documents for the delegate's consideration including:

- role scope
- full list of applicants
- for expression of interest processes – a written summary of all applicants who progressed to interview or the final selection gateway that justifies the overall rating given by the SAC
- for all other vacancy processes – an individual assessment that outlines each applicant's performance at interview or at the final selection gateway
- conflict of interest declarations
- referee reports or a summary of the referee reports (if sought).

AFP Recruitment will submit the SAC report and any supporting documentation to the respective delegate for approval, generally within three business days of receipt.

## 15.8 Review process

### a. Internal review process

Following completion of a SAC report, any internal applicant at the executive level or below has a period of seven calendar days to request a review of the process by directly contacting the delegate. This review is limited to vacancy processes. EOIs are exempt from the review process. The seven-day review period commences from the date that AFP Recruitment provides the signed SAC report to the delegate. Internal applicants will be notified by AFP Recruitment of the review period commencement date.

A request for review from an internal applicant must be based on either an apparent or perceived:



- breach of the application of section 6 of the AFP Regulations
- significant departure from the merit selection process as set out in this guideline.

The delegate's consideration and determination of the SAC report and recommendations must not be finalised prior to the conclusion of the review period and notification of the outcome of the review being made in writing to the applicant(s) requesting the review.

An independent person may be selected by the delegate to undertake the review on behalf of the delegate.

If the delegate determines that there has been a significant departure from the principles set out in section 6 of the AFP Regulations, the delegate may:

- direct the SAC to take specific action considered necessary to remedy any defect in the selection process raised during the delegate review
- direct that the selection process be abandoned and recommend that a new SAC be formed
- refer the matter to Professional Standards in accordance with the [AFP Commissioner's Order on professional standards \(CO2\)](#).

#### **b. External review process**

There is no ability to seek an external merit-based review of a recruitment decision; however, there may be avenues for external review if an employee considers the decision was contrary to law. For example, if an employee considers the decision contravened the general protections provisions of the [Fair Work Act 2009](#) (Cth) or constituted unlawful discrimination, they may seek to make an application to the [Fair Work Commission](#) or the [Australian Human Rights Commission](#).

## **15.9 Delegate's role**

The delegate must not make any decision and/or approve the recommendations contained in the SAC report until the following responsibilities and requirements have been met:

- They have given consideration to integrity check outcomes provided by Professional Standards.
- If applicable, the seven-day review period has concluded.
- All requests for a review have been addressed, in writing, and finalised to the satisfaction of the delegate.

The delegate has the authority to revoke or vary the decision before it comes into effect.

In accordance with this guideline, an existing order of merit must not be reordered; however, the delegate may disregard a list or place a condition on a selection decision. At the conclusion of the recruitment action, the delegate may, for example, offer positions only to internal applicants due to full-time equivalent constraints. Where this occurs, the delegate must document the reasons for this decision in writing in the SAC report.

Generally, any merit pool or order of merit will be available to other business areas to access in order to fill vacancies of a similar nature. Where the delegate feels it is necessary, they can choose

to lock the merit pool or order of merit so that it can only be accessed to fill the advertised role or on their written approval to fill other roles.

Cancellation of a process may be considered in a range of circumstances, including where the AFP decides not to proceed with recruitment action because of financial or other considerations. Other circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- subsequently discovering that a person has provided incorrect information as part of the application process
- serious flaws in the selection process
- failure to comply with the requirements of this guideline
- the selected applicant deciding not to continue with the proposed recruitment action
- operational requirements and/or change in funding.

## 15.10 Integrity checks

All AFP employees who are successful for placement in an order of merit or merit pool from an EOI or vacancy will be subject to an integrity check. Outcomes of the integrity check must be considered by the delegate when making employment decisions and before endorsement of the SAC report. Where an offer is to be extended more than six months after the initial integrity check, another integrity check must be requested for consideration of the delegate.

Where the delegate has determined there is an integrity issue with an applicant in the order of merit or merit pool, the delegate may place a condition that restricts the placement of the applicant pending resolution of the matter(s). The delegate may restrict access to the applicant and may, upon an adverse outcome of the matter(s), remove the applicant from the order of merit or merit pool.

## 15.11 Orders of merit and merit pools

At the time of advertising, a decision must be made and included in the advertisement as to whether an order of merit or a merit pool will be compiled as a result of the SAC's assessment of the applicants' performance against the predetermined gateways for the vacancy.

- An **order of merit** ranks the applicants in order of their overall ranking – offers must be extended in accordance with the order listed.
- A **merit pool** is an unranked list of applicants that may have a varying overall rating of Highly Suitable, Very Suitable or Suitable. These applicants are placed in a pool and offers may be extended to any applicant from the pool regardless of rating.

In coming to a decision, the SAC might have regard to the generalised or specialist nature of the skills required for the subject role and also the flexibility offered by both options.

The delegate will decide whether the resulting merit list or merit pool is to be made available for other business areas to use ('unlocked') or if they will retain control over its use ('locked').

## 15.12 Accessing an order of merit or merit pool

Where an unlocked order of merit or merit pool contains additional competent applicants over and above those required for filling the advertised vacancy or EOI, it will be accessible to fill vacancies:

- at the same band level as the original advertised role (cannot be used to fill vacancies at a higher or lower band level)
- for roles with the same tenure as the original advertised role (e.g. if the vacancy/EOI was only for a temporary period, permanent placement cannot occur)
- where the requirements of the role, the skills and duties have considerable overlap and would be considered as similar in nature.

Before an order of merit or merit pool can be accessed, the requesting delegate must determine whether a role has similar requirements, skills and duties to the original advertised role. Access to a merit pool or order of merit will only be permitted where the role/s to be filled are determined to be similar in nature.

Where the order of merit or merit pool is locked, the requesting area must obtain written approval to access the order of merit or merit pool from the 'owning' delegate. This approval should clearly indicate what the request is for (i.e. whether the request is for a particular applicant/s or to consider all successful applicants). Written delegate endorsement must be provided before any request to draw from an order of merit or merit pool can be progressed.

AFP Recruitment manages access to merit pools and orders of merit and should be contacted for details.

## 15.13 Placement of successful applicants from an order of merit or a merit pool

When placing applicants from a merit pool, the delegate may approve placement of any successful applicant in no particular order; however, those rated highest should be considered for placement before lower-rated applicants (e.g. applicants rated Highly Suitable should be considered before applicants rated Very Suitable or Suitable).

When placing applicants from a merit list, successful applicants must only be placed based on the SAC ranking, with no ability for the delegate to vary from this ranking.

Gender balance should be considered by the delegate when determining the most appropriate applicant for placement. This is a secondary consideration to the applicant rating and cannot impact the ranking of an order of merit.

## **15.14 Order of merit or merit pool validity**

Unless otherwise outlined when advertised, an order of merit and merit pool will remain valid for a period of 12 months from the date the SAC report is signed by the delegate. The delegate has the ability to extend the expiry date beyond 12 months at their discretion. Prior to the nominal expiry date of the merit pool or order of merit, a request can be made to the delegate for an order of merit or merit pool to be extended. If agreed, it can only be extended for a maximum period of a further 12 months. After this time, the order of merit or merit pool will be closed and can no longer be accessed.

Alternatively, a delegate may choose to close an order of merit or merit pool before the nominal expiry date. In this case, the delegate must document the reason(s) for their decision, such as organisational restructures, role sizing of positions or the fact that the requirements of the advertised position have evolved. If the order of merit is closed before the nominal expiry date, then all applicants in the order of merit or merit pool will be advised by AFP Recruitment in writing of the closure and the reason for it, as advised by the delegate.

## **16. Finalising the recruitment process**

### **16.1 Commencement date**

The commencement date of employment or duties for a successful applicant depends on the completion of mandatory employment requirements, availability of a suitable role and/or the commencement date of any required training program. A public holiday, or a day treated as a public holiday, cannot be the date of commencement for an external applicant.

Mandatory gateways for external applicants include:

- security clearance
- integrity checks (if required)
- drug testing
- fingerprinting.

The delegate may determine that mandatory gateways may be completed after commencement.

Existing employees are subject to the release provisions outlined in section 17 of this guideline.

### **16.2 Revoking an employment offer**

An offer of employment made to a successful applicant may be retracted by the delegate if the applicant:

- fails to respond to an offer of employment made by AFP Recruitment within the required timeframe
- fails to meet the requirements of any employment suitability gateways
- has not met the requirements of all gateways before the commencement date of the offered role or training course (noting that the delegate has the discretion to determine that these may be completed after commencement).

Revocation may also occur if the position no longer exists or is no longer vacant due to a restructure.

## 16.3 Feedback

All applicants should be invited by the SAC to register their interest in receiving feedback. Applicants must register for feedback in the timeframe provided. The SAC may refuse any requests that are received outside the specified timeframe. If feedback is requested, the SAC must provide feedback to all applicants after the conclusion of each gateway. It is the decision of the SAC to determine the method and type of feedback applicants receive.

Where a delegate decides that it is not feasible to provide feedback on a specific gateway or process (such as processes where large number of applicants are anticipated), this decision must be communicated to applicants in the advertisement (e.g. advertising text and/or the applicant information pack). Where a decision has been taken to limit feedback, no exceptions are permitted.

Where a delegate determines that a selection process is to be cancelled or restarted due to failure to meet the requirements of this guideline, candidates will not be provided with feedback.

## 17. Advancement and transfer effective dates (internal applicants)

The delegate and line managers must ensure that employees who have been offered a role as a part of a selection process involving advancement and higher duties are released. The resulting assignment of duties occurs on an effective date as outlined in this guideline.

### 17.1 Effective date of advancement – the 14-day rule

The effective date of the successful employee's advancement is 14 calendar days from the date the applicant accepts the offer (as the direct result of a SAC process or for order of merit or merit pool advancement). An employee has seven working days to accept an offer of advancement. An employee may request an extension to the seven days by contacting AFP Recruitment.

A successful applicant is entitled to receive any salary progression attached to their advancement from the effective date in accordance with section 9 of the [Australian Federal Police Enterprise Agreement 2017–20](#) and section 10 of the [Australian Federal Police Executive Level Enterprise Agreement 2019–2021](#).

## 17.2 Exceptions to the 14-day rule

Exceptions to the 14-day rule are:

- If the employee is performing higher duties in the advancement role at the time of offer, the effective date is the date the employee accepts the offer.
- If the employee commences in the advancement role within 14 days of their acceptance, advancement will be from the date they commence duty in the advancement role.
- Where an employee returns from an international posting where they were covered by [Determination 1 \(Overseas Terms and Conditions of Service\)](#), the effective date of the advancement is the next available working date after any overseas accrued leave commitment is exhausted.
- Where an employee is unable to take up the advancement role due to personal circumstances such as extended leave (inclusive of all leave types), then the advancement will be the date they return to work and are available to commence in the advancement role.
- Where the advancement role offered will not be vacated by an employee at the substantive level of the role until a particular date, advancement will occur on the date after the former substantive employee ceases to perform the role and the next employee commences in the role.

## 17.3 Release date

Before assigning new duties to an employee, the delegate assigning the duties must agree on a release date with the employee's current line management. The release date is the day on which an employee commences the new duties.

If the employee's current line management cannot release the employee by the effective date, they may seek to extend the release date by an additional 14 days. The effective date remains and the losing area is responsible for paying the employee's new salary until the date the employee takes up the new role.

Delay or decline in releasing an employee may only occur where there is clear evidence that the losing area's organisational/operational priorities are greater than those of the gaining area. This only applies to where the employee is either transferring at level or through an EOI process that will result in higher duties assignment (HDA). In these cases, where they are unable to agree on the release date, the matter must be referred to the gaining area's Assistant Commissioner for resolution and to the deputy commissioner if required for final arbitration.

If the advancement involves an AFP-funded relocation, then the advancement will take effect on the effective date even though the AFP appointee may still be in transit to their new work location or on leave to effect the relocation.

## **17.4 Transfers at level**

Transfers at level are reassignments at the same band level and have no effect on an employee's base salary. The effective date and release date of transfers will therefore depend upon negotiation between the current and receiving business area representatives, having regard to operational requirements and any approved leave.

An employee has seven calendar days to accept the offer of a transfer at level. An employee may request an extension to the seven days by contacting AFP Recruitment, which will seek approval from the business area.

It is strongly encouraged that releases for transfers at level are approved wherever possible; however, release is not mandatory if the owning area has operational requirements that prevent the release. The owning area must detail these reasons in writing to AFP Recruitment.

The assignment of duties for the transfer at level is facilitated by AFP Recruitment and sent to Payroll Services for actioning.

## **17.5 Higher duties assignment for less than six months**

If HDA is offered by another business area for less than six months, the effective date and release date for the employee to take up the HDA role are a matter for the receiving business area and the employee's current business area to negotiate.

The employee's commencement of HDA of less than six months in another business area is conditional upon them being released to take up the HDA role. Business areas are not obliged to release employees for HDA opportunities of less than six months; however, where possible employees should be provided with every opportunity to undertake HDA to assist in their personal development and career progression and to stimulate continued workplace engagement.

The candidate can complete an HDA request through Insight! (unless the assignment of duties has been facilitated through a requisition in MyCareer, in which case AFP Recruitment will facilitate the advice to Payroll Services).

## **17.6 Higher duties assignment for more than six months**

Business areas must release an employee to take up an HDA opportunity if the offer:

- results from the outcome of a competitive merit-based selection process (e.g. expression of interest)
- is for a period of six months or more.

The timing of the effective date and release date of these HDA opportunities is subject to the same principles that apply to advancements.

If the receiving line management and the employee's current line management are unable to agree on a release date for commencement of HDA, the matter is to be referred to the delegate. The delegate will consider the matter and determine a suitable release date.

The assignment of duties for the period of HDA will be facilitated by AFP Recruitment and sent to Payroll Services for actioning. For delegations on higher duties, refer to [Determination 3 of 2017: Instrument of Delegations and Authorisations, AFP Enterprise Agreement 2017–2020](#).

## 17.7 Processing of an advancement

After receiving the SAC report from the delegate, AFP Recruitment takes all action necessary to give effect to an advancement. Where there is an additional placement from a merit pool or order of merit, then an approved requisition or written confirmation from the delegate is required before action can be taken. AFP Recruitment actions include:

- sending the offer to the successful applicant
- receiving the applicant's acceptance
- requesting release from the applicant's current line management (if required)
- forwarding assignment of duties documentation to Payroll Services for processing.

## 17.8 Processing of transfer or higher duties assignments

AFP Recruitment will action an assignment of duties for all transfers and periods of higher duties from all merit selection processes.

## 18. Commencement salary (external applicants)

Successful applicants will be engaged to a position at the band level advertised for the role and will be remunerated accordingly.

Salary will be at the minimum pay point of the relevant band in accordance with the [Australian Federal Police Enterprise Agreement 2017–2020](#) or the [Australian Federal Police Executive Level Enterprise Agreement 2019–2021](#) (as applicable).

External applicants who wish to commence on a pay point above the minimum must seek approval through a request submitted to AFP Recruitment. The request must be reviewed by the engaging business area delegate, who will make a recommendation on the request.

In exceptional circumstances, the starting salary may be determined by the delegate, under the prevailing enterprise agreement. These circumstances include where the new employee is an



acknowledged expert in their field or has other critical qualifications or attributes required by the AFP.

If the external applicant is requesting that the AFP match their current salary then they are required to provide a minimum of two recent payslips showing evidence of annual earnings and other relevant information to support their claim for engagement at the higher pay point.

Details on remuneration structure can be found in the current [Australian Federal Police Enterprise Agreement 2017–2020](#) or the [Australian Federal Police Executive Level Enterprise Agreement 2019–2021](#).

## 19. Engagement of non-citizens

Minimum eligibility requirements set out in this guideline require all applicants to be Australian citizens and have the ability to gain and maintain an AFP security clearance.

Under very limited circumstances, as outlined in the AFP [Commissioner's Order on security \(CO9\)](#), these requirements may be waived by the Commissioner (or delegate). The business area is responsible for obtaining this approval.

Business areas that are considering the engagement of a non-citizen must also ensure that the applicant has the necessary visa to undertake work in Australia.

Engagement of a non-citizen is generally via a direct engagement and must have the relevant delegate approval for a direct engagement. Once all approvals are finalised they must be provided to AFP Recruitment in order to facilitate the engagement.

## 20. Further advice

Queries about the content of this guideline should be referred to the AFP Recruitment Team at [afprecruitment@afp.gov.au](mailto:afprecruitment@afp.gov.au).

## 21. References

### Legislation

- [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth)
- [Australian Federal Police Regulations 1979](#) (Cth)

### AFP governance instruments

- [AFP Commissioner's Order on governance \(CO1\)](#)
- [AFP Commissioner's Order on professional standards \(CO2\)](#)

- [AFP Commissioner's Order on security \(CO9\)](#)
- [AFP Enterprise Agreement 2017–2020](#)
- [AFP Executive Level Enterprise Agreement 2019–2021](#)
- [AFP National Guideline on integrity reporting](#)
- [AFP National Guideline on privacy](#)

#### Other sources

- [Whole-of-Australian-Government Advertising Arrangement](#)
- [Factsheet on Reasonable Adjustment](#)

## 22. Shortened forms

### ACPCC

Assistant Commissioner People and Culture Command

### AFP

Australian Federal Police

### EOI

expression of interest

### RD

Requires Development

### ROI

register of interest

### SAC

selection advisory committee

### SES

Senior Executive Service

### US

Unsuitable

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INFORMATION PUBLICATION SCHEME (IPS)

## 23. Definitions

**AFP appointee** means a deputy commissioner, AFP employee, special member or special protective service officer and includes a person:

- engaged overseas under section 69A of the [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth) (AFP Act) to perform duties as an AFP employee
- seconded to the AFP under section 69D of the AFP Act
- engaged under section 35 of the AFP Act as a consultant or contractor to perform services for the AFP and determined under section 35(2) of the AFP Act to be an AFP appointee.

(See section 4 of the AFP Act.)

**AFP employee** means a person engaged under section 24 of the AFP Act (excludes deputy commissioners, special members, special protective service officers, persons engaged overseas, secondees, consultants and contractors).

**AFP member** means a 'member of the AFP' as defined in section 4 of the AFP Act. See also the [AFP Glossary](#).

**Advancement** means permanent progression from one AFP band level to a higher AFP band to specified roles in a broadband or program (in accordance with program guidelines).

**Base salary** is defined in section 8 of the [Australian Federal Police Enterprise Agreement 2017–2020](#) and section 7 of the [Australian Federal Police Executive Level Enterprise Agreement 2019–2021](#). Base salary is the salary band and increment point against which an employee is remunerated. Base salary does not include allowances.

**Casual employment** is where an employee is engaged to perform work that is intermittent or irregular in nature.

**Conflict of interest** means a conflicting obligation, loyalty or other improper influence to which an individual is subject in the course of a relationship or activity. It may involve an actual, perceived or potential conflict between an AFP appointee's responsibilities in serving the public interest / official AFP duties and the AFP appointee's private interests.

**Delegate** means the delegate who is delegated to approve aspects of a recruitment process including approving the SAC recommendation (details at Attachment C)

**Direct engagement** means the engagement of a specific individual who has been identified by the business area, function or command as the most appropriate or suitable person to perform the role. This may include a previous appointee.

**Engagement** means permanent (ongoing) employment or employment for a fixed period or specified task (non-ongoing).

**Fixed-term role** means a role designated in [Determination 6 of 2017 – Fixed Term Mobility Roles](#) under the [Australian Federal Police Enterprise Agreement 2017–2020](#).

**General recruitment** means recruitment for a specific role and includes both policing and 'unsworn' roles.

**Independent SAC member** means a member of the SAC who reports to a different manager/commander from the one where the vacancy exists.

**Lateral recruit** means a police officer who has completed a Diploma in Policing (or equivalent) and who is recruited as an AFP member.

**Merit pool or order of merit** means a list of applicants determined to be competent by the SAC in the selection process and approved by the delegate.

**Promotion** means movement to a higher band level as a result of a recruitment process (excluding an EOI)

**Recruitment gateways** means the mandatory and optional stages in a recruitment process that applicants must undertake to determine overall employment suitability.

**Register of interest (ROI)** means a register that is used to gauge interest for a particular role, band level and/or recruitment program; an ROI is not a merit selection process.

**Restricted role** is a role where applicants must possess prescribed characteristics or qualifications.

**Role sizing** is the activity undertaken to assess the appropriate [AFP Work Level Standard](#) for a particular role. Role sizing is conducted to ensure that roles across the AFP are appropriately classified and to ensure consistency, fairness and equity for all. There are certain times when role sizing should be undertaken.

**Selection advisory committee (SAC)** means an independent panel formed to establish and recommend the most suitable applicant to fill a vacant role. It must comprise a minimum of a SAC chair and one SAC member; one person on the SAC must be an independent SAC member.

**Selection process** means a process conducted by an appropriate independent SAC to identify suitable applicants to fill a current or anticipated vacancy.

**Specific employment program** means an employment and/or training program for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples or another diversity employment initiative or government-supported special employment program.

## 23. Attachments

- [Attachment A – Mandatory recruitment gateways \(XLSX, 15KB\)](#)
- [Attachment B – Recruitment assessments \(XLSX, 15KB\)](#)
- [Attachment C – Recruitment authorisations \(XLSX, 20KB\)](#)