

JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Deputy Secretary-General (Political)

Division: Secretary-General's Office

Grade: B

Reports To: Secretary-General

General Information

The Commonwealth Secretariat is the principal intergovernmental body of the Commonwealth, responsible for advancing and achieving the shared goals of the association's 53 member governments in promoting democracy, development and respect for diversity.

The Secretariat is headed by the Secretary-General who, as the Chief Executive of the organisation, is responsible and accountable for overall leadership, management and delivery. At the senior level, the establishment has recently been restructured and there are three Deputy Secretaries-General responsible broadly for the political, economic and social development, and corporate goals and programmes of the Secretariat. The Secretary-General and the three Deputy Secretaries-General comprise the Management Committee, which supports the Secretary-General in the management of the Secretariat through providing advice and through taking decisions for which the Committee is collectively accountable.

The Secretariat at present has an annual budget of approximately £45 million in three separate Funds (Commonwealth Secretariat, Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, and Commonwealth Youth Programme) and a staff establishment of upward of 280 deployed principally at the headquarters in London as well as at two Commonwealth Offices for small states situated globally.

The Secretariat is implementing a new four-year Strategic Plan for the period from 2013/14 to 2016/17. The Plan concentrates effort on those areas where the Commonwealth Secretariat has a clear or proven advantage, capacity to add global value, and potential to deepen impact and results of benefit to Commonwealth member governments as well as the Commonwealth at large. The Secretariat is consolidating Results-Based Management together with strengthened governance in alignment with contemporary international standards and norms. The Secretariat is also currently introducing a reformed staff structure and establishment to meet the needs of the Strategic Plan.

Job Summary

The Deputy Secretary-General (Political) advises and supports the Secretary-General in the management of the Secretariat and is accountable for results in assigned areas associated with the Strategic Plan and with other mandates agreed by Heads of Government from time to time. This includes areas of Secretariat work relating to its democracy, human rights, legal and communication programmes.

The Deputy Secretary-General (Political) is expected to be sharply and actively focussed on delivering measureable results, reporting and being accountable to the Secretary-General; providing visionary leadership as well as practical management; and, modelling personally core Commonwealth principles including transparency, integrity, and inclusiveness.

The Deputy Secretary-General (Political) has line responsibility for the following Divisions and Unit in the Secretariat:

- Political Division
- Rule of Law Division
- Communications Division
- Human Rights Unit

In particular, the Deputy Secretary-General (Political) provides management oversight and guidance for work in the Strategic Plan, advancement of pan-Commonwealth cooperation, and the strengthening of national institutions to achieve the following goals:

- To protect and promote the Commonwealth's fundamental political values (democracy, rule of law, and human rights);
- To deliver and support inter-governmental meetings and other discussions organised by the divisions and unit for which the post-holder is responsible, including Ministerial meetings;
- To support the Secretary-General's 'Good Offices' that promote peaceful resolution of political tension and advancement of Commonwealth values;
- To support member governments in the conduct of fair, credible and inclusive elections;
- To establish and strengthen effective national human rights institutions, and to support national engagement in the Universal Periodic Review process upon request;
- To promote the autonomous and harmonious operation of the three branches of government;
- To strengthen the administration and delivery of the rule of law and justice including judicial independence; and,
- To strengthen the public profile of the Commonwealth's goals, values and principles as well as the work of the Secretariat including through personal advocacy and interaction with the media.

Task Description

The post-holder:

1. Contributes to collective institutional management at senior level.
2. Is accountable publicly and to member governments through the Secretary-General for the delivery of elements of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Strategic Plan and associated work programmes relating to support for member governments in advancing their commitment to the Commonwealth's fundamental political values, and in strengthening the profile and public awareness of the Commonwealth at all levels (governmental and non-governmental; official and civil society; national, regional and international).
3. Ensures that operations in areas of responsibility and accountability adhere to the highest corporate standards of financial and administrative governance; meet expected quality standards; and, are monitored for performance and results regularly through results-based management processes.
4. Undertakes line management of the Directors of Divisions and the Head of Unit for which the post-holder is responsible, as well as providing leadership to ensure effective human resources management and development in line with the organisation's Rules, Regulations and values (the role of Spokesperson, however, is under the direct supervision of the Secretary-General).
5. Provides policy leadership, direction and advice to staff in areas of line responsibility and accountability.
6. Undertakes representation, building and fostering relationships with representatives of Commonwealth governments including Ministers, High Commissioners and senior officials; counterparts in other intergovernmental organisations; representatives of the wider family of Commonwealth organisations; and, representatives of the private sector as required.
7. Pursues strategic partnerships with external parties, and acts as the principal point of contact at the senior level with a number of other Commonwealth entities, notably the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and Commonwealth Local Government Forum, in jointly advancing Commonwealth values and goals.
8. Oversees as a priority the strengthening of the Commonwealth profile and projection, and actively contributes to organisational profile-building through public diplomacy, including public speaking and interaction with the media and other means. Has oversight responsibility of cooperation with Commonwealth accredited organisations related to the media.
9. Participates in the governance of the Secretariat, notably meetings of the Board of Governors and its Executive Committee, and in particular provides informed contributions to Board members' deliberations on matters concerning the Secretariat's activities in the areas of democracy, rule of law, human rights and communications.

Person Specification

Education

- Desirably, a post-graduate degree in international relations, law or other field relevant to this role.

Experience and Skills

1. Clear evidence of at least 15 years of substantive senior executive level experience and results in areas of work relevant to this role (candidates would normally have served either as a senior official in a public service department or in a senior management position in an international organisation in a relevant field, and be familiar with political processes and constitutional government).
2. Experience in the management and leadership of political relationships, and evidence of being accustomed to working and succeeding in complex political and governmental settings.
3. Experience in the development and oversight of delivery of multi-faceted communications strategies.
4. Substantial people management skills and experience including experience of recruiting and developing high performing and diverse teams; and, of managing and supporting change.
5. Ability to think strategically, including experience of planning and offering sound operational and tactical advice where required to achieve strategic goals.
6. Financial management skills and experience including planning and oversight of budgets.
7. Excellent communication skills including public speaking skills that are persuasive and confident in style.
8. Good negotiating skills, with demonstrable experience of navigating successfully between differing demands and stakeholders. Experience of effective interaction with Commonwealth governments at high levels, including Ministers and senior officials as well as senior counterparts in other international organisations.
9. Familiarity with project planning, monitoring and evaluation frameworks.
10. Ability to demonstrate the core corporate values and competencies of the organisation including being able to operate in the pan-Commonwealth multi-cultural setting of the Commonwealth Secretariat.