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Premier and Cabinet Circular

PC029 – GUIDELINES FOR CHIEF EXECUTIVE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Effective from November 2023

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Purpose statement

This circular outlines the framework for the performance appraisal process for chief executives in the South Australian public sector, and is applicable to:

- all chief executives employed pursuant to Part 6 of the *Public Sector Act 2009* (PS Act) and
- all members of the Senior Leadership Committee who are not employed pursuant to Part 6 of the PS Act.

Other public sector chief executives who are not covered by the above may use this circular and associated documents as a guideline.

Context

The principles and processes of the chief executive performance appraisal process reflect the general duties established in Part 6, Division 3 of the PS Act.

Section 31 refers to each chief executive's responsibility for:

- the attainment of the performance objectives set by the Premier and the agency's minister(s) under the contract relating to the chief executive's employment
- making an effective contribution to the attainment of the whole-of-government objectives that are communicated by the Premier or the agency's minister(s)
- the effective management of the agency and the general conduct of its employees.

Section 32 refers to the duties of the chief executive to ensure, as far as practicable, that:

- the objects of the PS Act are advanced and
- the public sector principles and code of conduct are observed in the management and day-to-day operations of the unit.

The framework outlined in this circular meets the requirements of section 8 of the PS Act. It guides the structure, process and timing of the chief executive performance appraisal process, and the roles and responsibilities of chief executives and others involved in the process.

Authority and accountability

The Premier approves all in-scope chief executive performance appraisals.

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment (OCPSE) is responsible for co-ordinating the performance appraisal process, reviewing and maintaining this circular and developing additional supporting material such as guidelines, templates and systems used to inform and support the process.

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Chief executives are responsible for following the performance appraisal process, including the mid and end-of-cycle reviews and meeting with the Premier, as required, throughout the process.

The Commissioner for Public Sector Employment (Commissioner) and the Chief Executive (CE) of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) conduct new performance agreement conversations and provide a briefing to the Premier.

Establishing performance agreements

Prior to the commencement of a new performance cycle, the Commissioner will release the *Chief Executive Performance Agreement* template and *Chief Executive Performance Appraisal Process Timeline*, providing details regarding the process and key dates of the performance cycle, together with any relevant instructions or supporting material.

Requirements of the Performance Appraisal Process include that:

- the performance cycle runs according to the financial year
- agreements outline performance priorities as detailed in this circular and how they will be assessed
- the chief executive initiates a biannual review (mid-cycle and end-of-cycle review) of the performance agreement with the minister(s)
- workforce profile dashboard of performance indicators
- the Commissioner and CE DPC meet with the chief executive to discuss the performance agreement, results and their performance, including strengths, priorities, additional development or support.

Following completion of all meetings, the Commissioner and CE DPC will provide a briefing to the Premier, which will include evaluation summaries.

Chief executives, ministers, the CE DPC and the Commissioner may elect to combine the end of cycle and commencement of a new cycle discussions.

Development and succession plan

Chief executives have the option to establish a personal development plan to outline their personal development objectives and actions. When establishing the plan, chief executives should consider:

- challenges and opportunities in achieving the performance agreement priorities
- areas where further development is needed, and
- specific capabilities, skills, or knowledge to build on or refresh.

Chief executives are encouraged to develop succession planning activities for their roles and other critical roles within their agencies.

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Exemptions

For chief executives appointed part-way through a performance cycle, a new performance agreement should be established within three months of commencement.

If the chief executive reports directly to a board, the minister may delegate, in part or in whole, their responsibilities under this circular to the chair of the board.

In circumstances where the chief executive works closely with a board (but does not report directly to it), it is open to the minister to seek information from the chair of the board on the performance of the chief executive in relation to the relevant functions of that board.

Monitoring and compliance

In partnership with the CE DPC, OCPSE is responsible for monitoring application of this circular and working with in-scope chief executives to ensure the principles, requirements and intent of the circular are complied with.

Distribution and publication

This circular will be published on the DPC website, along with additional guidance material and templates. The CE DPC will distribute the circular to chief executives covered by this circular.

Document control

Review number: 5
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Next review date: April 2026

For more information

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