



Public Services and
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Final Report

Review of Staffing

Office of the Chief Audit Executive



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Executive summary

- i. This engagement was included in the Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) 2018 to 2023 Risk-Based Audit and Evaluation Plan.
- ii. In April 2016, the Public Service Commission's New Direction in Staffing came into effect, which provided a renewed appointment and oversight framework for staffing in the Government of Canada. The overarching goal was a more streamlined staffing process based on departmental needs and risk tolerances. In support of this New Direction in Staffing, the Public Service Commission renewed its Appointment Framework, which allows deputy heads to exert additional discretion in their approach to staffing, and reduces administrative and reporting requirements. Departments are provided with more flexibility to design their staffing systems based on their own organizational context and evolving business needs.
- iii. Within PSPC, the Deputy Minister sub-delegates staffing authority to the lowest managerial/supervisory level possible, via PSPC's Instrument of Human Resources Delegation.
- iv. The objective of this review was to assess whether: policies, processes and procedures; roles and responsibilities; quality assurance; and, monitoring and reporting of the PSPC staffing function exist to support the Department in attracting and appointing qualified candidates. The review covered the period April 1, 2018 to January 31, 2019. It included the National Capital Area and the 5 PSPC regions: Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Western, and Pacific.
- v. Overall, we found that management controls were established with respect to PSPC staffing policies, processes and procedures which addressed the staffing function requirements as outlined in the Public Service Commission's Appointment Delegation and Accountability Instrument. However, there was the need to strengthen controls in the other areas examined.
- vi. More specifically, roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in staffing may not be adequately understood and/or discharged. Furthermore, opportunities for improvement were identified pertaining to the quality assurance function over the staffing process. With respect to monitoring and reporting, the review determined that while a draft Staffing Monitoring Framework was developed, it has not been finalized, approved and fully implemented.

Management response

We have had the opportunity to review the Chief Audit Executive's report and agree with the conclusions and recommendations found therein. We have developed a Management Action Plan to address these recommendations.

Recommendations and management action plan

Recommendation 1: The Assistant Deputy Minister of the Human Resources Branch in conjunction with the Regional Directors General should review implementation of roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in staffing.

Management Action Plan 1.1: The Human Resources Branch will develop a communication plan and issue communications to remind stakeholders of their roles and responsibilities related to staffing. These communications will reiterate that the role of organizations providing support staffing responsibilities stem from the sub-delegated manager's role and not the staffing advisor's role.

Management Action Plan 1.2: The Integrated Strategic Planning Process and the review of the different internal services functions (how they are delivered, funded, service catalogue, etc.) will most likely help confirming the roles and responsibilities of the individuals/organizations with support staffing responsibilities and potentially define their need. The Human Resources Branch will consider all recommendations and results from the Integrated Strategic Planning Process and align accordingly. A communication plan will be developed to support the initiative.

Recommendation 2: The Assistant Deputy Minister of the Human Resources Branch in conjunction with the Regional Directors General should formalize the risk-based quality assurance function that covers the staffing process.

Management Action Plan 2.1: Based on the results of the 2018 to 2019 Staffing Monitoring Exercise, the Human Resources Branch will determine the high risk elements. From this analysis, tools and templates will be updated to target the critical elements in staffing. Additionally, existing roles and responsibilities will incorporate the results of this analysis.

Management Action Plan 2.2: The Human Resources Branch will put in place quality assurance tools to ensure compliance and consistency of results. The Human Resources Branch will ensure risk-based quality assurance is conducted systematically and consistently by staffing team leads before releasing letters of offer or contracts. This performance objective will be included in performance agreements of staffing team leads.

Recommendation 3: The Assistant Deputy Minister of the Human Resources Branch should ensure that monitoring and reporting activities are finalized, approved and implemented. This would include reporting to senior management on PSPC's staffing function.

Management Action Plan 3.1: The Human Resources Branch will implement the Staffing Monitoring Framework and the Annual Staffing Monitoring Plan for 2019 to 2020. Both documents are currently being translated and will be provided to human resources senior management for final approval by June 2019.

Introduction

1. This engagement was included in the Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) 2018 to 2023 Risk-Based Audit and Evaluation Plan.
2. PSPC plays an important role in the daily operations of the Government of Canada as a common service provider for federal departments and agencies. It supports them in the achievement of their mandated objectives as their central purchasing agent, linguistic authority, pay and pension administrator, real property manager, treasurer, accountant, and integrity adviser. Given its size and importance, finding the right person, at the right time, for the right position, while upholding the integrity of the staffing process is essential to the effective management of the Department and delivery on its objectives.
3. According to Public Service Commission glossary, staffing within the public service refers to “the processes and actions leading to appointments to and within the public service, deployments, secondments and assignments.”
4. In April 2016, the Public Service Commission’s New Direction in Staffing came into effect. The overarching goal was more simplified, streamlined staffing processes based on departmental needs and risk tolerances. In support of this New Direction in Staffing, the Public Service Commission renewed its Appointment Framework.
5. The renewed Public Service Commission’s Appointment Framework allows deputy heads to exert additional discretion in their approach to staffing, and reduces administrative and reporting requirements. Departments are provided with more flexibility to design their staffing systems based on their own organizational context and evolving business needs. This approach allows managers to exercise judgment while remaining accountable for staffing-related decisions.
6. PSPC processes a significant number of staffing activities. In 2016 to 2017, the Department recorded a total of 18,794 staffing actions in MyGCHR (the system for the management of all human resources information in the federal public service) and in 2017 to 2018, the number of staffing actions recorded was 19,811. These staffing actions included all types of appointments, such as indeterminate, term, acting, internal and external from both advertised and non-advertised processes.
7. Within PSPC, the Deputy Minister sub-delegates staffing authority to the lowest managerial/supervisory level possible, based on operational requirements, via PSPC’s Instrument of Human Resources Delegation. This Instrument outlines conditions for sub-delegation, and is reviewed annually by the Human Resources Operations Sector.
8. PSPC's organizational structure to administer the staffing function is decentralized and involves 2 sectors within the Human Resources Branch: the Human Resources Operations Sector; and, the Executive Group Strategies and Programs. In addition, regional human resources services are found in the 5 PSPC regions: Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Western, and Pacific.
9. The Human Resources Operations Sector carries out a range of staffing management activities and operational services. Staffing management activities cover the development of policies and procedures, oversight, performance analytics, training, sub-delegation program, and investigations. Operational services include: support to sub-delegated persons; services to branches; and, support to PSPC staffing advisors. There are 131 full-time equivalents who provide staffing services.

10. The Executive Group Strategies and Programs Sector manages all executive staffing and executive talent management activities. There are 16 full-time equivalents who provide executive staffing services.
11. Regional human resources services carry out staffing actions for their respective regions. There is a total of 51 full-time equivalents with staffing responsibilities across the 5 regions.
12. The 2 key stakeholders involved in staffing at the operational level include individuals with sub-delegated staffing authority, referred hereafter in this report as “sub-delegated persons” and human resources advisors with staffing responsibilities, referred hereafter as “staffing advisors”.

Definition of internal audit and review

13. An audit provides a reasonable level of assurance by designing procedures so that the risk of an inappropriate conclusion being drawn based on the audit procedures performed is reduced to a low level. This includes inspection, observation, inquiry, confirmation, recalculation, re-performance and analytical procedures.
14. A review provides a moderate level of assurance by designing procedures so that the risk of an inappropriate conclusion being drawn based on the review procedures being performed is reduced to a moderate level. Procedures are normally limited to inquiry, analytical procedures and discussion. Risk is reduced to a moderate level when the evidence obtained enables us to conclude that the subject matter is plausible in the circumstances.

Focus of the review

15. The objective of this review was to assess whether policies, procedures and procedures, roles and responsibilities, quality assurance, and monitoring and reporting of the PSPC staffing function exist to support the Department in attracting and appointing qualified candidates.
16. During the planning phase, we met with key departmental personnel with staffing responsibilities in the Human Resources Branch, and consulted with representatives of the Public Service Commission to solicit their input on the expectations for the staffing function in federal government organizations. We also reviewed and analyzed applicable federal government policies, PSPC policies and guidelines, and documentation relating to administration of the PSPC staffing function and implementation of the New Direction in Staffing changes. A risk-based approach was then used in establishing the objectives, scope and approach for this review engagement.
17. The review assessed selected staffing management controls, as well as practices and activities spanning the period of April 1, 2018 to January 31, 2019. It included the National Capital Area and the 5 PSPC regions: Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Western, and Pacific.
18. We did not review whether designed staffing management controls and operational processes worked as intended, or whether they allowed sufficient flexibility to stakeholders to attract and appoint qualified candidates. The above is expected to be covered, as appropriate, as part of the PSPC Audit of Staffing currently underway.
19. Processes and controls for executive appointments were also excluded from the scope of this review since they were identified as low risk in our risk assessment. This is because the executive staffing function, which is administered by the Executive Group Strategies and Programs Sector,

is centralized; policies, processes and procedures related to executive staffing have been established; and, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.

20. More information on the review objective, scope, approach and criteria can be found in the section “About the review” at the end of the report.

Statement of conformance

21. The review conforms with the Internal Auditing Standards for the Government of Canada, as supported by the results of the quality assurance and improvement program.

Observations

22. Effective and appropriate review procedures have been conducted and evidence has been gathered to support the accuracy of the findings and conclusions in this report with a moderate level of assurance. The findings and conclusions are based on a comparison of the conditions, as they existed at the time, against pre-established review criteria that were agreed upon with management. The findings and conclusions are only applicable to the entity examined, and for the scope and time period covered by the review.

Staffing policies, processes and procedures have been established

23. Policies, processes and procedures provide an authoritative reference for employees concerning the administration of staffing to attract and appoint qualified employees. Well-developed policies, processes and procedures contribute to an effective staffing function.
24. We expected to find established policies, processes and procedures which address the staffing function requirements as outlined in the Public Service Commission’s Appointment Delegation and Accountability Instrument.
25. Under the requirements of the Public Service Commission’s Appointment Delegation and Accountability Instrument, deputy heads, who are accountable for staffing in their organization, are required to set the strategic direction and requirements for their organizational staffing functions. Specifically, as of April 2016, the deputy heads were required to establish direction, through policy, planning or other means, on the use of advertised and non-advertised appointment processes; establish requirements for sub-delegated persons to articulate, in writing, their selection decision; and, have an attestation form signed by sub-delegated persons.
26. As conveyed in the Public Service Commission’s report on the 2018 System-Wide Staffing Audit, all participating departments, which included PSPC, had established requirements for their organizational staffing functions. We noted that this included established requirements on areas of selection for internal processes; direction on the use of advertised and non-advertised appointment processes; a requirement for sub-delegated managers to describe, in writing, the basis of their selection decision; and a sub-delegation attestation form.
27. We noted that the Department developed and approved the Policy on Staffing and Recruitment (108) and the Guideline on Staffing and Recruitment, effective as of May 30, 2016, to address specific organizational context and business needs. These policy instruments also outline general roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of stakeholders involved in staffing.
28. Furthermore, the Department established the Instrument of the Human Resources Delegation which was last updated in December 2017. This Instrument prescribes the delegation of human

resources authorities. It includes the staffing-related authority, in accordance with the Appointment Delegation and Accountability Instrument established between the Public Service Commission and the Deputy Minister.

29. These policies, processes and procedures are expected to be used by sub-delegated persons and staffing advisors at PSPC. Specific additional guidance was developed to provide interpretation on a wide variety of staffing-related topics and to facilitate consistent implementation of policies, processes and procedures.
30. We noted that policies, processes and procedures are available on a dedicated “Staffing” section of the Intranet. As well, pertinent information related to staffing was communicated via the departmental weekly newsletter “*In the Know*”.
31. Overall, we found that staffing policies, processes and procedures were established. We also noted that these policies, processes and procedures were communicated and additional guidance was available to support sub-delegated persons and facilitate the role of staffing advisors.

Roles and responsibilities have been defined and documented, but may not be adequately discharged

32. Well defined and documented roles and responsibilities are essential for ensuring that employees across an organization or related to an activity, have a common understanding of objectives, requirements, and outputs.
33. We expected to find that roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders involved in staffing would have been defined and documented.
34. The PSPC Policy on Staffing and Recruitment (108) identifies sub-delegated persons and staffing advisors as the 2 key stakeholders with staffing operational roles and responsibilities. We noted that roles and responsibilities of these 2 stakeholders were defined throughout the staffing process in the PSPC staffing policy instruments. Additionally, the PSPC’s Guideline on Staffing and Recruitment notes “strategic partnership” between these 2 stakeholders as 1 of the guiding principles for staffing in the Department.
35. We noted that each branch and region was assigned a specific staffing advisor within the Human Resources Branch to assist with staffing matters. However, we were advised that some branches within the Department have hired individuals within their own branches to provide support with staffing responsibilities (referred to hereafter as “individuals with support staffing responsibilities”). Accordingly, these branches relied instead on the services provided by these individuals, as opposed to working with Human Resources Branch’s staffing advisors.
36. We were informed by sub-delegated persons that the hiring of individuals with support staffing responsibilities within the branches is due in part to sub-delegated persons’ beliefs that their staffing needs are not met by the Human Resources Branch.
37. Management within the Human Resources Branch expressed concerns that roles and responsibilities of individuals with support staffing responsibilities within individual branches may not possess the required knowledge and/or qualifications to provide management with sound staffing advice.
38. We were also informed the strategic partnership between staffing advisors and sub-delegated persons may be weakened by the existence of these individuals within the branches due to

decreased level of consultation and communication between these 2 key stakeholders during the staffing process and noted that roles and responsibilities of individuals with support staffing responsibilities within individual branches were not clearly defined and documented, and, hence, may not be understood.

39. In August 2018, as part of the Integrated Strategic Planning Process, the Finance and Administrative Branch launched an assessment of the human resources function. The objective of this assessment is to review departmental operations to better align resources with departmental priorities. This includes information gathering and analysis to determine the scope of human resources activities performed within their client branches. The results of this exercise should help to ascertain the existence/need for support staffing responsibilities in branches.
40. Overall, roles and responsibilities of sub-delegated persons and staffing advisors were clearly defined; however, there is some evidence to suggest they may not be adequately discharged. To compensate, sub-delegated managers are hiring individuals with support staffing responsibilities within the branches. While these individuals may relieve some challenges related to staffing, they create new ones and don't address the underlying issues that have led to the need for their hiring.

A risk-based quality assurance function is not formalized

41. The purpose of the quality assurance function is to provide on-going monitoring and systematic measurement to validate whether staffing activities meet quality expectations and comply with requirements. The key benefit of this process is that it facilitates improvement of the staffing processes.
42. We expected to find a risk-based quality assurance function within the Human Resources Branch to provide: quality assurance over staffing appointments; consistency of human resources advice; compliance with applicable legislative and policy requirements; as well as to address potential process and control weaknesses.
43. We found that no formal risk-based quality assurance function exists, although some activities were taking place within the Human Resource Operations Sector. The intent of the activities was to ensure that: staffing actions respect applicable legislative and policy requirements; to ensure the completeness and accuracy of data entry into MyGCHR and allow timely correction of errors identified; and to identify the need for coaching/training.
44. We noted that responsibilities relating to quality assurance were documented as part of the performance objectives of team leads in the Human Resource Operations Sector in the National Capital Area. As for regional human resources, quality assurance responsibilities were not documented with the exception of the Quebec Region. Despite this, we were informed that some quality assurance activities were taking place across all the regions.
45. We did not find a formal risk-based methodology for determining extent and coverage for quality assurance activities. Further, we found that the extent of quality assurance activities performed was determined by team leads in the National Capital Area or human resources managers in the regions, as deemed appropriate.
46. Effective November 26, 2018, all express staffing appointments are managed via My HRResource Portal, and are subject to quality assurance reviews. MyHRResource Portal is a self-service tool that allows PSPC sub-delegated persons and employees to submit and track a variety of human resources requests, pay action requests, and MyHRResource call centre pay enquiries and issues.

47. In the fiscal year 2017 to 2018, the Human Resources Operations Sector initiated a quality assurance pilot project to strengthen the quality assurance function. As part of this project, the Sector developed a draft Staffing File Monitoring Quality Assurance Guide and quality assurance tools, which were provided for testing and feedback to respective human resources personnel in the National Capital Area in December 2017. We were advised by the Human Resources Branch that the quality assurance documents are still in draft, and that there are currently no plans to implement a more formalized quality assurance function.
48. Overall, although there was no formal quality assurance function, some quality assurance activities were taking place to support staffing processes, and address potential control weaknesses.
49. PSPC is a large department with approximately 15,000 employees that processes a significant number of staffing related activities that range in complexity. An effective risk-based quality assurance function would provide an opportunity for continuous improvement in staffing services being offered to sub-delegated persons.

Monitoring and reporting activities are not finalized, approved, and implemented

50. Monitoring and reporting activities provide direction, as well as tangible evidence of progress against objectives. It is important that staffing activities are monitored on a regular basis, and that accurate and timely reports provide governing bodies with relevant information on PSPC's staffing function to measure performance and adjust staffing practices accordingly.
51. We expected to find that the Department had established an approach and supporting processes to monitor and report on the staffing function as per the requirements outlined in the Appointment Delegation and Accountability Instrument.
52. As part of the New Direction in Staffing, the Public Service Commission reoriented the oversight model, enhancing the role of the deputy heads in monitoring staffing in their respective organizations, while reducing overall reporting demands. The Public Service Commission's Appointment Delegation and Accountability Instrument outlines deputy heads' accountabilities and responsibilities for monitoring and reporting on their staffing functions.
53. The Appointment Delegation and Accountability Instrument specifies that deputy heads must conduct ongoing monitoring, and, as a component of this requirement, conduct a cyclical assessment based on their organizational risks (at least once every 5 years) and provide the results to the Public Service Commission. Deputy heads must also ensure that appropriate remedial actions are taken to address any deficiencies and must annually report to the Public Service Commission on the areas identified in the Appointment Delegation and Accountability Instrument.
54. The Corporate Staffing Directorate in the Human Resources Branch developed a Draft Staffing Monitoring Framework to support the Deputy Minister in meeting their staffing monitoring responsibility. The objective of the staffing monitoring function is to highlight areas of opportunities or risk and assess the department's staffing performance as a whole.
55. We noted that this Framework: described the monitoring process methodology; identified monitoring and reporting responsibilities; and, included a logic model. A logic model is a tool that serves as a program's road map. It outlines the intended results of the program, the activities

the program will undertake, and the outputs it intends to produce in achieving the expected outcomes.

56. In October 2018, the Draft Staffing Monitoring Framework was presented to the Human Resources Branch Management Committee, chaired by the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Human Resources Branch. Finalization and formal approval of the document is pending a decision regarding the appropriate level of approval for the Staffing Monitoring Framework.
57. In support of the Framework, the Corporate Staffing Directorate also developed a Draft Staffing Monitoring Annual Plan for 2018 to 2019 which was to serve as the blueprint for conducting the staffing monitoring exercise, and support PSPC in making strategic choices about the activities to monitor in a given year. It provided a summary of the environmental scan, priorities for on-going monitoring and performance indicators. The Plan was to be approved by the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Human Resources Branch.
58. In September 2018, the Corporate Staffing Directorate initiated its first on-going monitoring exercise, since the implementation of the New Direction in Staffing. This exercise included a review of 59 randomly selected files extracted from a MyGCHR report of appointments made between April 1, 2018 and July 31, 2018. The sample contained a combination of internal and external, advertised and non-advertised appointments, and included different regions and branches. We were advised that the results are planned to be presented to management by May 31, 2019.
59. As noted previously, the Human Resource Operations group engages in monitoring of operations through its quality assurance function. Although the objectives of the Corporate Staffing Directorate's Staffing Monitoring Framework and Human Resource Operations Sector's quality assurance function are not identical, there are similarities and overlap. As such, we noted that opportunities may exist to link the activities undertaken as part of the quality assurance function with those to be conducted as part of the Staffing Monitoring Framework.
60. Overall, efforts were made in the development of the Staffing Monitoring Framework and work is being undertaken with regards to on-going monitoring. However, the Staffing Monitoring Framework and the associated Monitoring Plan require finalization, approval, and implementation to ensure the policy requirements for ongoing and cyclical monitoring and reporting responsibilities are appropriately met. Additionally, there is an opportunity to link the quality assurance function to the Framework.
61. Delays in the approval and implementation of the PSPC Staffing Monitoring Framework may impede the ability to assess the departmental staffing function, to identify areas of opportunity or risk, and to ensure remedial actions are taken to address any deficiencies.

Conclusion

62. Overall, we found that PSPC staffing policies, processes and procedures existed to support the Department in attracting and appointing qualified candidates. However, there is an opportunity to strengthen management controls in the other areas examined.
63. More specifically, we noted that roles and responsibilities of sub-delegated persons and staffing advisors were clearly defined and documented. However, it is not clear if they are being fully implemented as we noted a pattern of hiring staff to support delegated persons. As these

individuals are hired to compensate for challenges experienced in the staffing process, their roles and responsibilities were not defined and may not be understood.

64. Furthermore, we noted that while the Staffing Monitoring Framework was developed, it requires formal approval. Monitoring and reporting activities need to be finalized, approved and implemented. Additionally, opportunities for improvement existed in establishing a formalized risk-based quality assurance function and linking this function to the Staffing Monitoring Framework.

Management response

We have had the opportunity to review the Chief Audit Executive's report and agree with the conclusions and recommendations found therein. We have developed a Management Action Plan to address these recommendations.

Recommendations and management action plan

Recommendation 1: The Assistant Deputy Minister of the Human Resources Branch in conjunction with the Regional Directors General should review implementation of roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in staffing.

Management Action Plan 1.1: The Human Resources Branch will develop a communication plan and issue communications to remind stakeholders of their roles and responsibilities related to staffing. These communications will reiterate that the role of organizations providing support staffing responsibilities stem from the sub-delegated manager's role and not the staffing advisor's role.

Management Action Plan 1.2: The Integrated Strategic Planning Process and the review of the different internal services functions (how they are delivered, funded, service catalogue, etc.) will most likely help confirming the roles and responsibilities of the individuals/organizations with support staffing responsibilities and potentially define their need. The Human Resources Branch will consider all recommendations and results from the Integrated Strategic Planning Process and align accordingly. A communication plan will be developed to support the initiative.

Recommendation 2: The Assistant Deputy Minister of the Human Resources Branch in conjunction with the Regional Directors General should formalize the risk-based quality assurance function that covers the staffing process.

Management Action Plan 2.1: Based on the results of the 2018 to 2019 Staffing Monitoring Exercise, the Human Resources Branch will determine the high risk elements. From this analysis, tools and templates will be updated to target the critical elements in staffing. Additionally, existing roles and responsibilities will incorporate the results of this analysis.

Management Action Plan 2.2: The Human Resources Branch will put in place quality assurance tools to ensure compliance and consistency of results. The Human Resources Branch will ensure risk-based quality assurance is conducted systematically and consistently by staffing team leads before releasing letters of offer or contracts. This performance objective will be included in performance agreements of staffing team leads.

Recommendation 3: The Assistant Deputy Minister of the Human Resources Branch should ensure that monitoring and reporting activities are finalized, approved and implemented. This would include reporting to senior management on PSPC's staffing function.

Management Action Plan 3.1: The Human Resources Branch will implement the Staffing Monitoring Framework and the Annual Staffing Monitoring Plan for 2019 to 2020. Both documents are currently being translated and will be provided to human resources senior management for final approval by June 2019.

About the review

Authority

This engagement was included in the Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) 2018 to 2023 Risk-Based Audit and Evaluation Plan.

Objective

The objective of this review was to assess whether policies, processes and procedures, roles and responsibilities, quality assurance, and monitoring and reporting of the PSPC staffing function exist to support the Department in attracting and appointing qualified candidates.

Scope and approach

The scope of the review focused on the 4 management controls including: policies, processes and procedures; roles and responsibilities; quality assurance of staffing appointments; and monitoring and reporting.

The engagement assessed selected staffing management controls, practices and activities spanning the period of April 1, 2018 to January 31, 2019. It included the National Capital Area and the 5 PSPC regions: Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Western and Pacific. We also reviewed relevant documentation up to March 2019 to obtain an understanding of activities subsequent to our examination phase.

We did not review whether designed staffing management controls and operational processes worked as intended, or whether they allowed sufficient flexibility to stakeholders to attract and appoint qualified candidates. The above is expected to be covered, as appropriate, as part of the PSPC Audit of Staffing currently underway.

Processes and controls for executive appointments were also excluded from the scope of this review since they were identified as low risk in our risk assessment. This is because the executive staffing function, which is administered by the Executive Group Strategies and Programs Sector, is centralized; policies, processes and procedures related to executive staffing have been established; and, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.

Interviews were conducted with key departmental personnel with staffing responsibilities in the Human Resources Branch, and representatives of the Public Service Commission to solicit their views on the expectations for the staffing function in federal government organizations. We also reviewed and analyzed applicable federal government policies, PSPC policies and guidelines, and documentation relating to administration of the PSPC staffing function and implementation of the New Direction in Staffing changes. We also conducted a survey of sub-delegated persons to solicit their views on the client services provided.

Based on analysis of the information and evidence collected, the review team prepared findings and conclusions, which were validated with the Human Resources Branch.

This audit engagement was conducted in conformance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing, as supported by the results of the quality assurance and improvement program.

Criteria

The criteria for this review were chosen based on the results of a detailed risk assessment performed during the planning phase for this project. The criteria focused on management controls of the staffing framework that are considered to be relevant and important to establishing a success staffing function.

The criteria were as follows:

- the Department has established staffing policies, processes and procedures which address the staffing function requirements as outlined in the Public Service Commission's Appointment Delegation and Accountability Instrument
- roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders involved in staffing are defined and documented
- quality assurance of staffing appointments is in place to support staffing processes and address potential control weaknesses
- measures are in place to monitor and report on PSPC's staffing function, and adjust practices accordingly

Review work completed

Review fieldwork for this audit was substantially completed in February 2019.

Review team

The review was conducted by members of the Office of the Chief Audit Executive, overseen by the Director of Procurement Audit and under the overall direction of the Chief Audit Executive.

The engagement was reviewed by the quality assurance function of the Office of the Chief Audit Executive.