

**Merit Protection Commissioner**

**Independent Selection Advisory  
Committees**



**Australian Government**

**Australian Public Service  
Commission**

## **INDEPENDENT SELECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

This brochure provides general information about Independent Selection Advisory Committees (ISACs) as a method of recruiting staff in the Australian Public Service (APS).

The legislative basis for ISACs is Part 4 of the Public Service Regulations 1999 (the Regulations).

### **Role of the Merit Protection Commissioner**

The Merit Protection Commissioner is an independent statutory office holder established under section 49 of the *Public Service Act 1999* (the Act). The Merit Protection Commissioner has functions relating to the employment framework of the APS including establishing ISACs.

The Merit Protection Commissioner is assisted by staff of the Australian Public Service Commission.

### **What is an ISAC?**

An ISAC is an independent committee that makes recommendations to agencies about the suitability of candidates in staff recruitment exercises.

They may be used to fill vacancies at the job classification levels of APS 2 to 6 (or job titles at these levels).

If the agency accepts the recommendations of the ISAC, any resulting promotions are not subject to the promotion review procedures detailed in Division 5.2 of the Regulations (see the brochure entitled *Review of Promotion Decisions*).

### **How is an ISAC established?**

An agency makes a request to the Merit Protection Commissioner to establish an ISAC.

The Merit Protection Commissioner may charge agencies a fee for services provided by an ISAC.

## **Who are the members of the ISAC?**

Each ISAC has three independent members:

- a convenor nominated by the Merit Protection Commissioner
- a person nominated by the agency which requested the ISAC
- a third member who is also nominated by the Merit Protection Commissioner.

The convenor will be an employee of the Commission with special training in merit-based staff selection. The third member will be an APS employee who has the relevant skills and experience to undertake merit based staff selection.

## **How is an ISAC independent?**

Each member of the ISAC is required to sign a declaration of impartiality.

An ISAC cannot be directed when carrying out their duties. This means that they need to form their own judgement about candidates and determine what processes and evidence they will use to assess candidates.

ISACs need to follow the general and binding instructions which the Merit Protection Commissioner has issued to guide ISACs.

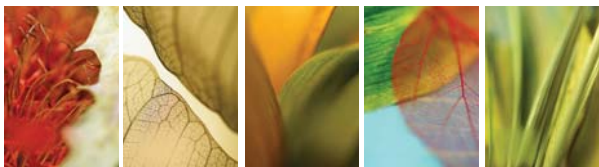
## **What will the ISAC do?**

In simple terms, the ISAC conducts a staff selection exercise. The ISAC assesses candidates, prepares a report, and makes a recommendation to the agency as to the candidates it considers most suitable to undertake the duties of the job vacancy.

An ISAC establishes the selection methodology used to assess candidates. This can include working with selection models developed by agencies, including a partnership with agency recruitment providers.

The ISAC considers the claims of all persons who apply for the job vacancy including persons who are not employed in the APS.





## **What criteria do ISACs use?**

The role of an ISAC is to conduct merit-based staff selection. This means assessing both the suitability of candidates for the job vacancy and establishing which candidates are best able to do the job, relative to other candidates. In making this assessment, ISACs consider the skills and attributes of candidates and the skills and attributes required to perform the duties of the job vacancy successfully.

## **What are the obligations on the ISAC?**

The Regulations require that ISACs:

- apply procedural fairness
- conduct their processes as quickly as possible while giving proper consideration to the claims of the candidates
- respect privacy.

## **ISAC recommendations**

As a result of an ISAC's recommendations, candidates from:

- outside the APS may be engaged by the agency
- within the APS may be promoted, or moved at the same classification level, to the vacant job.

A promotion is the ongoing movement of an APS employee to a job at a higher classification level.

Promotions of APS employees made as a result of an ISAC recommendation are not subject to the promotion review procedures.

An ISAC's recommendation is not binding on an agency but if it is not accepted then any subsequent promotion decisions are subject to promotion review.

## **Why might an agency want an ISAC?**

ISACs provide streamlined, cost-effective and timely merit-based selection processes. They can be used for selection processes of any size but are especially useful for large or sensitive processes where the maintenance of good workplace relations may be placed at risk if the process is not seen to be independent and impartial.

An ISAC results in savings for agencies by ensuring an efficient, timely, professional and transparent process at the outset without the costs of delayed staff placement decisions resulting from promotion reviews.

ISACs are flexible and able to accommodate a range of selection methodologies in consultation with agencies, ensuring that the best people are selected to fill job vacancies.

An ISAC can provide a merit list, that is a list of preferred candidates ranked by relative suitability. This enables agencies to make staff placements in respect of similar job vacancies for up to 12 months from advertisement without having to undertake another selection process.

## **Further information**

More detailed information is provided on the Commission website at [www.apsc.gov.au](http://www.apsc.gov.au).

## **Who to contact**

If you would like further information about ISACs, including questions about running a recruitment exercise as an ISAC, please contact the Commission office which covers the state or territory in which you work.

The current telephone and facsimile numbers of these offices can be found at [www.apsc.gov.au/contact/index](http://www.apsc.gov.au/contact/index).

The email addresses are provided below.

**Australian Capital Territory**

Email: [mpc.canberra@apsc.gov.au](mailto:mpc.canberra@apsc.gov.au)

**Victoria and Tasmania**

Email: [mpc.melbourne@apsc.gov.au](mailto:mpc.melbourne@apsc.gov.au)

**Western Australia**

Email: [mpc.perth@apsc.gov.au](mailto:mpc.perth@apsc.gov.au)

**New South Wales**

Email: [mpc.sydney@apsc.gov.au](mailto:mpc.sydney@apsc.gov.au)

**Queensland**

Email: [mpc.brisbane@apsc.gov.au](mailto:mpc.brisbane@apsc.gov.au)

**South Australia and Northern Territory**

Email: [mpc.adelaide@apsc.gov.au](mailto:mpc.adelaide@apsc.gov.au)

