

LEADERSHIP & TALENT

KEY POSITIONS

THE NEW STATUTORY LIST OF KEY POSITIONS IS AVAILABLE NOW

WHAT ARE KEY POSITIONS?

Key positions are senior leadership roles that are critical to the public service. Chief executives must obtain approval before appointing into a key position.

Section 50 of the State Sector Act 1988 gives the State Services Commissioner (the Commissioner) the ability to designate roles within a department or departmental agency as *key positions*, after consulting with the relevant chief executive.

The Commissioner has delegated key positions powers to certain functional leaders and heads of profession in respect of their professional areas.

Delegations are in place for the finance, human resources (HR), information and communications technology (ICT) and legal professions.

HOW ARE KEY POSITIONS CHOSEN?

“key position means a position in a department or departmental agency that, in the opinion of the Commissioner, is key—

(a) because of its potential to develop senior leaders; or

(b) because it is critical to the Public Service.

Section 50(2) State Sector Act 1988

Chief executives and the Commissioner consider potential key positions with support from Deputy and Assistant Commissioners, agency HR teams and Leadership and Talent Team in the State Services Commission (SSC).

Two categories are assessed against, using the following designation criteria:

- a) does the role have the potential to develop senior leaders *or*
- b) is the role working across the system *and* critical to either:
 - achieving government priorities *or*
 - avoiding service or systems failure *or*
 - emergency response.

To find out more about our work visit us at <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/public-service-key-positions>

STATE SERVICES COMMISSION
Te Komihana O Nga Tari Kawanatanga



Fact sheet – Key Positions

New Zealand Government

WHICH ROLES ARE KEY POSITIONS?

The current list of key positions includes only system-critical roles. There are a mix of strategy, operational, policy and functional positions, chosen because they have a significant impact across the Public Service and are critical to the achievement of government priorities, delivery of operational services, or emergency response.

Current **government priorities** include: Better Public Services results targets; more responsible finances; a stronger economy and rebuilding Christchurch.

The key positions list will evolve over time as government priorities change and capability needs emerge.

See the **SSC website** for the full statutory list, which is reviewed and updated regularly.

WHY HAVE KEY POSITIONS?

Key positions were introduced in 2013 as part of amendments to the State Sector Act to foster system-wide leadership and capability development and deployment.

As a formal lever, key positions are designed to assist the Commissioner, career boards and chief executives to:

- have visibility of the system's most critical roles
- understand the capability or "bench strength" of people in critical roles
- effectively plan the succession pipeline for system-critical roles
- take a more intentional approach to developing leaders for the positions
- use experience in these roles as a way of developing a pool of future leaders.

WHAT DIFFERENCE DO KEY POSITIONS MAKE?

For chief executives: key positions demonstrate visible system stewardship and ensure SSC's support in developing leadership and talent.

For people in key positions: job size, terms and conditions are unchanged. However such roles have formal recognition as being system-critical.

For HR practitioners: key positions are prioritised for talent management, with career boards, SSC and LDC support.

"KEY POSITIONS REFLECT A SYSTEM-FOCUSED APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT WHERE CHIEF EXECUTIVES SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR BUILDING THE CAPABILITY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE AS A WHOLE, NOT SOLELY THEIR OWN AGENCIES."

WHO IS INVOLVED WITH KEY POSITIONS?

SSC's Leadership and Talent Team administers key positions with input from functional leads:

- Secretary to the Treasury for finance roles
- Government Chief Talent Officer (GCTO) for HR roles
- Government Chief Information Officer (GCIO) for ICT roles
- Solicitor-General for legal roles.

Deputy and Assistant Commissioners support the Commissioner's overall responsibility and engagement with chief executives.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

The key positions initiative is being strengthened in 2015/16 in the context of evolving system talent management.

New material will be issued to support different audiences.

Key positions will reduce in number over time to enable greater prioritisation as part of integrated talent management.

WHAT DO AGENCIES NEED TO DO?

All changes with the potential to affect a key position should be notified to the State Services Commission or the respective functional leader.

CONTACT INFORMATION

To contact SSC or a functional lead for:

- notification of a change affecting a key position (eg: resignation, changes to job size or structure, restructuring or disestablishment)
- information, or
- help, contact:

SSC and the GCTO
leadershipandtalent@ssc.govt.nz
ph 04 495 6705

Finance
ph 04 890 7240

GCIO
gcio@dia.govt.nz
ph 04 816 4007

GLN
info@gln.govt.nz
ph 04 494 5962

LDC
info@ldc.govt.nz
ph 04 473 2222