

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DEPARTMENT OF CHILD, YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES



Position Description as at January 2006

**Chief Executive
Child, Youth and
Family Services**

The Department of Child, Youth and Family Services (CYF) was formed in 1999 to improve outcomes for children and youth at risk.

The Department of Child, Youth and Family Services delivers and funds social services to support children, young people and families at risk. The Department works to support children and youth at risk, by ensuring safety where children and young people have been harmed, investigating allegations of harm or abuse, and preventing the recurrence of harm; by working with youth offenders and providing rehabilitative services where these are needed to prevent re-offending. The Department manages approximately 5,000 children in care, conducts 35,000 statutory investigations and receives 50,000 notifications per year.

The Department is also expected to work closely with the Ministry of Social Development to ensure the development and delivery of a continuum of social services from prevention of to assisting and supporting at-risk children, youth and families. The expectations on the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Social Development will also be amended to reflect this.

The work of the Department derives from the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989. One of the key objects of the Act is:

“Advancing the wellbeing of families and the wellbeing of children and young people as members of families, whanau, hapu, iwi, and family groups”.

In terms of personal qualities, the Chief Executive needs to be confident and resilient, committed to making a difference to the lives of New Zealand children and their families. Essential to this job is strong leadership to improve the performance of the Department and contribute to the results of the sectors through effective management and measurement.

Accountabilities

The accountabilities of the Chief Executive of the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services are to:

- Ensure the quality delivery of the following key services on behalf of the Government:
 - information and education to promote public awareness of child abuse and neglect
 - statutory care and protection and youth justice services to children, young people and their families
 - development and funding of NGO services relating to the Department's primary outcomes, and
 - adoption services.
- Administer the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act and ensure that the Department operates in accordance with the stated principles and objectives of the Adoption Act, the Adult Adoption Information Act, the Adoption (Inter-country) Act, the Guardianship Act, the Child Support Act and other relevant statutes.
- Work with the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Social Development to provide timely, effective input into policy related to children, young persons and their families, and the primary prevention of harm.
- Work with chief executives in the social sector (led by the Ministry of Social Development) and the justice sector (led by the Ministry of Justice) on ensuring that the necessary linkages are made within and between the sectors, including ensuring that there is appropriate engagement with the health and education sectors during the assessment, planning and intervention phases of CYF's processes.
- Provide operational policy advice and services to the Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment (CYF) and the Government.
- Maintain the highest standards of professional and personal integrity; model and provide leadership for such behaviours within the Department.
- Effectively manage the Department's contractual agreements with community service, iwi and Pacific providers for the delivery of social services.
- Proactively front and manage communications with the wider community.

Priorities

The Department spans the justice and social sectors. The priorities to be addressed by the Chief Executive in the next three to five years are to improve the:

- management of notifications and referrals;

- effectiveness of Family Group Conferences;
- management of children in care;
- interface with the health and education sectors so that appropriate resources are available during the assessment phase and in the planning and implementation of Family Group Conference plans; and
- level of engagement with social and justice sector.

Within the Department the priority areas of work are to:

- generate and use departmental performance and management information to improve results for at risk children and youth;
- connect social work practice to policy and research capability;
- ‘costing the baseline’ to understand the cost drivers and volume within the entire system and confirm the most appropriate business model for the Department going forward;
- give priority to the completion and implementation of the Youth Justice Capability review; and
- Continue to build a culture that values consistent business processes based on international evidence including the implementation of the Differential Response Model.

Development Goals for the State Services

The Chief Executive will be expected to contribute towards the achievement of the Development Goals for the State Services. The Development Goals can be found on www.ssc.govt.nz.

Person Specification

To meet the above accountabilities, the Chief Executive will need to display all of the Public Service chief executive competencies. However, for the Chief Executive to be successful in this role, the following competencies are considered essential.

Strategic Leadership

Demonstrate understanding of the “big picture” and where the department fits in the wider sector. Anticipate situations, and recognise and seize opportunities. Adopt a proactive approach to problem resolution and demonstrate a willingness to accept change and lead their staff through change.

The Chief Executive must also have the ability to lead strategic thinking to get the system working well as a whole, including being able to grasp the role that CYF has to play in the provision of a continuum of services, in both the Social Sector and the Justice Sector, aimed at supporting children, young people and families.

Managerial Expertise

The Chief Executive must have the ability to manage a newly formed senior management team and work with them to create a positive organisational culture focused on continuous improvement in quality, and to drive the culture change through out the whole

organisation.

The Chief Executive must also have the ability to continue to improve the capability of the organisation. Experience in managing and measuring performance, in developing staff capability and in identifying and managing risk will be necessary. Technical understanding, at a managerial level, of management and financial systems will also be useful.

The Chief Executive will need to be able to manage in a decentralised environment, to support the recently implemented regional structure and to ensure it functions effectively in the future.

Change Management The task of change within the Department is not yet complete. The Chief Executive will need demonstrated change management and implementation skills to ensure that recommended strategies are effectively designed, implemented and achieved.

Relationship Management The Chief Executive will need demonstrated relationship management skills so that he or she can work effectively with and influence the leaders, stakeholders and decision makers in the social and justice sectors, including non-government organisations, judges and the Commissioner for Children.

Commitment to Achievement The Chief Executive will require personal strength to confront and deal with performance issues and resistance to change where they arise. The ability to thrive in challenging environments whilst remaining focused on performance improvement will be essential. The Chief Executive will require self-confidence, determination and personal resilience to make and carry out difficult decisions, if necessary.

Intellectual Capability The Chief Executive will need to demonstrate strong analytical, conceptual and innovative thinking to deal with the complexity of the issues the organisation is currently facing. The Chief Executive will need to generate innovative solutions that can be broken down into a realistic action plan to shift the Department's focus from a reactive to a proactive mode.

The Chief Executive must be able to gain respect, credibility and mana through her or his intellectual capability and life experience in an organisation staffed with an educated and experienced front line, who are likely to test her or his decisions for intellectual and professional rigor.

Effective Communication The Chief Executive will be a strong communicator and demonstrate both political and media savvy. She or he will need to make high impact communications through the use of convincing expression, especially in group and public speaking situations, and use sound

judgement in the choice of communication media.

To deal with the variety of CYF stakeholders, the Chief Executive will need to listen well, be receptive and encourage participation and mutual understanding.

***Managing in the
Political-Cultural
Context***

The Chief Executive must be responsive to the needs of Ministers and support and uphold the Government's strategic direction. The Chief Executive must have a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of the conventions and processes of government and how these affect the Department and the ability to manage the Department in this environment. The ability to deal with confidence and credibility within the Māori community will be important.

The booklet entitled *New Zealand Public Service Chief Executives' Competencies* provides a detailed description of the above competencies. This information can also be found on www.ssc.govt.nz.

**Statutory
Relationships**

The position of chief executive is established in terms of Part III of the State Sector Act 1988, and performs the duties as set out in the State Sector Act (especially section 32), the Public Finance Act 1989 (especially section 33), and other relevant statutes and legislation.

The Chief Executive is appointed by the State Services Commissioner, who employs and reviews the performance of Public Service chief executives.