



STATE SERVICES COMMISSION
Te Komihana O Ngā Tari Kāwanatanga



Understanding Career Boards

UNDERSTANDING CAREER BOARDS

This document provides information about the three functional Career Boards operating across the Public Service: Corporate, Operations and Policy. Whether you are part of the cohort, would like to be in the future, have a role in supporting the success of the Career Boards, or just have a general interest, you will find the essential information here. If you have further questions, please get in touch by emailing careerboard.secretariat@ssc.govt.nz.

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ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

A system-wide approach to leadership and talent development

The challenges and opportunities facing the public service require leaders who have the skills and broader perspectives to operate across a diverse range of roles and contexts. A common approach to leadership development, which shares development opportunities across the public service, is essential to quickly building the required base strength of our public service leaders.

By having a common approach, we achieve the following:

- As an individual, you will have richer and timelier development experiences across the public service to build breadth and depth to support you in your career.
- Agencies are able to easily identify and develop you and others with strong leadership potential and experience, and they will have ready access to a wider talent pool.
- By moving and developing talented people within and across agencies, the Public Service can create a strong group of public service leaders, unified around a spirit of service and capable of working across agency boundaries to serve New Zealanders better.

Career Boards

Career Boards are part of that common approach to leadership development. They are a mechanism for providing you, as talented leaders, with more targeted and deliberate cross-agency development. This in turn supports your career aspirations and potential, and grows system leadership capability to meet future needs.

There are three career boards, divided into the functional areas of Policy, Operations and Corporate, with a System Career Board across the three. Each Career Board has a chair, appointed by the Head of State Services, with board members being a mix of agency chief executives and senior system leaders.

Each member who sits on the Career Board wears a 'system hat' rather than an 'agency hat', as not every agency is represented on a single board. This drives system thinking and behaviour.

The Career Board Chairs are:

- Policy Profession Board: Andrew Kibblewhite (Chief Executive of DPMC and Head of the Policy Profession)
- Operations Career Board: Naomi Ferguson (Commissioner and Chief Executive of Inland Revenue)
- Corporate Career Board: Paul James (Chief Executive of Ministry for Culture and Heritage)

Each career board has its own yet similar vision for achieving leadership outcomes.

- The Policy Vision is to create policy leaders who support good Ministerial decisions that improve the lives of New Zealanders.
- The Operations Vision is to create leaders who will transform Public Service operations for a future that better delivers for New Zealanders.
- The Corporate Vision is to create strategic leaders who stimulate and lift public service performance through corporate service-led transformation.

What the Career Board will do for you

Career Boards will encourage you to clarify your own aspirations, and define your individual development plan with your manager and home agency. They are committed to getting to know how to best support your professional development through cross-agency opportunities. These opportunities can include secondments, shadowing, projects, governance board membership, and mentoring. Career Boards will also organise cohort events to give you the opportunity to hear from senior system leaders, get to know Career Board members and network with your cohort peers.

Joining the cohort and what you need to do

Initially, Career Boards will focus their support on 'Cross-Agency Learners' – those who have potential, with the right cross-agency development opportunities, for taking on more senior roles of importance across the system. They are also interested in identifying those who already exemplify great practice in Policy, Operations or Corporate service spheres, and who can form a Career Board 'Development Network' that supports their high potential peers. Career Boards are also likely to keep a watching eye on those in the most significant system roles, whether or not the individuals are in the previous groups. Your agency will advise you when your name goes forward for one of these groups.

Log into Talent Exchange and review your Talent Profile. Complete any missing information and make any needed updates. Talent Exchange is the way you make yourself, your career aspirations and development needs visible across the system, and to the Head of State Services. It is important that this information gets you the support you need. Talk with your agency HR team if you do not yet have access to Talent Exchange.

Spend some time getting clear about what your next ideal roles look like. Give three possible options. This is key to creating a specific and well-targeted individual development plan. Think about what experiences, capabilities and networks you need to become a credible candidate for any of those three roles. The more specific the better. Remember to complete the Diversity and Inclusion section right at the bottom of your talent profile. This is an important tool for us being able to understand the cohort's diversity.

How information is sourced and used to communicate with Career Boards

Career Boards and their secretariat use your information to identify common themes, as well as individual needs, so they can match you with opportunities and new initiatives across the system. To do this, they draw on your talent profile in Talent Exchange, which you author; information from any assessments you have completed, for example the Leadership Insights one-pager; and a high-level view of how you are perceived in your agency's Talent Management process.

Identifying your areas for development

There are a range of assessment options based around the Leadership Success Profile (LSP) that help you identify and understand your strengths, weaknesses and development areas. The LSP is the common leadership framework defining what good leadership looks like in the Public Service. Knowing your strengths and weaknesses in relation to the LSP will enable you to develop the leadership skills and behaviours that will best serve you, and the people you lead, in your career as a Public Service leader.

For leaders in Career Board cohorts, we recommend Leadership Insight Standard or Refresh assessments. These provide a comprehensive report regarding your leadership capability based on the LSP. Through the support of a coach, it will clarify your aspirations and assist you to generate a targeted development plan. Leadership Insight also gives Career Boards data in a consistent way, supporting system-wide activity planning.

If you have yet to complete Leadership Insight, talk to your agency's Human Resource team to see if this is an option for you. In the meantime, to help you understand your strengths and development areas, you can use myLSP (this is a free self-service online tool) to self-assess against your current role or a potential future role. Or you can undertake an LSP-aligned 360 feedback process.

If you have previously completed Leadership Insight, your agency will consider whether it is the right time to re-assess you through Leadership Insight Refresh. If you would like see how your development is progressing in the interim, you can do a self-assessment using myLSP or a LSP 360 feedback process.

Other Assessment Tools and Support

- Check out the Opportunities page on Talent Exchange ensuring you get the alerts.
- Check out the many toolkits and the LSP360 available through the Leadership Development Centre on the [website](#).
- Talk to your Human Resource team about options.

What to expect from your manager and agency

The primary development relationship remains between you and your manager, so you will retain your regular talent and development conversations with them and still be part of your agency's talent management process. Career boards supplement rather than replace this, instead focusing on the more strategic and common areas of need within their functional area. You and your manager will ultimately agree which Career Board offerings you will include within your development planning.

Deciding who joins the cohort

Chief Executives in each agency nominated leaders to form the initial career board cohort. Nominations are based on agency's internal Talent Management process, which you will already be involved in. The cohort consists of approximately 250 cross-agency learners, spread across the three functional Career Boards.

Changes to Career Board membership and support

Once in the cohort, Boards will continue to watch over your progress and development. However, their support will shift between active and passive as your needs change. Active support means you have a clearly identified need for cross-agency development opportunities. Cohort membership is dynamic, driven by your Chief Executive, and endorsed through a formal process by the Boards. This allows new members to be included as other individuals move on when their ongoing development is best managed in-house.

How the Public Service Leaders Group differs from Career Board cohorts

The Public Service Leaders Group (PSLG) consists of approximately 850 system leaders, with membership based on the role you are in, i.e. the largest and most senior public service roles. Conversely, the Career Board Cohort is based on your potential for filling more senior roles given the right cross-agency development opportunities. The Career Board cohort is approximately 250 cross-agency learners, most of whom are also part of the PSLG.

Changing Jobs

If you change jobs, your development needs will shift. How your new development needs will best be met depends on your needs and who is best placed to support these. You will need to communicate your updated development needs and plan to continue to gain well targeted Career Board support.

Agreeing to or turning down moves and opportunities

While some of the best development comes from options you may not have considered, it is important to deliberately target opportunities that allow you to make a valued system contribution and/or align with your career and development plan. Career Boards will expect you, with your manager, to turn down offered opportunities that are too far removed from your plan. Make sure you clearly communicate your needs to avoid 'random' offers. Career Boards may however, pause your membership if you are unavailable for any type of cross-agency opportunity, as this is the key reason to be in the cohort.

Finding out what was discussed about you at a Career Board

The first thing to note is that you are not profiled at every career board meeting. Your manager is approached for input if you are being discussed as part of a pool of leaders with similar needs. After the meeting, your manager will provide you feedback. You can expect this to include a call to action for you in relation to any new development initiatives on offer.

Changes to Career Boards

The previous career boards moved the public service to a common individual profiling approach. Maturing the system called for a strategic approach providing greater visibility of initiatives and more targeted leader development for roles of high system need. The functional approach, supported by a system-level board, recognises that most people's career journeys fit within one of the three functional areas, and allows the Boards to consider the changing leadership demands for their areas.

LEADERS AND ASPIRING LEADERS

Joining the Career Board cohort in the future

Engage in regular talent and development conversations with your manager. Spend some time getting clear about what your next ideal roles look like. Give three possible options. This is key to creating a specific and well-targeted individual development plan. Think about what experiences, capabilities and networks you need to become a credible candidate for any of those three roles. Then discuss with your manager if the career board is something you could be put forward for, and when. Ultimately, this will depend on the system roles you aspire to and have potential for, and the extent of cross-agency development you would benefit from to become a credible candidate.

Getting ahead in the Public Service through the Career Boards

Ultimately, you drive your own career so these are not compulsory stepping-stones. Career Boards are just one of many ways to access development opportunities to support your ongoing career. We put them in place to provide a way of developing Public Service leaders beyond the boundaries of their own agency. Boards can support access to a broader range of relevant opportunities in a timely way that fast tracks your development and that of Public Service leaders generally.

