

JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Financial Controller

Division: Corporate Services Division Finance & Management Information Section

Grade: F

Reports To: Head of Finance

General information

The Finance and Management Information Section (FMIS) forms part of the Corporate Services Division (CSD), which has responsibility for a wide range of services in the Commonwealth Secretariat. The division has five sections and overall responsibility for the financial management of the Commonwealth Secretariat's budget of approximately £45 million.

FMIS provides financial management and accounting services and support to the Commonwealth Secretariat. The section prepares budgets, management information and financial statements for the three separate Commonwealth Secretariat funds. It manages payroll, pensions, treasury, payments and travel and subsistence for both full time staff and contracted experts, and provides financial information to Secretariat management and the governing bodies. FMIS is also responsible for the implementation and maintenance of risk management across the organisation as well as the maintenance of the Secretariat's financial system.

Job summary

The post-holder, demonstrating strong integrity and reliability, will support the Head of Finance in implementing Secretariat strategies and policies particularly in relation to finance, internal controls, risk and audit.

The Financial Controller is responsible for the revenue, accounts receivable, payroll and pensions and travel functions of the Secretariat. The post-holder is responsible for ensuring the accurate, reliable and timely processing of the Secretariat's financial transactions. The position also includes streamlining of processes, and staff development/training.

Duties:

Supervise the work of the travel, revenue, accounts receivable and payroll and pensions teams.

Revenue

- Proactively manage the Secretariat's accounts receivable and income function to ensure the timely collection of funds and to safe guard the assets of the Secretariat;

- Responsible for overseeing the accurate and timely management of the Secretariat's accounts receivable function from invoicing to collection and reporting;
- Responsible for overseeing the management of the Secretariat's income contributions from member Governments ensuring accurate and timely invoicing and follow up procedures including reporting and notifications;
- Ensure timely and accurate preparation of the revenue and debtor schedules for inclusion in the Financial Statements for ComSec, CFTC and CYP;
- Assist the Head of Finance in responding to enquires from member Governments and other key external and internal customers by providing information, analysis and commentary;

Payroll and Pensions

- Provide support to the board of trustees of the pension scheme assisting them to meet their responsibilities;
- Responsible for liaison and coordination of the various external advisors, fund managers, and auditors involved in the pension scheme;
- Responsible for managing the pension administration contract;
- Provide payroll support and analysis to senior management and is responsible for implementing into payroll and pensions Senior Management decisions on revised TACOS arrangements;
- Ensure timely and accurate preparation of the pension notes and payroll related schedules for inclusion in the Financial Statements for ComSec, CFTC and CYP;

Travel

- Responsible for overseeing the activities of the Travel Team, which manages the global travel spend of the Secretariat;
- Ensure that a consistent and high level of service is provided to the organisation while maintaining compliance with the Travel Policy;
- Ensure that the travel programme provides value for money, operational efficiency and meets traveller needs;
- Responsible for overseeing the timely and accurate processing of advances and expenses including reporting and collection of outstanding amounts;

Other

- Prepare and ensure adherence to the monthly and year end corporate, accounting and payroll timetables;
- Support month-end and year-end close processes;
- Ensure timely and accurate production of draft Financial Statements for ComSec, CFTC, CYP and the New York and Geneva offices;

- Assist in the timely implementation of external and internal audit recommendations;
- Proactively pursue opportunities for improved service, streamlined processes, efficiency and information for decision making;
- Produce ad hoc and periodic reports to facilitate management control and decision making;
- Maintain relationships with auditors, actuaries, bankers, tax authorities, and other external bodies as required;
- Promote sound financial management by ensuring adherence and compliance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS);
- Ensure compliance with the Secretariat's policies and procedures, updating them on a regular basis;
- Manage the recruitment of the teams; and working with Human Resources, deals with disciplinary and grievance issues, employee engagement, and training and development;
- Active role in the project to implement a ERP system across the organisation;
- Adheres to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy; and
- Perform any other duties as may be required from time to time.

Person Specification

Education:

- A professionally qualified accountant, e.g. CIMA or ACCA with proof of ongoing professional development

Experience:

- At least 10 years' financial leadership and management experience gained since attaining professional qualification
- Working knowledge of IPSAS or IFRS
- Experience of working effectively with senior management
- Experience in managing a payroll team
- Experience in managing pension schemes including defined benefit schemes
- Experience in managing a travel team
- Experience in forecasting and budgeting
- Excellent organisational, analytical and problem solving skills
- Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to communicate effectively at all levels with both financial and non-financial staff particularly in relation to difficult situations
- Good IT skills, particularly with strong working knowledge of excel
- Knowledge and experience in using computerised financial systems

Competencies:

Respect for Diversity

Works effectively with people from all backgrounds.

Treats all people with dignity and respect. Treats men and women equally.

Shows respect and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates understanding in daily work and decision making.

Examine own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses and does not discriminate against any individual or group.

Encourages others to evaluate systems, processes & behaviour to ensure respect for diversity is demonstrated

Working with Others

Manages conflict and works towards mutual solutions

Identifies organisations with which to partner for specific solutions

Encourages others and provides them with the autonomy to pursue relationships

Uses personal influence to establish compromise and agreement when faced with conflict

Demonstrates balance between directness and diplomacy in negotiations

Uses influence to persuade partners and third parties toward Commonwealth Secretariat aims

Encourages and supports others in demonstrating cultural awareness when working with others

Managing Resources

Manages programme and cross team activities against specific objectives/results

Manages available resources in order to meet objectives e.g. by effective and efficient use of budget inter alia

Identifies the best method and resources when high level course of action has been identified

Analyses available resources and what activity they will enable

Takes responsibility for multi team/programme activities

Manages diverse motivations of a range of groups in large scale programmes

Decision Making

Determines what can be realistically achieved when deciding on strategic solutions

Is proactive and responsive in making decisions on complex, technical issues based on appropriate information

Considers the relevant justifications for a particular course of action

Takes context into consideration when making decisions

Makes effective decisions when acting on behalf of a senior colleague, seeking advice where appropriate

Bases actions and approaches on the root cause of an issue, rather than the symptoms

Accountability

Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines.

Ensures timely delivery of outputs within defined cost and quality standard parameters.

Takes responsibility for own shortcomings and compliances.

Supports subordinates, provides oversight and takes responsibility for all delegated assignments.

Leadership & Development

Reinforces vision throughout organisation e.g. by acting accordingly inter alia

Identifies and develops leadership skills in others

Empowers others to take control of their own development and progression

Offers sound guidance and direction on complex and critical issues

Maximises the potential of others e.g. by creating suitable opportunities for development inter alia

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