



## JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

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**Job Title:** Public Affairs Adviser to the Commonwealth Secretary-General

**Division:** Secretary-General's Office

**Grade:** F

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**Reports To:** Director, Secretary-General's Office

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### General Information

The Commonwealth Secretary-General is the public face and representative of the Commonwealth at large and is also the Chief Executive of the Commonwealth Secretariat for which s/he has primary responsibility for direction, management and accountability. As an eminent public figure, the Secretary-General interacts regularly and widely with senior representatives of governments, other inter-governmental organisations, civil society groups and the media, as well as representatives of specific groups such as youth, women, and business. In addition to the support received from specialist divisions in the Secretariat, the Secretary-General relies on expert advice and support in her/his own executive office (the Office of the Secretary-General), including on matters relating to public diplomacy and external relations as well as profile-raising.

### Job summary

We are looking for a highly motivated and talented public affairs adviser. The role of the Public Affairs Adviser is to formulate and advise the Secretary-General on the implementation of public relations strategies in order to provide exposure across the Commonwealth to the Secretary-General's work.

The role also entails supporting the Secretariat's communications strategy through developing and implementing complementary initiatives involving the Secretary-General personally. This includes identifying and overseeing the Secretary-General's participation in selected public events, and also leading in producing editorial outputs such as draft speeches, public statements and other contributions to publications and print media.

Keeping abreast of political developments and sourcing key information, a range of media sources and political intelligence and monitoring are key aspects of the role. Research, forecasting and evaluating the effects of public policy as an organisation using political intelligence.

Respond effectively to public policy threats and opportunities, review the effectiveness of previous activities.

The Public Affairs Adviser also liaises with a selected number of Divisions in the Secretariat on behalf of the Office of the Secretary-General to ensure policy coherence and coordination of effort across the Secretariat as well as appropriate support and leadership by the Secretary-General.

These duties are undertaken in close and regular consultation with the Communications Division to ensure a coordinated and coherent approach.

### **Task description**

The post-holder will be responsible for the following:

1. Produce high quality written public affairs briefing material for the Secretary-General in order to ensure that a consistent, coherent professional image is portrayed of the Secretary-General in support of the Commonwealth Secretariat's media and outreach strategies including through:
  - Drafting/editing the Secretary-General's speeches, messages, articles, and press releases and ensuring their suitably targeted promulgation;
  - Drafting correspondence for the Secretary-General of a general public relations nature; and,
  - Placement of speeches and articles in the media.
2. Contribute to creating greater awareness of the Secretary-General's work among policy makers, opinion formers and the public in general in order to ensure that the image of the Secretary-General and the Commonwealth are depicted positively. In particular:
  - Advising the Secretary-General on external relations strategies, and implementing initiatives to advance these strategies to promote the work of the Secretary-General and Secretariat in line with wider strategic objectives;
  - Developing and initiating new partnerships to create greater public impact and profile for the official work of the Secretary-General;
  - Briefing public affairs, external relations and media contacts direct when required in support of communication and outreach plans agreed with Communications Division; and,
  - Developing calendars of structured outreach activities by the Secretary-General, including identifying and facilitating key media opportunities, as well as monitoring and reporting on their implementation.
3. Create, implement and manage a proactive media strategy and initiatives for the Secretary-General personally that contributes to the overarching communications strategy for the Secretariat devised by the Communications Division (COM), doing so in close consultation with COM:
  - Arranging and responding to requests for media interviews with the Secretary-General;
  - Prepares an action plan with timelines
  - Preparing briefings and talking points for the Secretary-General in preparation for media engagements;
  - Generating media and public interest in the work of the Secretary-General by developing new and original messages, media lines and "sound bites".
  - Analysing the implications of media interventions on sensitive political issues, taking into consideration the media, diplomatic and political impact;
  - Monitor political environment and feedback timely intelligence to the Secretary-General and to all relevant internal staff
  - Monitoring daily coverage in the media across the Commonwealth for the Secretary-General's attention; and,

- Responding direct as required to media outlets in response to coverage of the Secretary-General.
4. Initiates and co-ordinates arrangements for internal Secretariat governance meetings led by the Secretary-General concerning public affairs and media matters.
  5. Initiates liaison by the Office of the Secretary-General with internal contacts in the Secretariat on selected political, development and governance policy areas where there is a particular requirement for coordination of effort and coherence under the guidance and direction of the Secretary-General. Acts also as the liaison point in the Office of the Secretary-General for selected external contacts, representing the views of the Secretary-General and advancing the interests of the Secretariat as required.
  6. Attends meetings and travels with the Secretary-General from time to time as a representative and adviser from the Office of the Secretary-General, including delivery of follow-up and accountability needs such as outcome reporting.
  7. Adheres to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy.
  8. Undertakes other duties as may be required from time to time.

## **Person Specification**

### **Education:**

Post-graduate University degree or qualification, preferably in English Literature, History or Law.

### **Experience:**

Ten years post qualification experience.

Experience of writing clear, concise and persuasive copy for a range of audiences and in variety of formats including draft reports, speeches and briefing.

Excellent knowledge of legislative and political process/workings of government combined with proven experience of successful networking, negotiation and influencing skills and ability to build effective and sustainable partnerships to achieve shared aims.

Working knowledge of the Commonwealth or related international organisation and experience in dealing with international Law/Affairs.

Demonstrable experience in covering political, parliamentary, legal, social or economic issues; appreciation and knowledge of international and or diplomatic issues;

### **Skills/Abilities:**

Strategic thinker and content planner, adept at managing deadlines and producing measurable outcomes

Excellent communication skills

Political sensitivity and a demonstrable ability to recognise, influence and manage the communications and public relations consequences of sensitive issues;

Effective at managing projects, you will possess strong communication skills with the ability to communicate complex issues and develop innovative ways of communicating.

Ability to work effectively in a fast paced environment, adept at managing organisational change.

Proven research skills

Persuasive and diplomatic manner to build clear, evidence-based arguments about complex issues to promote particular viewpoints

Collaborative working style, happy to work with others to achieve agreed objectives

Resilience and calmness under pressure

Passionate about quality

### 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.

Identifies biases in systems & processes

#### Working with Others

Regularly shares information of value with colleagues

Shows commitment to delivering on key agreements made to colleagues

Makes an effort to view a situation from the other party's perspective as well

Demonstrates awareness and sensitivity to colleagues' pressures

Utilises networks to ensure similar goals are achieved collaboratively

Develops long term relationships across cultures and/or geographical boundaries

Uses relationships to identify the best people to help in the completion of tasks

Tactfully deals with difficult people to gain buy-in and manage their expectations

### **Developing & Applying Expertise**

Takes advantage of opportunities to develop an area of expertise

Takes learning from previous experience and applies them appropriately

Demonstrates willingness to learn new skills and/or approaches

### **Adapting & Innovating**

Recognises opportunities for improvement and proposes change with impact and effect

Helps others evaluate and strengthen ideas

Quickly grasps new concepts and how to apply them

Demonstrates flexibility e.g. by working beyond own remit in order to achieve an objective inter alia

Will effectively reorganise activities when faced with changing contexts and demands

Welcomes and adapts to new ideas and/or approaches

Adapts personal style to meet the needs of others

### **Accountability**

Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines.

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

Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines (L1)

Ensures timely delivery of outputs (L1)