

2016 Spring Report 3 of the Auditor General of Canada
The Governor in Council Appointment Process in Administrative Tribunals
Privy Council Office – Management Response Action Plan, October 2016

General Comment

On February 25, 2016, the Prime Minister of Canada announced a new policy approach to Governor in Council (GIC) appointments that supports open, transparent, and merit-based selection processes that will result in the recommendation of high-quality candidates who achieve gender parity and who reflect Canada's diversity in terms of linguistic, regional and employment equity representation.

The Privy Council Office (PCO) is responsible for the implementation of the new policy on behalf of the Prime Minister and is committed to providing assistance and guidance to portfolio departments, organizations and ministers' offices to help ensure alignment with the new policy and to help support ministers in managing vacancies within their portfolios and making timely appointment recommendations to the Governor in Council.

PCO has been working closely with colleagues and ministerial staff across government and has carried out a number of communications outreach and information sharing initiatives to support the implementation of the new policy approach.

This Management Response Action Plan provides details on the guidance and support efforts that PCO Senior Personnel Secretariat has implemented in response to the recommendations of the Auditor General of Canada in *Report 3 – The Governor in Council Appointment Process in Administrative Tribunals*.

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RESPONSE	ACTION PLANNED	STATUS
<p>Recommendation 3.29 – The Privy Council Office, in consultation with portfolio departments and tribunals, should indicate in its guidance whether there are any exceptions to the process requirements, such as the appointment of judges to tribunals.</p>		
<p>The Privy Council Office Response:</p> <p>Agreed – <i>A Guide to Managing the Governor in Council Appointments Process</i> (November 2009) provides general guidance that has assisted staff in departments, organizations, and ministers’ offices in applying the government’s policy in respect of the vast majority of Governor in Council (GIC) positions to be filled. In this context, the Guide does not address the specifics of every case.</p> <p>In future guidance, the Privy Council Office (PCO) will provide information on the types of positions that are subject to different selection processes (such as the appointment of judges to tribunals), in accordance with policy decisions taken by the government.</p> <p>In this regard, the Privy Council Office will continue to provide guidance on the procedures applicable in those cases to staff in the departments, organizations, and ministers’ offices that support ministers in managing vacancies or making appointments to those positions.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) PCO to provide information sessions about the new GIC Appointments policy, including exemptions from the requirement for an open selection process, to portfolio departments, organizations and ministers’ offices. 2) Positions subject to different selection processes will be identified and guidance to public servants in the responsible organizations will be provided. 3) PCO to continue to consult with, and provide guidance to portfolio departments, organizations and ministers’ offices on procedures for selection processes to fill positions under the new policy approach to GIC appointments. Efforts to support this action will include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The sharing of information/guidance materials with portfolio departments and organizations and ministerial staff responsible for GIC appointments (e.g., templates). b) Weekly two-hour teleconferences chaired by PCO’s Director of Appointments with the network responsible for GIC appointments (i.e., contacts in portfolio departments, organizations and ministers’ offices). The purpose of these teleconferences will be the engagement with the networks of officials responsible for GIC appointments through open sharing of emerging and evolving information that will inform the drafting of the formal new policy guidance and administrative support materials. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completed (Spring 2016) (5 sessions held) 2. Introduced (Spring 2016) and ongoing (types of positions identified and general guidance provided at information sessions in April and May 2016, and in weekly teleconferences with the network of officials responsible for GIC appointments) 3. a) Introduced (Spring 2016) and ongoing (information/guidance materials (e.g., templates), to support the implementation of the new policy approach are developed and shared on an ongoing basis) b) Introduced (Spring 2016) and ongoing (20 teleconferences held as of October 13, 2016)

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RESPONSE	ACTION PLANNED	STATUS
Recommendation 3.30 – The Privy Council Office should post its guidance in a central location so that all stakeholders can easily find and access the guidance.		
<p>The Privy Council Office Response:</p> <p>Agreed – The Privy Council Office (PCO) will post its updated guidance centrally in future, so that stakeholders will have available to them the information relevant to their specific needs.</p>	<p>PCO to post guidance in two central locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A public portal / central online repository of guidance, information and updates on the new GIC appointments policy for user-friendly access by stakeholders (i.e., portfolio departments and organizations and ministers’ offices; and the public at large). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) To be hosted on the GIC Appointments website (www.appointments-nominations.gc.ca), with eventual complete migration to the Canada.ca website. A main page to be created on the Canada.ca website with key links to information about GIC appointments and other public appointments. (www.canada.ca/en/government/system/government-appointments.html) ii) To provide interested applicants with information on all notices of appointment opportunity and how to create a profile and submit an application in a secure environment; and to include general information and guidance about the new GIC appointments policy, useful links, and Frequently Asked Questions. b) An internal portal / central repository on GC-CONNEX for use by departmental and ministers’ office staff responsible for supporting the GIC appointments process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) To include interactive/social media features and collaborative tools (e.g., instant messaging; discussion fora; blogs; twitter feeds, etc.); Frequently Asked Questions; the posting of instructions and guidance information and other materials (e.g., templates). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) i) Completed (February 2016) and ongoing (posting of information about the new GIC appointments policy, with ongoing postings of updates, guidance and information); Completed (Summer 2016) and ongoing (launch of the Government appointments page on the Canada.ca website; ongoing postings leading to complete migration from the current GIC Appointments website by the end of 2016) ii) Completed (March 2016) and ongoing (launch of a secure portal where interested applicants can register to create a profile and submit their applications; ongoing postings of updates, guidance and information and notices of appointment opportunity) b) i) Completed (Fall 2016) and ongoing (launch of GC-CONNEX GIC Appointments Group portal; ongoing updates and postings)