

Communications Review Recommendations 3 & 4: Communication Competencies

**A report to the Communications Review
Steering Committee**

30 March 2010

Contents

1	Purpose	Page 3
2.	Background	Page 3
3.	Discussion	Page 3
4.	Conclusions	Page 8
5.	Recommendations	Page 9
	Appendix i Lominger Competency & workshop outcomes	Page 10
	Appendix ii ANZSCO Codes	Page 23
	Appendix iii UK GCN model	Page 26

1. Purpose

This paper presents recommendations to the State Services Commission (SSC) Communications Review Steering Committee on the work of the Competency Working Group. These recommendations are intended to provide the basis for the development of a set of competencies for integration into communications/public relations roles in the public sector.

2. Background

A communications review was initiated in 2008 by a group of senior public sector communications managers, working under the auspices of the SSC to "provide a view of the current state of New Zealand Public Sector government agency communications and provide some guidance as to where improvements could be made."

The review group presented 12 recommendations to the State Services Commissioner in April 2009. The recommendations were accepted and working groups established to advance the recommendations.

This paper reports the outcome of the 2009 Competency Working Group - addressing recommendations three and four:

Recommendation 3 *"That further work is undertaken, in conjunction with the SSC's Human Resource (HR) Capability survey team, to identify what constitutes a core communications practitioner according to the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) codes, and distributed to the HR teams that input the survey data."*

Recommendation 4 *"Work is completed, in consultation with SSC on a set of competencies for communicators. These competencies will be both technical and behavioural, using the Lominger and United Kingdom Government Communications Network (UK GCN) frameworks and include a component for senior managers."*

The working group comprised: Elizabeth Griffin, Ministry of Culture and Heritage/Griffin Communications; Dianna Marriott, Department of Building and Housing; Michael Player, New Zealand Police; and Christine Seymour, Archives New Zealand. Michael Player was subsequently replaced by Russell Pilcher from New Zealand Police (Chair).

3. Discussion

3.1 Identifying Communications Practitioner Roles

A clear and common understanding of what constitutes a communications role within the public sector was considered fundamental to the task of selecting an appropriate competency model.

The working group has used the "common definition in New Zealand" of the public sector communications function for identifying the competencies required in the roles of communications practitioners.

The agreed definition of the public sector communications function is:

"The public sector communications function enables the effective flow of ideas between an agency and its internal and external publics, to facilitate participation, service delivery and informed decision-making, and to build accountability and trust in government.

"This is achieved by developing, delivering and evaluating public agency communications based on good practice communications techniques, supported by the principles of integrity and neutrality of the public service.

This definition provided the basis for identifying the range of competencies required in the models we explored.

In the course of identifying communications competency models and exploring the application of those models in the New Zealand Public Sector environment the working group spoke with communications and recruitment specialists from the public and private sectors.

The working group's research includes assessment of the ANZSCO Codes, the UK GCN and Lominger models. Further work was also undertaken to identify a set of competencies for communication practitioners.

3.2 ANZSCO codes

In practical terms, the ANZSCO codes are more a classification system than a competency framework. While the ANZSCO model fits the New Zealand market framework it is more focused at occupational level rather than one contributing to the identification of the core skills required for communications roles.

ANZSCO codes for a communications' team member would be assessed across the coding system. For example, a communications director/general manager/chief advisor could be coded as a specialist manager (ANZSCO 139999), a technical writer (212415), public relations (225311) and web designer (232414).

The working group also identified other models for determining whether a particular role should be considered as part of the core communications framework. A significant piece of work undertaken on behalf of the Ministry of Social Development that clearly defined communications/public affairs roles was provided to the group. This work succinctly and accurately identified the distinction between core communications roles, and those roles which support communications.

Support roles include client information service and community or stakeholder engagement.

Appendix iv "Determining how to designate a role" clearly illustrates the process which can be used to determine whether a role should be described as being "communications" and thus included (or covered by) within the communications competency framework.

3.3 Communications Competencies

The working group was tasked with assessing two competency models or frameworks, Lominger and the UK GCN.

United Kingdom Government Communication Network

An insight into the UK system of recruiting public servants and the required standards needed for the distinct levels of attainment in the profession was relayed by Matt Radley, communications advisor with the Ministry of Education. Matt (formerly with the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) also gave practical examples from his own experience and provided a useful paper, *Core Skills for Government Communicators Professional Practical Framework*.

The core skills for government communicators are designed for use alongside generic departmental competence frameworks which cover the general behaviours required of staff. This core skills framework is used in:

- recruitment and selection
- performance management, and
- identifying training needs.

UK Government communicators are expected to demonstrate six core skill areas, as set out in the Engage Framework at www.comms.govt.uk. (requires logon) These are:

- Communications – drafting, layout and design
- Channels and technologies
- Business knowledge and communication environment
- Relationship/Account Management
- Strategic Marketing and Communications
- Evaluation, Research, Evidence.

The level of attainment required for each of the six core skill areas varies according to the position, with the highest levels being required for senior managers and lower levels for those at entry level.

The framework is used alongside the UK public service and departmental competencies which cover generic skills. It also sets out a clear process for evaluating candidates when applying for roles.

The UK model works across the public sector by having a range of common standards, HR processes and competencies. This common approach differs significantly from the current approach in the New

Zealand public sector where HR practice works at individual departmental level, While our HR departments share job descriptions and may have them reviewed by external parties, to ensure they are in tune with the current market, there is no across government requirements for any inclusions of core competencies.

Perhaps and more importantly there is no common evaluation, internal qualification or selection processes in New Zealand.

The requirement for a system which integrates across New Zealand public sector HR practice, rather than simply being used to describe the competencies required for various levels of communications roles in the public sector, limits the application of the UK GCN model for the purposes of this review.

The Lominger Competency Model

Lominger is based on the research of Dr Michael M Lombardo and Dr Robert W Eichinger, who created the Leadership Architect Suite of HR Integrated tools, known as Lominger.

Lominger provides a set of HR/skills and evaluation tools based around using “card sorts” to identify competencies critical to success. The products are built on 67 competencies, 19 career stallers and stoppers and seven “Global Focus” areas identified as critical to success.

The Lominger model is used for organisational development job profiling, recruitment, assessment, training, performance management, succession planning and development and can be customised to fit any organisation’s culture or operational requirements.

Lominger is already used in both the private and public sector in New Zealand as a basis for identifying role competencies.

Lominger workshops to Identify Competencies

The working group was tasked with identifying a set of competencies for communications practitioners and, as part of its research, arranged workshops for communication practitioners, using the Lominger Competency Model.

The Lominger workshops were designed to agree a common set of competencies for position guides at communication director, communication manager, senior communication adviser and adviser levels of the communication function.

The objective was to identify between six and 10 critical behavioural competencies for each of the four communication levels.

Each practitioner was asked to identify and prioritise the most critical behavioural competencies necessary for great performance in their role. Those findings provided an indication of the core competencies necessary for each communication level.

However, given the relatively small sample sizes, and the range of views - particularly from the senior advisers/advisers workshop we believe more detailed work is required to develop a detailed and robust framework.

This work would best be undertaken by a specialist in the recommended competency framework, preferably with experience in interpreting that framework in the context of communications/public affairs roles within the wider public/private sector context.

Such an approach would enable more robust competency outlines to be provided for public sector communications roles.

Workshops

Two workshops were held in September 2009. The first workshop for communication directors and managers took place on 22 September 2009. Eight practitioners attended.

The second workshop for senior communication advisers and advisers took place on 23 September. Twenty one practitioners attended. The findings of the workshops, as identified by the communication practitioners are listed below. The critical core competencies consistently identified for each of the communication groups are:

Communications Directors

- Strategic agility
- Problem solving
- Dealing with ambiguity
- Decision quality
- Motivating others
- Integrity and trust

Communications Managers

- Strategic agility
- Political savvy
- Composure
- Dealing with ambiguity
- Motivating others
- Customer focus
- Timely decision making
- Integrity and trust

Senior Advisers

- Strategic agility
- Political savvy
- Integrity and trust
- Comfort around top management
- Interpersonal savvy
- Dealing with ambiguity
- Learning on the fly

Advisers

- Decision quality
- Negotiating
- Composure
- Learning on the fly
- Problem solving
- Political savvy
- Listening
- Interpersonal savvy
- Written communications

Detailed reporting on the analysis from the two Lominger workshops is provided in **appendix i**.

Of note was the strong agreement on the critical competencies amongst those who identified as “communications directors” however, the level of consistency amongst participants decreased proportionately to the seniority of the roles being considered.

4. Conclusions

4.1 ANZSCO Codes

While the ANZSCO code system is useful in identifying and categorising the relationship between various job types, it is less helpful in identifying the requirements of those roles.

The varied nature of communications requirements across the public sector makes it difficult to apply a rigid structure or framework to identifying and categorising role types.

A decision matrix model, such as that developed for the Ministry of Social Development (**appendix iv**) is potentially a more useful and flexible approach for the New Zealand public sector environment.

4.2 Competency Framework

Of the two competency models considered by the working group, the Lominger model would be more easily adopted for describing competencies for New Zealand public sector communicators.

Lominger is already used in the public sector and operates within existing HR frameworks.

While the UK GCN approach could be applied, it offers less flexibility and would require significant change across the public sector and in HR approach and processes.

5. Recommendations

These recommendations follow on from the Review of New Zealand Public Sector government agency communications - Recommendations 3 and 4.

The working group recommends that:

- (i) The Lominger competency framework should be used as the basis for developing a set of common role/function descriptions for public sector communications practitioners.
- (ii) That further work be undertaken, with input from the State Services Commission, to refine the Lominger descriptions for the four levels of communications practitioner. This work should be conducted by a specialist in the Lominger framework who (ideally) has understanding and experience in applying the framework to communications/public relations roles. The working group understands the Ministry of Social Development has previously engaged a Lominger specialist with such background.
- (iii) Once this work has been completed a communications paper should be developed explaining the competencies to public sector communications managers, HR practitioners and Chief Executives. The paper would also cover how competencies can be applied and benefit state sector/stakeholder communications.

Acknowledgements

The working group would like to acknowledge the input and support provided by: Michael Player, Acting Deputy Commissioner, New Zealand Police; Warren Young, Senior Adviser HR, SSC; Matt Ridley, Communications, Ministry of Education; Dave Hollander and Lindsay Jackson, Powerhouse People; Paul Dryden, Public Relations Institute New Zealand; Ali Tocker, Ali Tocker and Associates; Mike Shatford, General Manager Communications, MSD; Rod Scotts, Scotts Communications; Rire Scotney, MAF BNZ HR Manager; and Sally Thomas, HR Manager, Land Information New Zealand (LINZ).

Appendix i

LOMINGER Competency model and workshop outcomes

Introduction to Competencies

“Competency models are management tools which describe the skills, attributes and behaviours which employees use to achieve outcomes at work. They are a means by which leaders at all levels of an organisation can articulate to employees what is expected or desired in how they perform their role. Fully developed competency models go beyond just description of skills, attributes and behaviour and provide advice on how an employee can learn and improve, meaning the model can be equally valued by management and employees as an aid to better performance”.

Competencies can be technical or behavioural in nature. Technical competencies are often unique to an organisation or profession, whereas behavioural competencies are usually generic and more transferable in nature and therefore tend to be more relevant to different roles and levels in organisations. The focus of this paper is on behavioural competencies.

The Lominger Competency Model

The Lominger model is based on 20 years of research. Lominger Limited, Inc was founded in 1991 by Dr Michael M Lombardo and Dr Robert W Eichinger, who created the Leadership Architect Suite of HR Integrated tools, known as Lominger.

The model represents a collaboration of research-based findings and practical, user-friendly tools, applications and development solutions, using a set of cards to identify competencies critical to success. The products are built on 67 competencies, 19 career stallers and stoppers and seven Global Focus areas identified as critical to success.

Lominger defines competency as a measurable characteristic of a person related to success at work. It can be a skill, an attribute, or an attitude. The competencies provide a common language and a way of measuring key behaviours for the purpose of recruitment, learning and development, performance management, talent management and succession planning.

Behavioural competencies are used widely in the public and private sectors in New Zealand and are an effective way of describing desired behaviours for people management practices.

Lominger provides systems for organisational development job profiling, recruitment, assessment, training, performance management, succession planning and development and can be customised to fit any organisation's culture or operational requirements.

How does this model work in New Zealand?

The Lominger competency model was selected as the preferred competency model within the New Zealand State Sector following a procurement process led by SSC. The idea being that the Lominger model would be available to all government agencies thereby creating a common approach to competencies across agencies. This approach supports inter-agency work and succession planning through common language and shared practice and was considered a cost effective measure.

In New Zealand the Lominger model is supported by SSC, as the license holder, with the decision to participate sitting with individual agencies. Awareness of the model has grown since it was first introduced with a number of government agencies using it. However, there is no requirement for government agencies to participate in this scheme.

What changes need to be made for it to work in New Zealand?

A requirement for all government agencies to use the model, as would be the case for any and all the recommendations being made by the Communications Function Review, would be necessary.

The Lominger model is a well developed and easy to use practical tool that would fit equally well with a centralised government agency. However, further work is required to develop Lominger competencies for public sector communications roles.

Identifying competencies through workshops – a practical example

Our committee was tasked with identifying a set of competencies for communications practitioners. The committee, as part of its research, arranged workshops for communication practitioners, using the Lominger model.

These workshops were designed to agree a common set of competencies for position guides at communication director, communication manager, senior communication adviser and adviser levels of the communication function.

The objective was to identify between six and 10 critical behavioural competencies for each of the four communication levels.

Each practitioner was asked to identify and prioritise the most critical behavioural competencies necessary for great performance in their role. Those competencies are identified in this report. The findings provide an indication of the core competencies required for each level but are not intended in any way as conclusive.

Two workshops took place in September 2009. The first workshop, for communication directors and managers, was facilitated by LINZ HR Manager, Sally Thomas on 22 September. The second workshop, for senior communication advisers and advisers, was facilitated by MAF BNZ HR Manager Rire Scotney on 23 September.

WORKSHOP FINDINGS

Core Competencies for Communication Directors

The six critical competencies consistently identified by and for communication directors are:

- Strategic agility
- Problem solving
- Dealing with ambiguity
- Decision quality
- Motivating others
- Integrity and trust

Other competencies also identified as important across the group are listed below, making up 25 of the possible 67 competencies outlined in the Lominger model. The numbers listed next to the competencies represent the votes the directors identified for each competency.

VISION

Strategic agility 4
Problem solving 4
Dealing with Ambiguity 4
Decision quality 3
Innovation management 2
Perspective 2
Managing vision and purpose 2
Learning on the fly 1

KNOWLEDGEABILITY

Business acumen 2
Intellectual horsepower 1

MANAGING FOR RESULTS

Organisational agility 2
Political savvy 2
Results 1

EMPOWERMENT

Motivating others 4
Delegation 2
Building effective teams 1
Directing others

RELATING

Interpersonal savvy 2

Negotiating 1

Conflict management 1

Humour 1

Comfort around top management 1

TRUST

Integrity and Trust 3

Ethics and values 1

MANAGING PERSONAL PRESSURE

Composure 2

Core Competencies for Communication Managers

The eight critical competencies consistently identified by the communication managers are:

- Strategic agility
- Political savvy
- Composure
- Dealing with ambiguity
- Motivating others
- Customer focus
- Timely decision making
- Integrity and trust

Other competencies also identified as important across the group are listed below, making up 25 of the possible 67 competencies outlined in the Lominger model.

VISION

Strategic agility 4

Managing vision and purpose 1

Dealing with ambiguity 2

Decision quality 1

Dealing with paradox 1

Perspective 1

KNOWLEDGEABILITY

Functional/technical skills 1

Intellectual horsepower 1

Written communication 1

MANAGING FOR RESULTS

Customer focus 2

Political savvy 4

Managing through systems 1

EMPOWEMENT

Directing others 1

Motivating others 2

Managing and measuring 1

MAKING PEOPLE CALLS

Managing courage 1

RELATING

Approachability 1

Interpersonal savvy 1

PERSONAL PRODUCTIVITY

Timely decision making 2

Planning 1

Priority setting 1

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Personal learning 1

TRUST

Integrity and trust 2

Ethics and values 1

MANAGING PERSONAL PRESSURE

Composure 3

Core competencies for Senior Advisers

The seven critical competencies consistently identified by the senior communication advisers are:

- Strategic agility
- Political savvy
- Integrity and trust
- Comfort around top management
- Interpersonal savvy
- Dealing with ambiguity
- Learning on the fly

Other competencies also identified as important across the group are listed below, making up 31 of the possible 67 competencies outlined in the Lominger model.

VISION

Dealing with ambiguity 5

Decision quality 3

Learning on the fly 4
Dealing with paradox 1
Problem solving 2
Strategic agility 6

KNOWLEDGEABILITY

Business acumen 1
Functional technical skills 2
Intellectual horsepower 1
Presentation skills 2
Technical learning 1
Written communications 3

MANAGING FOR RESULTS

Customer focus 3
Organisational agility 3
Political savvy 6
Results 2

RELATING

Approachability 2
Comfort around top management 6
Humour 1
Interpersonal savvy 5
Listening 2
Negotiating 1
Understanding others 1

DRIVE

Standing alone 2

PERSONAL PRODUCTIVITY

Timely decision making 2
Priority setting 1

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Self knowledge 1

TRUST

Ethics and values 3
Integrity and trust 6

MANAGING PERSONAL PRESSURE

Composure 2
Work/life balance 1

Core Competencies for Advisers

The nine critical competencies consistently identified by the communication advisers are:

- Decision quality
- Negotiating
- Composure
- Learning on the fly
- Problem solving
- Political savvy
- Listening
- Interpersonal savvy
- Written communications

Other competencies also identified as important across the group are listed below, making up 38 of the possible 67 competencies outlined in the Lominger model.

VISION

Dealing with ambiguity 3

Creativity 3

Decision quality 5

Innovation management 3

Learning on the fly 4

Dealing with paradox 1

Problem solving 4

Strategic agility 3

Managing vision and purpose 1

KNOWLEDGEABILITY

Business acumen 1

Functional/technical skills 2

Informing 2

Intellectual horsepower 1

Presentation skills 2

Technical learning 1

Written communications 7

MANAGING FOR RESULTS

Command skills 1

Customer focus 3

Political savvy 4

Process management 1

Total quality management 1

EMPOWEMENT

Managing and measuring 1

MAKING PEOPLE CALLS

Managerial courage 3

RELATING

Approachability 3

Comfort around top management 3

Interpersonal savvy 4

Listening 4

Negotiating 5

Understanding others 3

DRIVE

Perseverance 1

Action oriented 2

PERSONAL PRODUCTIVITY

Timely decision making 2

Organising 2

Planning 2

Time management 3

TRUST

Ethics and values 2

Integrity and trust 3

MANAGING PERSONAL PRESSURE

Composure 5

COMMUNICATION COMPETENCIES OVERVIEW

1. Entry level communication competencies

Core competencies identified by a representative group of communications practitioners as essential for entry level communications roles include:

Written skills
 Listening skills
 Time management
 Interpersonal savvy
 Learning on the fly
 Problem solving ability
 Functional/technical skills
 Planning
 Intellectual horse power
 Customer focus
 Integrity and trust
 Presentation skills

2. Core communication competencies for communication levels

Core behavioural competencies identified as critical for each communication level: Communication directors, managers, senior advisers and advisers, using the Lominger model.

Communications Director	Communications Manager	Senior adviser communications	Communications adviser
Strategic agility Problem solving Dealing with ambiguity Decision quality Motivating others Integrity and trust	Strategic agility Political savvy Composure Dealing with ambiguity Motivating others Customer focus Timely decision making Integrity and trust	Strategic agility Political savvy Integrity and trust Comfort around top management Interpersonal savvy Dealing with ambiguity Learning on the fly	Decision quality Negotiating Composure Learning on the fly Problem solving Political savvy Listening Interpersonal savvy Written communications

3. Assumptions

1. When recruiting, these competencies are required in addition to those core competencies required for a managerial role.
2. Does not include technical skills which will form part of the job description.

The Lominger Framework

Under the Lominger system there are 11 categories and 67 competencies. They are listed below:

1. VISION

Dealing with ambiguity
Creativity
Decision quality
Innovation management
Learning on the fly
Dealing with paradox
Perspective
Problem solving
Strategic agility
Managing vision and purpose

2. KNOWLEDGEABILITY

Business acumen
Functional/Technical skills
Informing
Intellectual horsepower
Presentation skills
Technical writing
Written communications

3. MANAGING FOR RESULTS

Command skills
Customer focus
Organisational agility
Political savvy
Process management
Results
Managing through systems
Total quality management

4. EMPOWERMENT

Caring about direct reports
Confronting direct reports
Delegation
Developing others
Directing others
Managing diversity
Fairness to direct reports
Managing and measuring
Motivating others
Building effective teams

5. MAKING PEOPLE CALLS

Hiring and staffing
Managing courage
Sizing up people

6. RELATING

Approachability
Boss relationship
Comfort around top management
Compassion
Conflict management
Humour
Interpersonal savvy
Listening
Negotiating
Patience
Peer relationship
Understanding others

7. DRIVE

Career ambition
Perseverance
Standing alone
Action oriented

8. PERSONAL PRODUCTIVITY

Timely decision making
Organising
Planning
Priority setting
Time management

9. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Personal disclosure
Personal learning
Self development
Self knowledge

10. TRUST

Ethics and values
Integrity and trust

11. MANAGING PERSONAL PRESSURE

Composure
Work/life balance

Discussion notes

The discussion notes below were taken from the senior communications advisers and advisers workshop in September, 2009.

The workshop for senior communication advisers and communication advisers provided the opportunity for further discussion on the current communication environment and critical issues facing communication practitioners.

They openly expressed concerns about the current rationalisation of communication positions in the government sector and of the perceived devaluing of the role of the communications practitioner. Some real concerns were shared about job security.

The combined group of senior advisers and advisers also jointly discussed and outlined criteria that they considered communications practitioners must have to work in the communications sector. They also discussed the competencies that made practitioners 'stand out' as successful practitioners. They are listed below.

1. Requisite skills for entry level communications Identified

The recommended 'must have' skills, or skills necessary to work at entry level in a communication role are:

- Good written skills
- Good listening skills
- Time management
- Interpersonal savvy
- Learning on the fly
- Problem solving
- Functional/technical
- Planning
- Intellectual horse power
- Customer focus
- Integrity and trust
- Presentation skills

2. Stand out skills for Advisers Identified

The recommended 'stand out' skills for communication advisers that would set them apart from other advisers are:

- Negotiating skills
- Decision quality
- Composure
- Organisational agility
- Creativity
- Approachability
- Political savvy
- Dealing with paradox
- Good peer relationships

3. Stand out skills for Senior Advisers Identified

- Strategic agility
- Dealing with ambiguity
- Managerial courage
- Standing alone
- Managing conflict
- Managing vision and purpose
- Managing and measuring work

Appendix ii

ANZSCO Codes

Background

ANZSCO (the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations) is a skill-based classification used to classify all legal occupations and jobs in the Australian and New Zealand labour markets. The system is used by both the state and private sectors.

ANZSCO identifies a set of occupations, defines these occupations according to their attributes, and groups them on the basis of their similarity into successively broader categories for statistical and other types of analysis. ANZSCO is intended to provide an integrated framework for storing, organising and reporting occupation-related information in statistical applications. ANZSCO can also be used for matching job seekers to job vacancies and career information.

ANZSCO First Edition was released in September 2006 and replaced the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) Second Edition and the New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (NZSCO) 1999 used previously in Australia and New Zealand, respectively. Updates are considered every two to three years. The last update was in 2009.

The ANZSCO System

The ANZSCO framework is based on the concepts of 'job' and 'occupation' and uses a combination of skill level and skill specialisation. Each code relates to one of eight groups with each level of code a subdivision of the preceding code.

The ANZSCO system does not measure the skill level of an individual. It is irrelevant whether an individual working in a job in a particular occupation has a certain amount of seniority, training, level of competence or not.

The ANZSCO system classifies occupations and jobs under eight major groups – managers, professionals, technicians and trades workers, community and personal service workers, clerical and administrative workers, sales workers, machinery operators and driver, and labourers. The groupings are then categorised according to their attributes and similarities. Tables setting how the codes are built are set out below. For example, specialist manager 139999, a technical writer 212415, a person working in public relations 225311 and a web designer 232414.

Possible ANZCO coding for a communications team

Major Groups	Sub-groups	Minor Groups	Unit Groups	Occupations
1 Managers	13 Specialist Managers	131 Advertising, Public Relations and Sales Managers 139 Miscellaneous Specialist Managers	1311 Advertising, Public Relations and Sales Managers 1399 Other Specialist Managers	131113 Advertising Manager 131114 Public Relations Manager 139999 Specialist Managers nec

2 Professionals	21 Arts & Media Professionals	212 Media Professionals	2124 Journalists & Other Writers	212415 Technical Writer
2 Professionals	22 Business, HR & Marketing Professionals	225 Sales, Marketing & PR Professionals	2251 Advertising & Marketing Professionals	225311 PR Professional
2 Professionals	23 Design, Engineering, Science & Transport Professionals	232 Architects, Designers, Planner & Surveyors	2324 Graphic & Web Designers & Illustrators	232414 Web Designer

ANZSCO Professionals Group Codes

8 - Major Groups	89 - Sub- groups	899 - Minor Groups	8999 - Unit Groups	899999 - Occupations
2 Professionals				
	21 Arts & Media Professionals			
		211 Arts Professionals		
			2111 Actors, Dancers & Other Entertainers	211111 Actor 211112 Dancer or Choreographer 211113 Entertainer or Variety Artist 211199 Actors, Dancers & Other Entertainers
			2111 Actors, Dancers & Other Entertainers	211111 Actor 211112 Dancer or Choreographer 211113 Entertainer or Variety Artist 211199 Actors, Dancers & Other Entertainers
			2113 Photographers	211311 Photographer
		212 Media Professionals		
			2124 Journalists & Other Writers	212411 Copywriter 212412 Newspaper or Periodical Editor 212413 Print Journalist 212414 Radio Journalist 212415 Technical Writer 212416 Television Journalist 212499 Journalists & Other Writers
	22 Business, HR & Marketing Professionals			
		221 Accountants, Auditors & Company Secretaries		
			2211 Accountants	
				221111 Accountant (General) 221112 Management Accountant 221113 Taxation Accountant
		225 Sales, Marketing & PR Professionals		
			2251 Advertising & Marketing Professionals	225111 Advertising Specialist 225112 Market research Analyst 225113 Marketing Specialist

			2253 PR Professionals	225311 PR Professional
	23 Design, Engineering, Science & Transport Professionals			
		232 Architects, Designers, Planners & Surveyors		
			2324 Graphic & Web Designers & Illustrators	232411 Graphic Designer 232412 Illustrator 232413 Multimedia Designer 232414 Web Designer

Conclusion

The ANZSCO system is a classification system for occupations and jobs rather than a competency system. While it is useful to have a skill-based classification for all legal occupations and jobs in the New Zealand labour market, ANZSCO should not contribute towards developing core competencies for communications professionals across the New Zealand public sector.

Appendix iii

Considering the United Kingdom Government Communication Network (UKGCN) model

Process

An insight into the UK system of recruiting public servants and the required standards needed for the distinct levels of attainment in the profession was relayed to the team by Matt Radley, communications advisor with the Ministry of Education. Matt (formerly with the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) also gave practical examples from his own experience and provided a useful paper *Core Skills for Government Communicators Professional Practical Framework*.

Background

The core skills for UK government communicators are designed for use alongside generic departmental competence frameworks which cover the general behaviours required of staff. This core skills framework is for use in:

- recruitment and selection
- performance management, and
- identifying training needs.

Government communicators are expected to demonstrate six core skill areas, as set out in the Engage Framework at www.comms.govt.uk. These are:

- Communications – drafting, layout and design
- Channels and technologies
- Business knowledge and communication environment
- Relationship/Account Management
- Strategic Marketing and Communications
- Evaluation, Research, Evidence.

The level of attainment required for each of the six core skill areas varies according to the position with the highest levels being required for senior managers and lower levels for those at entry level.

The framework is for use alongside the UK public service and departmental competencies which cover generic skills. The paper *Building Professional Skills for Government* outlines how and why the UK public service set about up-skilling its workforce. The list of recommendations includes establishing a framework for professional skills standards, developing new standards and qualifications where needed, and segmenting the workforce to provide each profession with occupational profiles. Investing in training and providing managers with tools and guidance were also recommended.

Recommendation number six, to ensure professional standards and qualifications are integrated into departmental human resource (HR) systems (recruitment, performance management, learning and development, pay and

succession planning) is a key point of difference with the current New Zealand system for HR in the public sector.

Matt also outlined how the job interview process worked in the UK public sector. This involved candidates giving a six-minute presentation to three senior public servants as well as providing them with, for example, a written exercise of some 1500 words or a communications plan on a specific topic. Career levels are paralleled across the public sector, according to what post a person held. Once you had your 'ticket', ie, by passing the interview stage and the other required criteria you could step-up to the next level.

A job description for the Deputy Head of Communications Group in the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) showed how this model worked in practice. This job description is quite similar to those used in New Zealand, covering the vacancy description, organisational background, job profile and the key responsibilities of the position and the person profile. Here the expectation was that candidates would meet the Government Communications Network core skills at leadership level as well as those of the DWP as outlined in the job description.

In considering this model the committee looked at the following questions:

- 1 How does/will this model work in New Zealand?

This model has the potential to work quite well in New Zealand because the ground-work has already been done in the United Kingdom. While the UK public sector is hierarchical in comparison with ours, having standard core job competencies which are then adapted for specific roles makes sense. The difficulty may be in getting the basic standards adopted across the New Zealand public sector, but with leadership from the SSC this should be achievable. Having distinctive levels transportable across the public sector, eg, from entry level to managerial, and the standardised interview process would be alien to the New Zealand individualistic approach, but worth consideration in the current government's push for back-room efficiency and collaboration across the public sector. A precedent already exists here as staff in the armed services at officer level move across work boundaries

- 2 What changes need to be made for it to work in New Zealand?

As above, acceptance by the SSC as leaders of change across the public sector to up-skill and make it more transparent would be a necessary first step. A requirement for all government departments to use and follow the model, as would be the case for any and all the recommendations being made by the Communication Function Review, would also be required. (The paper *Building Professional Skills for Government* outlining the rationale behind the upskilling of the United Kingdom public sector is in line with current thinking here for a better, smarter, customer-focused public service.) Upskilling in the communications area would come second in this scenario.

3 How does the model fit with current New Zealand Human Resource (HR) practice?

New Zealand public sector HR practice works at individual departmental level, as noted earlier. While HR departments share job descriptions and they are reviewed by external parties to ensure they are in tune with the current market, there is no across government requirement for inclusion of core competencies. The exception being the Public Sector Code of Conduct and the resulting required Essential Behaviours; these are fairly standardised. Were core competencies for communications to be standardised these would then need to be accepted as well as enforced across the public sector.

4 What are the core competencies needed for job descriptions?

Job descriptions for communicators across the public sector need clear, consistent and transparent core competencies, but with the flexibility to be adapted to person profiles as required by the position.

The core competencies should be technical, ie, knowledge and experience, and behavioural, ie, personal attributes such as leadership and relationship management, and clearly matched to the job profile.

As in the UK we generally recognise four levels of competence required in the communications function. These are: entry level, junior, senior and managerial. The core competencies should also be generic to each of these four levels.

Conclusion

The UK framework is quite clear, but quite prescriptive when compared to the New Zealand way of operating. Also, while we are considering the core competencies for communications professionals the public sector in the UK set out to improve its overall capability and the communications framework was an adjunct to this. However, this still leaves us in a position to take and adapt from the UKGCN framework.