



Report Title:	Appointment: Deputy Public Service Commissioner		
Report No:	2024-0011		
Date:	23 January 2024		
To:	Hon Nicola Willis, Minister for the Public Service		
Action Sought:	Forward the Cabinet paper, attached letter to the Governor-General and warrant, to the Prime Minister for his signature.	Due Date	As soon as possible.
	Sign and lodge the attached paper for consideration by Cabinet on 30 January.	Due Date	25 January 2024
	Refer the attached letter and warrant to the Governor-General for signing, following signing by the Prime Minister.	Due Date	After Cabinet on 30 January.
To:	Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, Prime Minister		
Action Sought:	Recommend that the Governor-General appoint Ms Gaye Searancke as Deputy Public Service Commissioner for a further five months from 31 January 2024 to 30 June 2024.	Due Date	25 January 2024
	Sign the attached Cabinet paper for consideration by Cabinet on 30 January 2024.	Due Date	25 January 2024
	Sign the attached letter to the Governor-General, and warrant, confirming your recommendation.	Due Date	25 January 2024
Contact Person:	Thor Gudjonsson, Deputy Commissioner, 9(2)(a) privacy		
Encl:	Cabinet paper; letter to the Governor-General and warrant	Priority:	High
Security Level:	IN CONFIDENCE		

Executive Summary

1. The Public Service Commissioner has advised that he intends to extend the appointment of Deputy Public Service Commissioner, Ms Rebecca Kitteridge CVO, to act as Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and Chief Executive, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, for a further term from 31 January 2024 until a substantive appointment

is made (expected to be made by 30 June 2024 at the latest), pursuant to Schedule 7 clause 9(2) of the Public Service Act 2020.

2. Consequently, the Public Service Commissioner is also asking the Prime Minister to recommend the Governor-General approve an extension to Ms Gaye Searancke's appointment as Deputy Public Service Commissioner, for a further term from 31 January 2024 to 30 June 2024, pursuant to Schedule 4 clause 2(1) of the Public Service Act 2020. Ms Searancke has held this position since 27 March 2023, while Ms Kitteridge has been Secretary of the DPMC.
3. Ms Searancke has advised that she would resign from her acting role if a substantive appointment to the DPMC role is made before 30 June 2024 requiring Ms Kitteridge to return to her substantive role as Deputy Public Service Commissioner.

Recommended Action

We recommend the Minister for the Public Service:

- a. **forward** a copy of this report and Cabinet paper to the Prime Minister for signing;
Forwarded / not forwarded
- b. **sign and lodge** the attached Cabinet paper for consideration by Cabinet on 30 January 2024;
Lodged / not lodged
- c. **forward** the attached letter, and warrant to the Prime Minister for signing;
Forwarded / not forwarded
- d. **refer**, following Cabinet consideration and the Prime Minister's signing, the attached letter and warrant to the Governor-General for approval of the recommendation to appoint Ms Gaye Searancke for a further term as Deputy Public Service Commissioner.
Referred / not referred

Hon Nicola Willis
Minister for the Public Service

We recommend the Prime Minister:

- e. **recommend** to the Governor-General that she appoint Ms Gaye Searancke for a further term as the Deputy Public Service Commissioner, from 31 January 2024 to 30 June 2024;

Recommended / not recommended

- f. **sign** the attached Cabinet paper for consideration by Cabinet on 30 January 2024;

Signed / not signed

- g. **sign** the attached letter to the Governor-General and warrant.

Signed / not signed

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. M. Luxon', with a horizontal line underneath.

Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Prime Minister



Title: Governor-General's approval of appointment of Acting Deputy Public Service Commissioner: Appointment paper at Cabinet Tuesday 30 January 2024

Date: 25 January 2024 **Security Level:** SENSITIVE-STAFF

Minister: Hon Nicola Willis, Minister for the Public Service

Report No: 2024-0018

Purpose This aide-memoire provides you with information and talking points to support you in taking the Prime Minister's recommendations to the Governor-General to approve the appointment of Ms Gaye Searancke as the Deputy Public Service Commissioner for a further term from 31 January 2024 to 30 June 2024.

Date of meeting 30 January 2024

Proposal The Prime Minister is recommending that her Excellency the Governor-General approves the further acting appointments of Ms Gaye Marie Searancke as Deputy Public Service Commissioner from 31 January 2024 to 30 June 2024.

Background

- Key points**
- The Public Service Act 2020 (the Act) provides for two statutory Deputy Public Service Commissioner roles appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.
 - Ms Heather Baggott holds one office and Ms Kitteridge commenced as the other Deputy Public Service Commissioner on 1 March 2023.
 - Ms Kitteridge was appointed to act as Secretary of the DPMC from 8 March 2023 to 30 January 2024, to enable the substantive role holder, Mr Brook Barrington, to take a leave of absence to be with his family.
 - To fill the vacancy in the Deputy Public Service Commissioner role created by Ms Kitteridge acting as Secretary of the DPMC, the Governor-General's approval to appoint Ms Gaye Searancke as Deputy Public Service Commissioner was also sought and secured. Ms Searancke commenced in that role on 27 March 2023 with a term end of 30 January 2024.

Extending the Deputy Public Service Commissioner arrangements

- Mr Barrington recently advised the Public Service Commissioner of his resignation from the role of Secretary of the DPMC, creating a vacancy in the position.
 - The Public Service Commissioner intends to appoint Ms Kitteridge to continue to act in this position under Schedule 7 clause 9(2) of the Act.
 - The Governor-General's agreement is needed to extend Ms Searancke and enable her to exercise the statutory powers of the Deputy Public Service Commissioner position.
 - It is therefore the Prime Minister's recommendation to the Governor-General that Ms Searancke's role as Deputy Public Service Commissioner be extended from 31 January 2024 to 30 June 2024, pursuant to Schedule 4 clause 2(1) of the Act.
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- Ms Searancke has advised that she would resign from her acting role if a substantive appointment to the DPMC role is made before 30 June 2024 requiring Ms Kitteridge to return to her substantive role as Deputy Public Service Commissioner.

Warrant

- In the past, the Minister for the Public Service has typically managed the appointment of a Deputy Public Service Commissioner on behalf of the Prime Minister. This includes the presentation of the warrant for the appointee to the Governor-General. The Prime Minister also provides an accompanying letter outlining his recommendation and requesting the Governor-General's approval.

Recommended appointee, Deputy Public Service Commissioner

- Deputy Public Service Commissioners bring knowledge, capability and experience of Public Service management and leadership and work as a team with the Commissioner to ensure the Public Service delivers for New Zealanders and to the Government's priorities.
- The Prime Minister considers Ms Searancke continues to meet these requirements and is suitable to have her term as Deputy Public Service Commissioner extended to 30 June 2024, bringing her total time in role to 15 months.
- Ms Searancke has a Bachelor of Laws from Otago University. Her current substantive position is Secretary for Land Information and Chief Executive, Land Information New Zealand, a position she has held since 2019. Prior to that, she held a wide range of senior Public Service roles.
- Ms Searancke is an experienced and successful leader and a respected member of the Public Service Leadership Team. She has demonstrated her capability in undertaking the functions of Deputy Public Service Commissioner and her skills complement those of Ms Heather Baggott, the other Deputy Public Service Commissioner.
- By continuing in the role to June 2024, Ms Searancke will provide continuity in the leadership of the Public Service and support for the incoming Public Service Commissioner following the retirement of the current Public Service Commissioner on 29 February 2024.
- The Prime Minister considers that Ms Searancke meets the requirements for the role, and recommends her acting term be extended.

Author Emma Shaw, Director, System and Agency Performance

Manager Thor Gudjonsson, Deputy Commissioner, System and Agency Performance 9(2)(a) privacy

Office of the Prime Minister
Office of the Minister for the Public Service

Chair
Cabinet

Extending Deputy Public Service Commissioner arrangements

Proposal

1 It is proposed that Cabinet notes:

- 1.1. The Public Service Commissioner's intention to extend the appointment of the Deputy Public Service Commissioner, Ms Rebecca Lucy Kitteridge CVO to act as Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and Chief Executive, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), for a further term from 31 January 2024 until a substantive appointment is made (expected to be made by 30 June 2024 at the latest), pursuant to Schedule 7 clause 9(2) of the Public Service Act 2020.
- 1.2. The Prime Minister's recommendation to the Governor-General to consequently extend the appointment of Ms Gaye Marie Searancke as acting Deputy Public Service Commissioner for a further term from 31 January 2024 to 30 June 2024, pursuant to Schedule 4 clause 2(1) of the Public Service Act 2020.

Background to current arrangements

- 2 The Public Service Act 2020 (the Act) provides for two statutory Deputy Public Service Commissioner roles. Under section 47(1) of the Act, Deputy Public Service Commissioners are appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.
- 3 Ms Heather Baggott holds office as one Deputy Public Service Commissioner. Ms Kitteridge has held the other since 1 March 2023.
- 4 Ms Kitteridge was appointed to act as Secretary of the DPMC from 8 March 2023 to 30 January 2024, to enable the substantive role holder, Mr Brook Barrington, to take a leave of absence to be with his family [CAB-23-MIN-0062].
- 5 To fill the vacancy in the Deputy Public Service Commissioner role created by Ms Kitteridge acting as Secretary of the DPMC, the Governor-General's approval to appoint Ms Gaye Searancke as Deputy Public Service Commissioner was also sought and secured. Ms Searancke commenced in that role on 27 March 2023 with a term end of 30 January 2024.

Extending the Deputy Public Service Commissioner arrangements

- 6 Mr Barrington recently advised the Public Service Commissioner of his resignation from the role of Secretary of the DPMC, creating a vacancy in the position.

- 7 The Public Service Commissioner intends to appoint Ms Kitteridge to continue to act in this position under Schedule 7 clause 9(2) of the Act.
- 8 The Governor-General's agreement is needed to extend Ms Searancke and enable her to exercise the statutory powers of the Deputy Public Service Commissioner position. It is therefore the Prime Minister's recommendation to the Governor-General that Ms Searancke's role as Deputy Public Service Commissioner be extended from 31 January 2024 to 30 June 2024, pursuant to Schedule 4 clause 2(1) of the Act. Ms Searancke has advised that she would resign from her acting role if a substantive appointment to the DPMC role is made before 30 June 2024 requiring Ms Kitteridge to return to her substantive role as Deputy Public Service Commissioner.

Recommended appointee

- 9 The criteria for appointing Deputy Public Service Commissioners are not prescribed in legislation. In the absence of that, considerations for this appointment included whether the candidates were honest and trustworthy, and had the necessary experience, qualifications and characteristics to perform the role which includes exercising all the functions, powers and duties of the Public Service Commissioner.
- 10 Deputy Public Service Commissioners bring knowledge, capability and experience of Public Service management and leadership and work as a team with the Commissioner to ensure the Public Service delivers for New Zealanders and to the Government's priorities.
- 11 The Prime Minister considers Ms Searancke continues to meet these requirements and is suitable to have her term as Deputy Public Service Commissioner extended to 30 June 2024, bringing her total time in role to 15 months.
- 12 Ms Searancke has a Bachelor of Laws from Otago University. Her current substantive position is Secretary for Land Information and Chief Executive, Land Information New Zealand, a position she has held since 2019. Prior to that, she held a wide range of senior Public Service roles.
- 13 Ms Searancke is an experienced and successful leader and a respected member of the Public Service Leadership Team. She has demonstrated her capability in undertaking the functions of Deputy Public Service Commissioner and her skills complement those of Ms Heather Baggott, the other Deputy Public Service Commissioner. By continuing in the role to June 2024, Ms Searancke will provide continuity in the leadership of the Public Service and support for the incoming Public Service Commissioner following the retirement of the current Public Service Commissioner on 29 February 2024.
- 14 Ms Searancke's summarised CV is attached.

Conditions of Appointment

- 15 The remuneration of the Deputy Public Service Commissioner is determined by the Remuneration Authority. The other Conditions of Appointment, including leave and other entitlements, are agreed between the appointee and the Public Service Commissioner.
- 16 The Deputy Public Service Commissioner must be able to obtain and maintain a Top Secret Special security clearance. Ms Searancke has 9(2)(a) privacy security clearance.

Publicity

- 17 The Public Service Commissioner will inform the Public Service Leadership Team. As Deputy Public Service Commissioner appointments are made by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, the Prime Minister or Minister for the Public Service may choose to make a media announcement. No media statement was issued when the arrangements commenced.

Recommendations

- 18 The Prime Minister and the Minister for the Public Service recommend that Cabinet:
- 1 **note** the Public Service Commissioner's intention to extend the appointment of Ms Rebecca Lucy Kitteridge CVO to act as Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and Chief Executive, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet for a further term from 31 January 2024 to 30 June 2024 (or an earlier date if a permanent appointment to the role is made), pursuant to Schedule 7 clause 9(2) of the Public Service Act 2020.
 - 2 **note** the Prime Minister's recommendation to the Governor-General to consequently extend the appointment of Ms Gaye Marie Searancke as acting Deputy Public Service Commissioner, for a further term from 31 January 2024 to 30 June 2024, pursuant to Schedule 4 clause 2(1) of the Public Service Act 2020;
 - 3 9(2)(a) privacy
 - 4 **note** the remuneration for the Deputy Public Service Commissioner is determined by the Remuneration Authority and other Conditions of Appointment, including leave management, are agreed between the appointee and the Public Service Commissioner;
 - 5 **note** that the Public Service Commission will inform the Public Service Leadership Team. As Deputy Public Service Commissioner appointments are made by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, the Prime Minister or Minister for the Public Service may choose to make a media announcement;

Authorised for lodgement



Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Prime Minister

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Nicola Willis
Minister for the Public Service

CURRICULUM VITAE

Gaye Marie Searancke

Employment History

2023 - present	Deputy Public Service Commissioner (Acting) Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission
2019 - present	Land Information New Zealand Secretary for Land Information and Chief Executive
2017 - 2019	Inland Revenue Deputy Commissioner, Customer and Compliance Services – Business
2014 - 2017	Accident Compensation Corporation Chief Governance and Strategy Officer
2012 - 2014	Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment Deputy Chief Executive, Labour and Commercial Environment Group
2011 - 2012	Ministry of Economic Development Deputy Secretary; Competition, Trade and Investment
2009 - 2011	Ministry of Economic Development Deputy Secretary, Organisational Development and Support
2005 - 2009	Ministry of Economic Development Director Legal
2002 – 2005	Ministry of Social Development Deputy Chief Legal Advisor/ Litigation Manager

Academic Qualifications and Professional Memberships

1990	Bachelor of Laws (Hons), University of Otago
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Management and Leadership Training

2016	Global Women Breakthrough Leaders Programme
2014	Australia and New Zealand School of Government, Executive Fellows Programme



**RT HON CHRISTOPHER LUXON
PRIME MINISTER**

**Her Excellency
The Right Honourable Dame Cindy Kiro, GNZM, QSO
Governor-General**

Your Excellency

Under section 47(1) of the Public Service Act 2020 ("the Act") two statutory Deputy Public Service Commissioners must be appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. Ms Heather Baggott holds office as one Deputy Public Service Commissioner. Ms Rebecca Kitteridge has held the other since 1 March 2023.

On 6 March 2023 Ms Kitteridge was appointed to act as Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Chief Executive, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet for a period from 8 March 2023 to 30 January 2024 while Mr Brook Barrington, the current Secretary and Chief Executive, took an extended leave of absence.

Under Schedule 4 clause 2(1) of the Act the Governor-General may appoint an Acting Deputy Public Service Commissioner on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. To fill the Deputy Public Service Commissioner role held by Ms Kitteridge, in March 2023 your approval was sought and secured to Ms Gaye Searancke being appointed as Deputy Public Service Commissioner. Ms Searancke has held this role from 27 March 2023 to date.

Mr Barrington has recently advised the Public Service Commissioner of his resignation from the role of Secretary of the DPMC, creating a vacancy in the position. The Public Service Commissioner has advised that he intends to appoint Ms Kitteridge to act as Secretary for the DPMC for a further term until 30 June 2024, under Schedule 7 clause 9(2) of the Act.

Recommendation to extend the appointment of Deputy Public Service Commissioner

I recommend that you appoint Ms Gaye Searancke to continue to act as Deputy Public Service Commissioner, from 31 January 2024 to 30 June 2024, pursuant to Schedule 4 clause 2(1) of the Act, while Ms Kitteridge continues to act as the Secretary of the DPMC. Ms Searancke will step down from her role as Deputy Public Service Commissioner if Ms Kitteridge returns to her substantive position prior to 30 June 2024.

Ms Searancke is an experienced and successful leader, having undertaken a wide range of senior roles in the Public Service, including four years as the Secretary for Land Information and Chief Executive, Land Information New Zealand. She has demonstrated her capability in undertaking the functions of Deputy Public Service Commissioner and her skills complement those of Ms Baggott. By continuing in the role to June 2024, Ms Searancke will provide continuity in the leadership of the Public Service and support for the incoming Public Service Commissioner, following the retirement of the current Public Service Commissioner on 29 February 2024. Her summarised curriculum vitae is attached.

Yours sincerely,

**Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Prime Minister**



Wellington, 30 January 2024

Her Excellency the Governor-General of New Zealand is respectfully advised to appoint,
pursuant to Schedule 4 clause 2(1) of the Public Service Act 2020

Gaye Marie Searancke

as acting Deputy Public Service Commissioner from 31 January 2024 to 30 June 2024.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'C. M. Luxon', written over a horizontal line.

Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Prime Minister

Appointed

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Cindy Kiro', written over a horizontal line.

Governor-General of New Zealand

30 / 1 / 24



Appointment of acting Deputy Public Service Commissioner

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Cindy Kiro'.

Governor-General

Pursuant to Schedule 4 clause 2(1) of the Public Service Act 2020,
I, the Right Honourable Dame Cindy Kiro, GNZM, QSO, Governor-General of New Zealand,
hereby appoint:

Gaye Marie Searancke

to act as Deputy Public Service Commissioner for a term
commencing on 31 January 2024 and ending on 30 June 2024.

Given under the hand of Her Excellency the Governor-General of New Zealand and issued this 30
day of January 2024.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'C. M. Luxon'.

Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Prime Minister