

**SENIOR PUBLIC SERVICE:  
HIGH PERFORMING MANAGERS OF GOVERNMENT**

I.	Background .....	1
II.	A Senior Public Service .....	1
III.	The Purpose of Having a Separate Senior Public Service .....	2
IV.	Structuring A Senior Service within the Public Service .....	2
V.	Enrolling the Right People into the Senior Public Service .....	4
VI.	Managing the Senior Service for Distinctively Higher Standards.....	5
a.	Who manages the SPS? .....	5
b.	Training.....	6
c.	Employment arrangements .....	7
d.	Higher accountability standards.....	7
e.	Performance appraisal.....	7
f.	Performance driven career progression. ....	8
g.	Pay.....	9
VII.	Conclusion .....	10
VIII.	Table summarizing features of Senior Public Services .....	12
IX.	Sources of Information .....	16

## **SENIOR PUBLIC SERVICE: HIGH PERFORMING MANAGERS OF GOVERNMENT**

### **I. BACKGROUND**

Finding it hard to implement public service wide reform, some governments are introducing special pay and employment arrangements for the top levels of the public service. The premium group is expected to be the lever of change. This note is intended to be a discussion tool to aid such a restructuring exercise. How select should such a ‘senior’ group be, and how will it be delineated from the rest of the public service? What is the rationale for a premium remuneration package to a group of ‘higher’ or ‘senior’ public officials?

After describing features of a Senior Public Service (SPS), the note outlines how SPS is structured and arranged in different countries. How governments attract the right people into the SPS is summarized next, followed by methods that governments use to manage this group’s distinctly higher performance. A table summarizing structure, recruitment and management features of nine SPSs is attached at the end of this note.

### **II. A SENIOR PUBLIC SERVICE**

Some governments appoint a very small group of civil servants as a ‘senior’ public service, from among whom high-level government appointments are usually made. This band of civil servants is located near the vertex of the executive pyramid, just below the ministers. The senior service usually works in national government, or in policy making units of provincial government, or heads operational agencies; and rarely works in technical areas such as law and medicine, in frontline service delivery, or as personal staff of a minister. SPSs’ job content has more of professional management and less of technical expertise. SPS’s perspective is government-wide rather than limited to a particular sector or agency. The SPS is a subset of the universe of general civil servants, to whom they are expected to provide leadership by their vision, performance, integrity and innovation. It is an enclave within the public service that receives broader opportunities, has special conditions of employment, is held to rigorous standards of performance and behavior, is paid a higher rate of remuneration, and has less job security. Because the group is variously called Senior

#### **Distinguishing features of a Senior Public Service**

- ✓ Group of officials that are appointed to top-level positions across government agencies.
- ✓ Usually works in policy-making in national government, or leads major operating agencies.
- ✓ Works closely with ministers and senior political leaders.
- ✓ More generalist than specialized in a single government function, but could be managing even specialized agencies.
- ✓ Small size—less than 1% of national civil service.
- ✓ Hurdles to entry that make it selective.
- ✓ Receives more training than general public service.
- ✓ Rewarded by higher rates of remuneration, and sometimes reputation.
- ✓ Career progress determined by performance.
- ✓ Held to distinctive set of ethical standards such as separate code of conduct.

Executive Service or Senior Civil Service or Administrative Service in different countries, the generic term Senior Public Service has been used to describe all of them.

### III. THE PURPOSE OF HAVING A SEPARATE SENIOR PUBLIC SERVICE

Improving public organizations' performance being the overall goal of governments, the SPS's role is to provide leadership and management to that effort.

The SPS can be a useful bridge between policy making and implementation. Drawing upon their knowledge of government laws, procedure and resources, SPS can present information to ministers in a way that helps them make policy choices. They can advise on what is implementable within the country's financial situation and available human resources. Experience of government organizations' functioning and their managerial perspective enables the SPS to shape and guide implementation strategies. In countries where the SPS is working well, the political executive respects the SPS's understanding of government procedures and its ability stand up to ministers to warn against legal tangles when new courses of action are being considered. Most countries maintain a clear separation between political appointments and the SPS. Except in France and the US, SPS do not serve as personal staff of ministers.

The SPS can act as the glue of government. Being a small group within a much larger civil service makes it akin to the corps of officers in the military, and cultivates *esprit de corps*. Even though SPS's horizontal mobility within government differs between countries, during their careers, SPS are likely to work in several different government organizations. This helps overcome a parochial perspective, and inculcates a government-wide perspective. SPS have been relied upon to build cohesion between government agencies. In India and Malaysia, their non-partisan role has helped control conflicts and violence arising out of ethnic and religious differences. They can provide stability in government during times of political unrest and continuity when governments change.

### IV. STRUCTURING A SENIOR SERVICE WITHIN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

SPSs are islands in the public service, and some islands are more closed than others. The degree of openness / closedness draws the distinction between the two observed models of SPS.

The *career-based* SPS, as in France India, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia and Spain, are staffed mainly by recruitment at the entry level through competitive examinations, with a very small proportion entering the corps by promotion from provincial / feeder / junior public services. The *position-based* SPS, as in Australia, Belgium, Netherlands, and U.S.A, is considered more open because appointments to identified senior positions are made from a wider pool comprising all public servants who are qualified to apply as well as those private sector applicants with relevant experience.

The career-based SPS resembles a closed club. Selected very early in their careers, candidates are trained and nurtured to become an elite administrative cadre and tracked on an accelerated career path. The advantage of a closed nature is that it helps foster a common SPS culture and value system, which in turn encourages good communications

across government agencies staffed by the SPS. However, assurance of a secure career path turns out to be the career-based system's disadvantage because it discourages initiative by reducing competition: appointments to top positions are made only from among members of this select group. It is very difficult not only for highly qualified persons outside government, but also for high performers from other cadres / services to get selected for top positions.

Its openness is a strength of the career-based system. All professional cadres in government and even those outside government can compete for selected top positions. Not only does this system open up the choice of top managers from a much wider pool, new entrants bring in their own 'culture' which promotes renewal and adaptivity in public organizations. Because this system has multiple entry and exit points, there is some risk of patronage appointments and SPS members do not stay together long enough to develop an esprit de corps similar to the closed system. Although described as more open than the career-based system, a majority of appointments even in position-based systems, turns out from among senior careerists. In the American Senior Executive Service (SES), only 10 % of positions reserved for SES can be filled with non-careerists.

Even though SPSs are cast in two distinct models, their differences are not water-tight. Especially, countries having one or other system—career based or position-based—have adopted elements of the alternate system in order to improve their own SPS's effectiveness. For example, some career-based systems have opened up to encourage competition among senior officials. Twenty percent of positions previously reserved for Korea's career-based SPS is now recruited from outside the career civil service. On the other hand, the US's Senior Executive Service (SES), a position-based system, has adopted an attribute of the career-based service. It has introduced incentives to improve SES's esprit de corps through members' greater mobility between federal organizations: rank-in-person is granted to SES members, which they can carry to whatever part of the federal service they move. (However, a 1999 survey showed that only 10 percent of the SPS had actually moved between agencies.)

SPS are usually employed in national government or its agencies. The Australian and US SESs work in national level agencies, while states develop their own personnel systems. However, there are exceptions to the general rule of SPSs working only in national government. In India, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka, SPS are recruited by the national government but shared between the center and states. In France, SPS head préfetures which are units of local government. Career-based SPSs are more likely to work outside national government: new entrants are groomed for policy-making positions by early assignments in public organizations that implement policy.

SPSs are staffed by both generalists and specialists. The career based system's managed rotation favors the creation of generalists who can quickly grasp the ropes of any organization in which they are placed. The Malaysian Administrative and Diplomatic Service (PADS) and the Singapore Administrative Service are all modeled on this principle. However, generalists from ENA and specialists from the grandes écoles comprise France's senior service. A generalist-dominated SPS assumes sufficient and

high caliber technical capacity existing in the government to operate and head the technical branches. Half of the US SES are specialists in science and technology, and they remain employed in federal agencies of their area of specialization. But some specialization occurs even within career-based senior services. For example, in both Korea and Japan, SPS entrants are assigned to a particular ministry depending upon the official's choice and scores in the entrance examination, with economic ministries enjoying consistent popularity; and the SPS often spends the rest of the career in different positions of that ministry.

SPS coexists with specialist services, sometimes called cadres. These cadres include diplomatic corps of most governments, and the superior technical corps of France. The cadred senior officials' main difference from the SPS is that they spend most, if not all, of their careers in organizations that specialize only in their functional area. Indian administrative structure has 66 cadred services including Audit and Accounts, Revenue, Customs and Excise, and Public Works, whose selection to the cadres' Groups A and B is also by competitive examination. A cadred official's career movement is common in, but not restricted to, own cadre. (S)he can be selected to Deputy Secretary and higher positions in central ministries via the Central Staffing Scheme. Based on performance appraisal reports, the Civil Services Board (overseen by the Cabinet Secretary) recommends for these appointment some officers from among a panel. The appointments then have to be approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet. However, other cadred services are represented much less in these higher positions than the Indian Administrative Service.

#### V. ENROLLING THE RIGHT PEOPLE INTO THE SENIOR PUBLIC SERVICE

Managerial focus, leadership, innovation, communication, and professional competence occur frequently among attributes that governments seek in the SPS. The SPS is meant to be more performance oriented and less process compliant than the general public service. SPS selection is about identifying good managers of the public sector.

The career-based SPS system assumes that high academic achievers can acquire 'soft' skills and knowledge of government via training and career management. These, and the sophisticated political judgment they acquire through working closely with the political executive, are intended to create successful public sector managers. Therefore, selection is early, according to academic excellence criteria, by competitive examination from among university graduates (and civil servants at a very early stage in their careers). Half of those who enter France's Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENA), whose graduates become the SPS, are university graduates with average age of 24. In India, candidates applying for the Indian Administrative Service in the general or unreserved category must be under 26 years of age. In contrast, the position-based system identifies those who have already demonstrated their professional competence and managerial skills. Behavior and performance in past assignments are the criteria for selection. Therefore, selection to SPS comes at a much later stage than in the career system, often in the second half of their careers. In the US federal service, potential applicants from grades GS 14 and 15 (the two highest grades of the general schedule) are given coached and trained for selection to the SES.

Merit is the basis of selection in both systems. In the mandarin system, competition is intense, and only very few of those who take the entrance examination are actually recruited in the SPS. In Japan, only about 2.5% of those who take the examination are offered jobs. In France there is intense competition for admission to ENA and the grandes écoles from where higher civil servants are recruited. In India, only 0.1% of examinees are selected to the generalist cadre of the Indian Administrative Service. Selection is also rigorous in position-based systems. In Belgium, SPS candidates are first screened by an independent head hunting firm using standardized tests and interviews, and behavior in simulated situations. Next, the candidates are individually interviewed by a selection committee chaired by the recruiting department's representative. Finally, the selection committee and the head hunting firm compare notes and rank the candidates, with equal weighting from the independent assessment and selection committee interview.

Transparency is increasingly a keyword of the selection process. Screenings are by committees, and panels conduct interviews. People from outside the recruiting agency and outside government are included in the selection process. Singapore's Public Service Commission, which oversees the selection of Singapore Administrative Service and all public service positions in Super-scale D and above, has five business leaders, a physician and an attorney among its eight members. Merit and transparency are also enforced and overseen by the independent bodies such as Public Service Commissions (PSCs) during entry into SPS from the provincial / feeder services.

In keeping with its selective character, the SPS is very small compared with the general civil service – typically less than 1% of the federal civil service. Numbers in the SPS range from 300 in New Zealand and 490 in Singapore to 5000 in India and 7700 in USA. Worldwide, the trend is towards a smaller SPS. The size of Canada's executive group fell by 12% between 1985 and 1994. In Brazil, strict regulation governs the total number of DAS positions that can receive the special compensation package. Belgium's Copernic reforms reduced its SPS size from 2000 to the current strength of 450.

Governments manage diversity in their SPSs. In Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Sweden, and the United States, there have been explicit attempts to increase diversity by attracting more women and persons from ethnic or language groups that are under-represented. In New Zealand, the aim is to ensure adequate Maori representation in all positions, including heads of departments. The Canadian government's stated policy is equitable representation of designated groups, and the PSC reviews the percentage of designated groups in the staff of each department. Positions are reserved for ethnic Malays in the PADS, and for scheduled castes and tribes in the Indian Administrative Service.

## VI. MANAGING THE SENIOR SERVICE FOR DISTINCTIVELY HIGHER STANDARDS

### a. Who manages the SPS?

The management of SPS is usually shared between the line ministry in charge of public service, which is in charge of SPS's personnel management, and an independent, arms

length body such as PSC, which ensures good governance in that management. In UK, the Senior Civil Service Group in the Cabinet Office is responsible for promotions and career development, while the Civil Service Commissioners ensure merit-based appointment by overseeing the selection process, enforce the Civil Service Code, and hear appeals. In Sri Lanka, the Public Service Commission is responsible for recruitment of the Sri Lanka Administrative Service (SLAS), while the Ministry of Public Administration, Management and Reforms is the is in charge of transfers and promotions.

Career management is more decentralized in the position-based system compared with the career-based system. Appointment to the US SES is decentralized: federal departments themselves can follow OPM standards to designate positions as SES, as well as hire SES candidates from among those certified by OPM. In U.K., each ministry decides which positions are part of the Senior Civil Service. By contrast, the public service line ministry centrally manages SPS's mobility and promotion in the career-based service. Such centrally managed mobility builds SPS's esprit de corps. In India and Sri Lanka, where the arrangement was originally designed to make optimum utilization of scarce managerial capacity, it has become a powerful tool for the political executive to reward and punish SPS.

Countries that rely on the SPS to lead the general public service must also plan for its right size to adequately staff positions designated as 'senior'. New recruitment needs to be continuously adjusted to the existing age profile, forthcoming retirements and resultant vacancies; so succession planning is an important ingredient of SPS management. The Canadian government fills top positions at Deputy Minister level (highest level civil servant in a ministry), based on a strategy of actively identifying and training executives who have the right potential. US federal agencies are encouraged by the OPM to engage in advance planning to meet projected vacancies. UK's departments conduct succession planning exercises each year to assess future staffing needs at senior levels and the available supply of people.

#### **b. Training**

As SPS are expected to lead new initiatives, training plays a larger role in their career management than it does for the general public service. Some SPS, such as in India and Singapore, cannot take up their positions until they have undergone essential training. France's SPS is trained for 27 months in the ENA and other recruitment schools before they take up assignments in government. Officials of Singapore's senior service must attend at least 100 hours of training each year. The US's Federal Executive Institute conducts SES training after which OPM certifies their eligibility for entry into SES.

Developing management capacity is a common objective of training for SPS, although they are also trained in specialized areas according to changing needs to government or when they are required to lead government-wide changes. Recognizing that officials at different stages of their career have different training needs, India's National Academy of Administration conducts separate courses designed for those with 6 to 9 years of service, 10 to 6 years, and 17 to 20.

The level and variety of training required for an effective SPS requires that training institutes have the capacity to design and deliver the training, so development of training organizations needs to move in step with—or even a step ahead of—building an effective SPS. In the past, newly independent countries relied on training abroad for training SPS. Currently, foreign training—such as Korea’s Government Fellowship Program for Overseas Study that sends young officials to universities and research institutes for post-graduate study—is a small part of SPS training.

**c. Employment arrangements**

Career-based SPS are employed from recruitment until the age of retirement. The US’s SES are on open-ended contracts. Fixed-term contracts are offered in Australia, New Zealand and Sweden. Under its Public Service Act, Australia’s secretaries of government departments are appointed on a contract basis, for a maximum of five years. In New Zealand, the contract for chief executives is with the State Services Commissioner, and usually for five years. Since 1996, all members of the new British Senior Civil Service are covered by personal contracts, generally for an indefinite period. Contract provisions set out the terms and conditions of employment, tenure, remuneration, performance requirements and termination.

To prevent a closed culture, and open up government management to new ideas, some career based SPS are allowed to work outside of government for a limited period to gain the ‘other’ perspective. Indian Administrative Service officers are allowed to work in the private sector or with multilateral organizations for up to five years. Korea’s new Personnel Exchange Scheme is intended to exchange talent between the public and private sector. Civil servants in Grades 4 and 5 are given 3 years leave to work in the private sector and return to their public service career.

**d. Higher accountability standards**

SPS are often held to higher accountability standards compared with the rest of the public service which they are expected to lead by example. Also, working in positions of considerable influence and close to the political executive, they are more likely to encounter conflict of interest situations. SPS’s regulations or legal framework usually lays down standards for interacting with media, declaration of wealth and assets, participating in political activities, and conflict of interest such as themselves or family members having interest in firms that do business with government. India’s SPS are guided by the All India Services Conduct Rules of 1968. A new model code of conduct for UK’s Ministers and senior civil servants was established in 1995 following the recommendations of the Lord Nolan Report on Standards.

**e. Performance appraisal**

Performance orientation sets the SPS apart from the general public service, so performance—its appraisal and centrality in career management—is an integral part of SPS management.

*Performance standards are laid down in advance.* The US’s Government Performance and Results Act, 1993 requires that agencies must establish

Performance Review Boards to make recommendations to the appointing official on performance of executives, including recommendations on performance ratings and bonuses.

*Performance is appraised rigorously.* In Japan, merit ratings of personnel are very strict and evaluations are not only by supervisors, but also by subordinates and colleagues. New Zealand's State Services Commissioner assesses each chief executive against the performance agreement, using a variety of sources (responsible minister, central agencies, self assessment), The assessment is followed by a face-to-face meeting of the official being appraised with the State Services Commissioner.

*Performance appraisal is objective and transparent.* In Australia, SES's work responsibilities, objectives and performance indicators are first agreed between the official and supervisor. At the end of the performance cycle, the SPS and supervisor together discuss SPS's performance, Then the supervisor rates the SPS's performance according to agreed indicators and along the agency's scale. The appraisal forms the basis for SPS's eligibility to performance-based-pay and career movement. In contrast, India's IAS are still appraised in confidential reports, which the supervisors do not share with the officer being appraised. Officers are allowed to see the supervisor's appraisal only when an adverse remark is made and the officer is allowed to lay his case before a reviewer.

Customer orientation is considered part of SPS performance. Both Canada's Public Service 2000 initiative and Singapore's Public Service for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century initiative were designed to improve government managers' relevance and responsiveness, and include these in officials' assessment. India's IAS officers are evaluated on their responsiveness towards disadvantaged groups in society.

**f. Performance driven career progression.**

SPS career progression depends on performance. In the position-based system, the link between performance and career advancement is strong because all eligible SPS can apply for top posts. In the career-based system, which lacks lateral entry, most SPS positions are filled by promotion from within SPS, but career progression is not automatic, not do all SPS progress at the same rate. In Singapore, SPSs are ranked according to laid down criteria, and those who demonstrate higher performance move further and faster via what is locally termed 'helicopter movement'. In India's IAS, only those officers who have demonstrated high performance in the first 20 years of their careers cross a major career hurdle to form a panel for promotion to Joint Secretary.

Performance also identifies potential officials for the SPS. UK's Fast Stream provides training and development for staff considered likely to merit early promotion to the SPS. As part of Canada's Career Assignment Program, the PSC identifies executives at the EX-1 to EX-3 levels who demonstrate strong leadership potential and may become assistant deputy ministers, and invests in their development and progression.

SPS's poor performers receive lower classification or are terminated. Australia's SES regression provisions provide a framework for managing under-performance of their SES. Based on assessment of performance, the department's Secretary can determine a lower salary within a band or reduce the officer's classification within the SES band structure with PSC approval. Officers of the IAS and SLAS with low performance or integrity can be involuntarily retired after twenty years of service. The US's SES are periodically re-certified, and under-performing SES do not receive certification.

#### **g. Pay**

SPS pay sometimes has a small component that is determined by performance. The link between SPS pay and performance is not a new concept. Even as early as in 1978, one of the stated objectives of creating the US's SES was to use pay-for-performance measures to reward senior managers. Performance was introduced as a determinant of SPS pay by UK and New Zealand governments during the late 1980s and in the 1990s. While calculating total remuneration, the weight given to seniority was reduced, and a performance component was brought in. New Zealand chief executives can be rewarded up to 15% of base pay if their departments meet the targets of the strategic incentive plan. As part of Canada's *Performance Management Plan* instituted during 2000-2001, discretionary lump sum amounts of 10 to 25 percent of pay can be paid to SPS. In the Malaysian Remuneration System (MRS), introduced in 1992, annual salary progression is determined officials' performance, and not by seniority, with four types of salary progression: *static* for unsatisfactory performance, *horizontal* for satisfactory performance, *vertical* for good performance and *diagonal* for excellent performance. The Annual Merit Increment for Korea's SPS was established in 1999: merit increment comprises a fixed salary component and a variable, performance-related component. The performance-related component is decided by the minister according to performance appraisal by a management by objective system. Malta has introduced performance pay for top three levels of its SPS.

Salary-banding and other mechanisms allow governments the flexibility to pay differentiated remuneration within a range, to SPS. In the UK, SPS jobs are evaluated by using Job Evaluation for Senior Posts (JESP) that contains nine overlapping bands of job and pay. An independent Senior Salaries Review Body makes recommendations on pay levels and a performance-related pay progression. The US's Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is now designing regulations for implementing the SES's pay-for-performance. Agencies that meet criteria established by the OPM will be allowed to raise the cap on both SES salaries and on the total of salary and bonuses.

Flexibility in SPS pay can also translate into decline in remuneration. The Singapore government pegs salaries of ministers and senior civil servants to those in the private sector. The total compensation package has four components: basic wage, non-pensionable variable payment (NPVP), monthly variable component (MVC) and variable 13th month non-pensionable annual allowance. In times of poor economic performance, the last three components are affected and have become reduced.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Even though useful, the SPS is not an indispensable tool of good government. It is an administrative tradition that many countries—Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, U.K. and U.S.A among them—have utilized as a lever that can move the much larger public service. Many countries, on the other hand, such as Austria and Finland in Europe, and Bolivia, Ecuador and Mexico in Latin America have not instituted an SPS. Although popular with many colonial administrations during the twentieth century, ex- colonies of Britain such as Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda do not have any SPS. It is often absent in countries where political appointments outweigh career civil servants' at the top levels of administration; or where an egalitarian approach conflicts with the notion of such an elitist enclave.

Where SPSs exist, their structures and arrangements are evolving according to the host countries' changing priorities and needs. Argentina began the tradition during the 1980s with the *Administradores Gubernamentales*, but soon discontinued it. Pakistan has moved away from an SPS after inheriting it at independence from the British colonial government. In 2001, the government decided to abolish the District Management Group as a reason for devolving greater power to local governments. Even countries, with a long tradition of SPS, have made many changes. The U.K. now has a hybrid model in which senior directors, political advisors and agency directors (grades 1 through 5 in the former structure) are part of the Senior Civil Service, as are university graduates and promising executives recruited via the Fast Stream program.

Is the career-based or position-based SPS more suited to the needs of a developing country? The career based systems have a longer history, and those countries' choice in favor of the career-based SPS was made at a time of scarce managerial capacity in government. This was true of France in early twentieth century, of Japan in 1945, and of newly independent British colonies like Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Singapore. Thus there was need to identify a few potential managers, and to train and nurture them. The position-based systems are younger in comparison, having been introduced mainly during the 1980s and 1990s, when executive capacity both in and outside government was readily available.

Competition is emphasized in modern public sector management, and this could tilt the choice in favor of a position-based SPS where all senior public servants and interested applicants from the private sector compete for top positions. But this kind of competition will successfully appoint the best available talent only when there exists a well-functioning market of managerial talent, with abundant opportunities outside the public sector. This exists in OECD countries where most position-based SPS are located. Without these preconditions, patronage-based appointments can create a SPS that is loyal to individuals.

Both career-based and position-based systems can be captured by a self-serving administrative elite that rewards itself. Blocking lateral entry can make this happen in the

career-based SPS, but the threat also exists in position-based systems: select departments of the US government (defense and homeland security) became exempt from public service salary caps. Capture by any elite—whether position or career based—can be prevented by oversight of SPS’s management by an independent body such as New Zealand’s State Services Commission or Canada’s Public Service Commission, and allowing judicial review of SPS management as in India.

The SPS option for a developing country with scarce managerial talent and evolving accountability mechanisms could be a combination of both systems. A small number of positions, in policy making and in top levels of operating agencies, could be jointly identified by line ministries, the public service ministry, and an oversight body, and designated as SPS. Qualified officials belonging to all cadres could apply for these SPS positions, without regard for quotas for any cadres. Applicants from private sector and academia could apply, and be especially invited for SPS positions in technical ministries and operating agencies. The selection process would be managed by an independent body such as PSC and the final selection approved by the head of public service. Those appointed to these SPS positions could receive open-ended contracts, as in U.K. and U.S.A or closed, renewable contracts, as in Australia and New Zealand, or simply return to their own cadres as in India. While opening up SPS positions to competitive recruitment, the system could also adopt a few features of the career-based system. If the accountability climate is weak, a centrally managed SPS would be preferable to one with decentralized management. Additionally, potential candidates for the SPS could be recruited and nurtured via an accelerated career path (such as U.K.’s Fast Track and Canada’s Executive Group) to create a pool of qualified government managers who would also compete for the SPS positions.

The distinguishing features of SPS, listed at the beginning of this note, are difficult to maintain in weak institutional environments, so there can be pressures to downplay those very features. For example, pressure to enlarge the SPS is quite likely to result from the promise of higher remuneration or reputation reward. There could also be attempts to lower the hurdles to entry, such as by emphasizing career length as selection criterion, and by instituting preferences such as promotion quotas. However, effective SPSs function well because they comprise the best available managers. So, the selection process—whether by performance appraisal, or interview, or examination, or by combination of these processes—must be both rigorous and transparent. Patronage in selection can be reduced if recruitment is managed or overseen by an independent arms length organization. The link of rewards with performance could be perceived as a threatening element of SPS design because the host government’s culture goes against differentiating well and poorly performing employees, and/or because performance appraisal is not a regular feature of personnel management. But, rewards, whether remuneration or career progress, granted to all or awarded intransparently to a few SPS does more harm than good by reducing initiative and morale respectively. Finally, naming the top levels of public service as SPS will not, by itself, introduce broader performance accountability in government. Without a strong accountability environment, creating an SPS could result in merely increasing remuneration for a small number of senior public servants, without making them, or those they lead, perform any better.

VIII. TABLE SUMMARIZING FEATURES OF SENIOR PUBLIC SERVICES

	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Canada</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>Malaysia</b>	<b>India</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>U.K.</b>	<b>USA</b>
<b>Structure</b>									
Mainly career or position based?	Career	Career	Career	Career	Career	Position	Career	Career	Position
Displays any features of the other system?	Yes, in open recruitment of heads of departments	Yes, in allowing external applicants for top posts	No, except for few political appointments	No	No	No, except for centralized selection of Chief Executives	No	Yes, contract appointment of some SES	Yes, in rank-in-person for SES and in OPM oversight
Employed in national agencies only or sub-national as well?	National agencies	National agencies but scope for secondment provinces.	National and local agencies	National and provincial agencies	National, provincial and local agencies	National agencies	National agencies and statutory boards	National agencies and executive agencies	National agencies
Generalists or specialists?	Generalists	Generalists	Generalists, except for top posts	Generalists	Generalists	Generalists and specialists	Generalists	Generalists and specialists	Generalists and specialists
Size	NA	3600	5360	3700	5000	300	490	3200	7000

	Australia	Canada	France	Malaysia	India	New Zealand	Singapore	U.K.	USA
<b>Recruitment</b>									
Early or mid-career?	Mid-career	Early, but selection for SES in mid-career	Early	Early	Early	Mid-career	Early	Early but selection in mid-career	Mid-career
Basis of selection	Merit and open to all within and outside government	Merit and open	Merit (political decision for top posts)	Merit.	Merit.	Merit and open	Merit--closed system	Merit and open; Fast Stream Program to identify candidates	Merit and open, except for 10% political appointees
Transparency in selection process	Complete, supervised by PSC	Complete, supervised by PSC	Based on merit-based competition Transparent except for political appointments	Merit-based competition through PSC and selection committees for top posts	Merit-based competition through PSC and selection committees for top posts	Open competition through SSC and Chief executives	Merit-based competition through PSC	Merit-based competition through PSC and selection for top posts by separate process	Merit-based selection and certification except for political appointments
Affirmative Actions	Non-discriminatory	Non-discriminatory	Non-discriminatory	Ethnic quotas with special provisions for disabled persons	Quotas for disadvantaged groups and disabled persons	Non-discriminatory	Non-discriminatory	Non-discriminatory	Equal Opportunity Act and affirmative action for minorities

	Australia	Canada	France	Malaysia	India	New Zealand	Singapore	U.K.	USA
<b>Managing the SPS for distinctively higher performance</b>									
Who manages the SPS?	Public Service Department and PSC	Treasury Board and PSC	Civil Service Department	Civil Service Department and PSC	Department of Personnel	State Service Commissioner and Chief Executive	PSC and PS Division in PM's Office	Cabinet Office	Office of Personnel Management and Agency heads
Centralization of management	Considerable decentralization.	Considerable decentralization	Considerable decentralization	Centralized management with limited delegation to departments and provinces	Shared control of federal and provincial governments	Decentralized management with mandated consultation with State Service	Centralized management by PSC and Personnel Board	Centralized management by Cabinet Office	Considerable decentralization with Central oversight by OPM.
Succession planning	Yes	Yes	No specific strategy	No specific strategy	No specific strategy. Recent interest in domain specialization	Yes, by chief executives in consultation with State Service Commissioner	Yes, by PS division	Yes. By Senior Civil Services Group in Cabinet Office	Yes, by agencies in consultation with OPM
Training	Comprehensive strategy overseen by PSC and departments	Comprehensive	In-service training is regulated by laws and regulations	Centralized	Centralized	Supervised by State Service Commissioner	Mandated minimum training each year.	Training for skill-building and policy analysis, overseen by cabinet office.	Joint involvement of Agencies and Federal Executive Institute

	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Canada</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>Malaysia</b>	<b>India</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>U.K.</b>	<b>USA</b>
Employment arrangements: tenure or contract?	Contract	Tenure	Tenure, except for political appointments	Tenure	Tenure	Contract	Tenure	Indefinite contract	Indefinite contract
Separate code of conduct?	Yes	Yes in the form of core competencies	Common code of conduct for all civil servants	Special code of conduct rules	Special code of conduct rules	Special code of conduct based on State Services Act	Special code of conduct	Special code of conduct	Special code of conduct and core qualifications
Performance appraisal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Career progression dependent on performance?	Clear link	Clear link	Clear link	Linked to higher posts within closed system	Link to promotion and preferred posts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pay component determined by performance?	Rules for performance pay; use of broadband system of pay	Discretionary lump sum amounts of 10 to 25 percent of pay	No	Annual salary progression determined by performance	No	Yes	Yes	Yes; use of overlapping pay bands and performance pay	Yes; use of overlapping pay bands; special fund for payment of performance bonuses and departments 'flexibility' to operate special packages

## IX. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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