



Member of the Committee on the Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products, and the Environment (COM)

Information pack for applicants

Closing date: Midday on Friday, 23 June 2023
Reference no: VAC-1829



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Section 1 – The Role

1.1 Role description and person specification

Role Description

Ministers are seeking to make two Member appointments to the board of the Committee on the Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products, and the Environment (COM).

As a specialist in genotoxicology or chemical hazard risk assessment, members will be expected to:

- Contribute to discussions of the Committee working alongside recognised experts who assess other aspects of the detailed technical data on genotoxins under consideration (e.g., mode of action/mechanism studies, traditional and novel toxicity testing strategies, statistics).
- Contribute to the Committee's discussions and to the consideration of detailed statements and conclusions from the Committee.
- Contribute to other discussions (such as in working groups or to draft text within your specialism if the need arises).

Person specification

The Department of Health and Social Care values and promotes diversity and encourages applications from all sections of the community. The boards of public bodies should reflect the population they are there to serve. Boards also benefit from fresh perspectives, and we are always keen to encourage candidates new to public appointments and with private sector experience to consider applying for our roles.

Essential Criteria

To be considered, you must be able to demonstrate that you have the qualities, skills, and experience to meet all the essential criteria for appointment.

You must be able to demonstrate an understanding of committee membership and the role of COM, with the ability to provide independent scrutiny on the issues that fall within the remit of COM. Applicants will have a sound understanding of a field of genotoxicity and be able to show a track record of achievement in one or more of the following areas:

- the use of in silico methods in the assessment of genotoxicity
- the use of toxicogenomic' s/ transcriptomics in genotoxicity

- regulatory aspects of genotoxicology- development of novel in vitro (non-animal) methods for the assessment of genotoxic risks from chemicals
- development and understanding of the application of New Approach Methods (NAMs) to genotoxicity testing and application to chemical regulation
- expertise in reproductive toxicology
- expertise in epigenetics
- the application of quantitative structural activity relationships to genotoxicity

Remuneration and status of appointment

- There is no remuneration for this post, but expenses will be paid in line with DHSC policy.
- You can claim reimbursement for reasonable travel and subsistence costs which are properly and necessarily incurred on official business, in line with the travel and subsistence policy and rates of the COM. However, these payments are taxable as earnings and will be subject to tax and national insurance, A copy of the policy and rates can be obtained from the COM.
- This is an office holder appointment and does not attract any benefits under any Civil Service Pension Scheme. You will not be eligible for redundancy pay as you are not an employee. No other arrangements have been made for compensation upon the end of your term of appointment because an office holder who is appointed for a limited duration would have no expectation of serving beyond that period.
- As this is an office holder appointment, you will not become a member of the Civil Service. You will not be subject to the provisions of employment law.

Time commitment

3 Meetings per year

Location

Board meetings are usually held in London / Oxfordshire and Virtual

Future meetings are as per the below, with locations yet to be confirmed:

- Thursday 12th October 2023

Tenure of office

Ministers will determine the length of the appointment, which will be up to 3 years.

The possibility of re-appointment for a further term is at the discretion of Ministers. Any re-appointment is subject to satisfactory annual appraisals of performance during the first term

in the post. There is no automatic presumption of re-appointment; each case should be considered on its own merits, taking into account a number of factors including, but not restricted to, the diversity of the current board and its balance of skills and experience. In most case, the total time served in post will not exceed more than two terms or serve in any one post for more than ten years.

Accountability

Members are appointed by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and are accountable to the Secretary of State via the Chair for carrying out their duties and for their performance.

For a discussion about the role

For further information regarding the role of COM and the role of a Member please contact:

Name: Ovnair Sepai

Tel: 01235 825163

Email: ovnair.sepai@ukhsa.gov.uk

1.2 Committee on the Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products, and the Environment (COM) role and responsibilities

The Committee on Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products, and the Environment (COM) advises government on the mutagenicity of chemicals used in pesticides, pharmaceuticals, and other products.

COM provides independent advice to government departments and agencies on the potential mutagenicity and genotoxicity of chemicals (whether they are likely to cause mutation in cells), from natural products to new synthetic chemicals used in pesticides or pharmaceuticals. It also advises on strategies and research for genotoxicity testing.

The committee also advises on important general hazards (the inherent property of the substance) or risk (the likelihood of mutagenetic or genotoxic effects occurring after a given exposure) and gives recommendations for genotoxicity testing.

COM is an advisory body and has no regulatory status. However, it may provide advice to agencies that have a regulatory role.

Expert Members

Genetic toxicology: applicants must have experience in the conduct and interpretation of in silico methods, and in vitro, and in vivo tests. An interest in molecular epidemiology would also be of value.

Carcinogenesis: applicants should be able to demonstrate an interest in cancer risk assessment and in the mechanisms of carcinogenesis both genotoxic and non –genotoxic mechanisms.

Toxicokinetics and metabolism: applicants should have expertise in interpretation of data on the disposition, metabolism and Toxicokinetics of chemicals and low dose effects especially in relation to genotoxicity testing.

Computational toxicology and Quantitative Structure Activity Relationships (QSARs): applicants must have expertise in the application of computational toxicology and QSARs and their application to genotoxicity.

Epigenetics and trans-generational effects: applicants with expertise in epigenetics with relevance to genotoxicity endpoints.

Reproductive or developmental toxicology: applicants with expertise in developmental toxicology and adverse reproductive effects of mutagenic and genotoxic chemicals.

Section 2: The recruitment

2.1 Making an application

Thank you for your interest in the appointment of a Member.

The Department of Health and Social Care's Honours and ALB Public Appointments Unit is managing this recruitment campaign.

In order to apply, you will need to [create an account](#) or [sign in](#) on the "Apply for a public appointment" website.

Once you are logged into your account, click on 'apply for this role' and follow the on-screen instructions. To apply, all candidates are required to provide:

- a Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- a Supporting Statement
- equality information
- information relating to any outside interests or reputational issues

Guidance on what to include in your CV/Supporting Statement and tips for applying can be found in the corresponding sections below and on the public appointment website: [Public appointments - GOV.UK](#).

We will ask you to check and confirm your personal details to ensure your application is accurate.

You will also have the opportunity to make a reasonable adjustment request or apply under the disability confident scheme before you submit your application.

You will also be required to make any declarations related to standards in public life and ensuring public confidence in your Supporting Statement. Further information on this can be found in the relevant section below.

If you are unable to create an account and apply online, or if you have any problems submitting your application online, please contact Karen Dinsdale on 0113 2545414

Applications must be received by **midday on Friday, 23 June 2023**.

The Advisory Assessment Panel reserves the right to only consider applications that contain all of the elements listed above, and that arrive before the published deadline for applications.

In completing an application, please firstly note the following in relation to:

- Disqualification from appointment
- Outside interests and reputational issues: Conflicts of interest
- Outside interests and reputational issues: Political Activity and social media

- Standards in public life and ensuring public confidence.

Disqualification from appointment

The Cabinet Office sets out the following regarding all public appointments:

In general, you should have the right to work in the UK to be eligible to apply for a public appointment. There are a small number of specialist roles that are not open to non-British citizens. Any nationality requirements will be specified in the vacancy details.

The Government expects all holders of public office to work to the highest personal and professional standards. You cannot be considered for a public appointment if:

- you are disqualified from acting as a company director (under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986)
- have an unspent conviction on your criminal record
- your estate has been sequestrated in Scotland or you enter into a debt arrangement programme under Part 1 of the Debt Arrangement and Attachment (Scotland) Act 2002 (asp 17) as the debtor or have, under Scots law, granted a trust deed for creditors.

When sending your application online, you will be asked to confirm that the information you have provided is true and correct and that you are eligible to apply for a public appointment. As part of this, you will also confirm that you have read any disqualification criteria for the role, and that you are willing to stand down from any other role/s in order to take up appointment. If you are currently disqualified from appointment, please provide further details in your supporting letter.

For further advice please contact Karen Dinsdale on 0113 2545414

Outside interests and reputational interests: Conflicts of interest

Before you apply you should carefully consider if you or a party related to you have any interests which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed.

When you apply you will be asked to complete four sections on the following:

- Financial interests
- Employment, appointments and other outside roles
- Personal interests
- Any other relevant interests or activity.

You should declare anything relevant that you think may call into question your ability to properly discharge the responsibilities of the role you are applying for or may be perceived as having scope to do so by a reasonable member of the public.

Interests may include, (without limitation), any outside personal or business interests, any direct and indirect financial interests (such as shareholdings or share options in individual companies), or any positions of employment, other appointments or other positions of authority, that you or any party related to you have and which may influence your judgement in performing your public appointment or may be perceived by a reasonable member of the public as having scope to do so. A 'party related to you' could include for example (but without limitation) a spouse/partner, a business partner, a close family member or a person living in the same household as you, or a close family member.

Further help and examples of the types of things which you may need to disclose will be given to you on the relevant pages when you create your account and application on the public appointments application system (gov.uk website).

Many conflicts of interest can be satisfactorily resolved and declaring a potential conflict does not prevent you from being interviewed.

If you are shortlisted, the panel will discuss any potential conflicts with you during your interview, including any proposals you may have to mitigate them, and can record that in their advice to Ministers. If Ministers wish to appoint you, an offer of appointment may be subject to you giving up any unmanageable conflicts of interest. Any interests that are deemed manageable will need to be formally declared and may be published in line with COM organisational policy regarding Declarations of Interest.

Failure to declare a potential conflict of interest may become grounds for withdrawing an offer of appointment. If offered the role, you will also be required to make a Declaration of Interests and to keep the Declaration up to date throughout the tenure of your appointment. The requirement to declare interests will also be included in your Terms and Conditions of appointment. Failure to disclose an interest, subject to the interest and the circumstances, may become grounds during the tenure of your appointment, for suspension or termination of your appointment.

Outside interests and reputational issues: Political Activity and social media

In the same section of your online application, you will also be asked to declare if you have undertaken any political activity for a political party within the last five years and for details of any social media accounts that can be viewed by the public.

Political Activity

Political activity information is primarily for monitoring purposes only, however if you are shortlisted for interview, this information will be shared with the Advisory Assessment Panel. The reason for this, is that it is appreciated that such activities may have given you relevant skills, including experience gained from committee work, collective decision-making, resolving conflict and public speaking. If you have had such experience and you consider it relevant to your application for this post, you should also take the opportunity to include it separately in your Supporting Statement. If possible, you should not, however, identify the relevant political party in your statement.

If you are appointed to this role, please note that any political activity you declare will be published in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments. Political activity is not a bar to appointment, but it must be declared.

Social Media

You can provide up to five public social media accounts and will be asked for the full URL of each. If you apply for a public appointment and are shortlisted for interview, DHSC will conduct appropriate checks, as part of which we will consider anything in the public domain related to your conduct or professional capacity. This may include searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information. We ask for information about your social media accounts to make sure these checks are carried out accurately.

Standards in public life and ensuring public confidence

If there are any issues in your personal or professional history that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment to Ministers or the ALB or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, **it is important that you bring them to the attention of the Advisory Assessment Panel and provide details of the issue/s in your Supporting statement.**

This should include declaring in your Supporting Statement if:

- you are, or have been, bankrupt or you have made an arrangement with a creditor at any point, including the dates of this
- you are subject to a current police investigation
- there are any previous or pending personal conduct issues where:
 - i) a complaint/ personal conduct issue has either been upheld or partly upheld
 - ii) an investigation that relates at least in part to your personal conduct, is to take place but it is yet to start, or a similar such investigation is underway, but it is yet to conclude
 - iii) a complaint/personal conduct issue is current, but at the time of your application it is yet to be confirmed whether or how it will be investigated further.
- there are any possible reputational issues arising from your past actions or public statements that you have made (including through social media and blogs)
- there are any other matters which may mean you may not be able to meet the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies. You can access this document at: [Code of conduct for board members of public bodies - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612222/code-of-conduct-for-board-members-of-public-bodies.pdf)

Alongside your own declaration, we will conduct appropriate checks, as part of which we will consider anything in the public domain related to your conduct or professional capacity. This may include searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information. This will be shared with the Panel.

The Panel may explore any issues you have raised or have been identified in Due Diligence checks with you as part of assessing your application.

Failure to disclose relevant information requested could result in an appointment offer being withdrawn or the appointment being terminated, as the person appointed to this role will be expected to demonstrate the highest standards of corporate and personal conduct and in line with standards set out in the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies, which includes the Seven Principles of Public Life. As part of agreeing to the terms and conditions of appointment you will be expected to agree to meeting the standards set out in this Code.

CV

Please ensure your CV includes:

- Your full name, title, home address, personal contact telephone numbers (land line and mobile) and personal email address.
- Details of your education and qualifications, employment history, directorships, membership of professional bodies and any relevant publications or awards.
- Contact details for at least two referees. One referee should be the person to whom you are/were accountable in your current/most recent appointment or position of employment. Please indicate the relationship of each referee to you. References will be requested for short-listed candidates prior to interview
- Brief details of your current or most recent post and the dates you occupied this role, and any past or present Ministerial appointments.

Supporting Statement

The Supporting Statement is your opportunity to demonstrate how you meet each of the criteria set out in the person specification. You may want to add the essential and/or desirable criteria set out in the role description as subheadings and in your statement and provide evidence underneath these. This will help the Advisory Assessment Panel to see how your skills and expertise relate to the role.

Please also set out details regarding any reputational issues (see above guidance on Standards in Public life).

Please ensure your full name, the role to which you are applying and the corresponding reference number for the post are clearly noted at the top of your Statement.

Please write all acronyms in full first, limit your statement to two pages and type or write clearly in black ink.

We will commission a pre-assessment of candidate applications which will then be provided to the Panel for consideration and to inform the shortlisting process. By applying, you are agreeing to your application being shared with another party for pre-assessment. It is the responsibility of the panel to determine who it believes best meet the criteria for the role, and who should be invited to interview.

You must inform the Department if, *during the application and assessment process*, your circumstances change in respect to any information that has been or should have been provided by you in your application.

Equality Information

You will be asked to complete questions on equality information when completing your application online. If you have previously created an account, the responses from that previous application will be saved. You will have the opportunity to review and edit your responses before you submit an application.

We encourage applications from talented individuals from all backgrounds and across the whole of the United Kingdom. Boards of public bodies are most effective when they reflect the diversity of views of the public they serve and this is an important part of the Government's levelling up agenda.

We collect equality information, including information about applicants' characteristics and educational and professional backgrounds so that we can make sure we are attracting a broad range of people to these roles and that our recruitment processes are fair for everyone. Without this information, it makes it difficult to see if our outreach is working, if the application process is having an unfair impact on certain groups and whether changes are making a positive difference.

The data you provide is used to produce anonymised management information about the diversity of applicants. You can select "prefer not to say" to any question you do not wish to answer. **The information you provide will not be seen by the Advisory Assessment Panel.**

Reasonable Adjustments

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments to make sure applicants with disabilities, physical or mental health conditions, or other needs are not substantially disadvantaged when applying for public appointments. This can include changing the recruitment process to enable people who wish to apply to do so.

Some examples of adjustments are:

- ensuring that application forms are available in different or accessible formats
- making adaptations to interview locations
- allowing candidates to present their skills and experience in a different way
- giving additional detailed information on the assessment process to allow candidates time to prepare themselves

- allowing support workers, for example sign language interpreters
- making provision for support animals to attend.

When you complete your application online, you will be given the opportunity to tick a box to request reasonable adjustment(s) to the application process at the “check your answers before sending your application” stage.

Disability Confident Scheme

The Department of Health and Social Care values and promotes diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity for all and to the appointment of disabled people. We are a member of the Government’s Disability Confident Scheme. We use the Disability Confident Scheme symbol, along with other like-minded employers, to show our commitment to good practice in appointing people with a disability. The Scheme helps recruit and retain disabled people.

As part of implementing the Scheme, we guarantee an interview to anyone with a disability whose application meets all the essential criteria in the person specification for the role and who has asked that their application is considered under the Scheme. Indicating that you wish your application to be considered under the Scheme will in no way prejudice your application.

What do we mean by a disability?

To be eligible for the Disability Confident Scheme you must have a disability or long-term health condition, which could be physical, sensory or mental and must be expected to last for at least 12 months. You do not have to be registered as a disabled person to apply under this Scheme.

If you wish to apply under the Scheme, please tick the relevant box at the “check your answers before sending your application” stage of your online application.

2.2 The Assessment Process

We will deal with your application as quickly as possible and will advise you of the likely timetable at each stage.

Planned timetable

- Closing date: Midday on 23 June 2023
- Shortlisting: 19 of July 2023
- Interviews: Mid to end of August - To be confirmed

Advisory Assessment Panel

Advisory Assessment Panels (AAP) are chosen by Ministers to assist them in their decision-making. These include a departmental official and an independent member. For competitions recruiting non-executive members of a board (apart from the Chair), the panel will usually include a representative from the public body concerned.

AAPs perform a number of functions, including agreeing an assessment strategy with ministers, undertaking sifting, carrying out interviews in line with the advertised criteria and deciding objectively who meets the published selection criteria for the role before recommending to ministers which candidates they find appointable. It is then for the minister to decide who to appoint to the role.

The panel will include:

- Will Jones, Deputy Director for Health Protection Policy and DHSC Senior sponsor for COM – Panel Chair
- Gareth Jenkins, Chair of COM – Panel member
- Hilary Randall - Independent Panel Member

Assessment

- Ministers are responsible and accountable to Parliament for the public appointments made within their department. As a result, they must be consulted at every stage of the appointments process.
- An Advisory Assessment Panel (AAP) is appointed by Ministers to assist them in their decision making. The role of the Panel is to decide, objectively, which candidates meet the eligibility criteria for the role.
- At the shortlisting meeting the AAP will assess applications against the essential criteria and decide which candidates have best met the criteria, who should be recommended for interview. Ministers will then be consulted on the AAP's recommended shortlist. If

you have applied under the Disability Confident Scheme and you meet all the essential criteria, then you will also be invited for an interview.

- If you apply under the Disability Confident Scheme and you are not shortlisted for interview, we can provide a summary of the assessment of your written application, if you choose to request feedback. However, we regret that due to the volume of applications received, we are only able to offer feedback to candidates who have been unsuccessful at the interview stage.
- Once the shortlist has been agreed by Ministers, you will be advised (by e-mail) whether you have been shortlisted. Those shortlisted will be invited to an interview. Interviews will be conducted either face-to-face, in central London or by video/ teleconference. We will confirm arrangements to shortlisted candidates in due course.
- If you are invited to interview and are unable to attend on the set date, then an alternative date can only be offered at the discretion of the AAP.
- The AAP will meet again to interview candidates and determine who meets the essential criteria and is therefore appointable to the role. The AAP may invite you to make a brief presentation at the start of the interview and will go on to question you about your skills and experience, including asking specific questions to assess whether you meet the criteria set out for the post. The AAP will also explore with you any potential conflicts of interest or any other issues arising from your personal and professional history which may impact on an appointment decision (see section 2.1 for further details).
- Details of the panel's assessment of interviewed candidates are provided to Ministers, including whether they have judged a candidate to be appointable to the role. It is then for Ministers to decide who should be appointed. In some circumstances, Ministers may choose not to appoint any candidates and re-run the competition.
- Ministers may choose to meet with candidates before making a decision. Candidates should therefore be prepared for a short time gap between interview and a final appointment decision being made. Candidates who have been interviewed will be kept informed of progress.
- Once the decision on the appointment has been made, interviewed candidates will be advised of the outcome of their application, including whom they may approach for feedback, if they wish. We appreciate it takes a lot of time and effort to apply for roles, and prepare for and attend an interview, and that feedback is a valuable part of the process.

Offer of appointment

If you are successful, you will be contacted by Officials to inform you of the offer and to confirm if you would be willing to accept. If you would, then the next steps will be to ask you to complete a Declaration of Interests form, which will be required to be signed-off by you and a senior official and for DHSC to conduct baseline security checks.

Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) checks are conducted on candidates prior to appointment and your role will be offered subject to these checks being completed. The BPSS is a recognised standard within government for the screening of individuals. The

checks will require you to initially provide three forms of documentation to the Honours and ALB Public Appointments Unit to verify your identity, and then provide further personal data, by completing an online form. The link to complete this form will be sent separately to you.

Appointment

On completion of your Declaration of Interests and baseline security checks, you will receive a letter from Ministers appointing you as a Member of COM which will confirm the terms and conditions on which the appointment is offered.

Announcement

All public appointments are announced on GOV.UK. The announcement is required to include the length of your appointment, the remuneration for the role and whether you have declared any political activity. We will share the draft announcement with you before it is made.

Queries

For any queries about your application status or the selection process, please contact Karen Dinsdale in DHSC's Honours and ALB Public Appointments Unit:

Email: Karen.Dinsdale@dhsc.gov.uk

If you choose to apply, we would like to thank you in advance for your time and effort in making an application.

You will receive an automated email to confirm your application has been submitted successfully. Following the closing date, you will receive a further email from DHSC's Honours and ALB Public Appointments Unit which will confirm next steps in the selection process. If you have not received your application ID reference number within 3 working days of the advertised closing date, please contact us quoting reference VAC-1829.

Governance Code on Public Appointments and the Commissioner for Public Appointments

The Governance Code on Public Appointments, published by the Cabinet Office, sets out the principles that should underpin all public appointments. The Governance Code can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-code-for-public-appointments>

The regulation of public appointments against the requirements of the Governance Code is carried out by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

The Commissioner provides independent assurance that public appointments are made in accordance with the principles set out in the Code. The Commissioner is appointed by the

Queen and is independent of the Government and the Civil Service. Further information about the role of the Commissioner is available from:

<http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk>

If you are not completely satisfied

The Department of Health and Social Care will aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you have any complaints about the way your application has been handled, please contact Ben Jones by emailing Ben.Jones1@dhsc.gov.uk

If after receiving a comprehensive response from the Department you are still concerned, you can write to the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Please contact:

The Commissioner for Public Appointments
1 Horse Guards Road
London SW1A 2HQ
Tel: 0207 271 8938
Email: publicappointments@csc.gov.uk

2.3 How we will manage your personal information

Your personal information will be held in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. You will not receive unsolicited paper or electronic mail because of sending the Department of Health and Social Care any personal information. No personal information will be passed on to third parties for commercial purposes.

When we ask you for personal information, we promise we will:

- Only ask for what we need, and not collect too much or irrelevant information
- Ensure you know why we need it
- Protect it and insofar as is possible, make sure nobody has access to it who shouldn't
- Ensure you know what choice you have about giving us information
- Make sure we don't keep it longer than necessary
- Only use your information for the purposes you have authorised

We ask that you:

- Provide us with accurate information
- Inform us as soon as possible of any changes or if you notice mistakes in the information, we hold about you

The Department of Health and Social Care will process personal data relating to you in accordance with: the Department of Health and Social Care data protection policy at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dhsc-privacy-notice> and the Cabinet Office's data protection policy for public appointments at <https://apply-for-public-appointment.service.gov.uk/privacy>.

If you apply for a post, we will share some of the information you provide with the members of the selection panel for the post to which you are applying, so that your CV and supporting letter can be assessed.

The diversity information you provide will not be used in the selection process and will therefore not be shared with the Advisory Assessment Panel assessing your application at any stage. However, panels may review the political activity response at the interview stage. This in no way acts as a bar to appointment.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments regulates and monitors appointments to public bodies to ensure procedures are fair. The Department of Health and Social Care is required by the Commissioner for Public Appointments to retain information about the people who apply for public appointments within his remit and make this information available to him for audit purposes, if requested to do so. Information you provide in your application may therefore be made available to the Commissioner for Public Appointments and the Commissioner's auditors on a confidential basis to help fulfil either the Commissioner's formal complaints investigation role or for audit purposes.

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