

**Commercial Interchange Programme - Statement of Principles****April 2012**

1. The Commercial Interchange Programme is one of a number of measures to improve commercial capability within the Cabinet Office through an exchange of skills and knowledge with the private sector. In turn, it provides commercial companies with a source of high calibre secondees from the Civil Service to enable them to better understand government ways of working.
2. The Programme is open to all companies, of whatever size, who meet the criteria for entry into the Programme. Management of the Programme will be transparent at all stages of its delivery, and we will release the names of all companies taking part on request. However, any further media or publicity mentioning companies taking part by name will only be conducted with the prior approval of the partners.
3. Once a company is part of the Programme, any exchanges of talent will occur on an “opportunity by opportunity” basis through a process of mutual consent. The three mechanisms by which talent can be exchanged are:
  - a. **Mutual exchange:** the exchange of people for broadly the same length of time with no money changing hands. This could include formal links between respective graduate schemes. Participants will continue to be funded by their parent organisation;
  - b. **Paid secondments:** bringing people into the Cabinet Office on a per project basis at civil service rates, or sending civil servants out;
  - c. **Development placements:** Career development opportunities for up to 3 months with the individual continuing to be funded by their parent organisation.
4. Only high performing candidates on both sides will be put forward for opportunities under the Programme. When the Cabinet Office puts forward a candidate for a private sector opportunity, the company is free to make the final decision as to their suitability and vice versa.
5. The Programme is based around a series of standard contracts. Subject to the agreement of the Cabinet Office, these standard contracts can be amended on a case by case basis but in joining the Programme, we expect the company to broadly agree to use the standard contracts. This is so we can exchange talent swiftly without a protracted period of negotiating terms for each exchange.
6. Control measures will be put in place for handling conflicts of interest. Where a conflict of interest does arise we will ensure that the situation is dealt with quickly and resolved. A governing principle in agreeing to participate in the Commercial Interchange Programme is the joint assessment of potential conflicts of interest and framing of the secondment from the outset to avoid conflict.
7. Under the Civil Service ‘business appointment rules’ individuals may be required to obtain the agreement of the Cabinet Office before accepting certain offers of employment for a period of two years following the interchange.
8. The Commercial Interchange Programme will be subject to ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement.