

# **Selection Process for Appointments to State Government, Federal Government, WALGA and Other Boards and Committees**

## **A. Background**

On 12 December 2001 and 6 February 2002, the State Council of the Western Australian Local Government Association endorsed the introduction of a formal selection process pertaining to the recommendation of persons for appointments to Boards and Committees.

State Council resolved that the new selection process must meet the following requirements:

- *The process must be justifiable and transparent;*
- *The criteria upon which nominations are to be considered must be understood by nominees and should be common knowledge amongst Association members;*
- *The process must be outcome focused, and must foster the merit principle of “best person for the job”; and*
- *The selection process should be capable of review where justifiable grounds have been established.*

Integral to this new process was the establishment of a **Selection Committee**, which operates under the delegated authority of State Council. The Selection Committee undertakes the assessment of nominations received for vacancies on Boards and Committees, and depending on the strategic importance of the body concerned either:

- Endorses preferred candidates for appointment; or
- Makes recommendations to the State Council on preferred candidates.

## **B. Terms of Reference for the Selection Committee**

The terms of reference for the Selection Committee as defined by State Council include:

- ***Oversee the nomination and selection processes in accordance with the objectives and framework endorsed by the State Council.***
- ***Call for and assess nominations for vacancies on Boards and Committees on the basis of objective selection criteria.***
- ***Ensure that all steps in the selection process are completed before existing appointments to Boards and Committees expire.***
- ***Make advisory recommendations to the State Council concerning the selection of applicants for vacancies on Boards and Committees which has been identified as being of strategic importance to the Association, including providing reasons for recommendations.***
- ***Resolve upon preferred applicants for vacancies on Boards and Committees which have not been identified by State Council as being of strategic importance to the Association, including providing reasons for decision.***
- ***Provide routine reports to State Council on the exercise of all delegated decision making authority concerning the selection process;***
- ***Establish key performance indicators and set achievable targets for the Association’s selection process.***

- *Review the process for the selection of applicants for vacancies on Boards and Committees and the delegations provided to the Selection Committee.*
- *Develop and implement measures to increase the awareness and understanding of the selection process amongst the Association's membership.*

## **C. Membership**

The Selection Committee is constituted by up to seven members, including:

- the Deputy President of the Association (Chair);
- two State Councillors from the country constituency;
- two State Councillors from the metropolitan constituency;
- a representative from Local Government Professionals WA; and
- an independent person with significant experience in recruitment and selection.

If the nominated representative from Local Government Professionals WA is unable to attend, to provide consistency in advice relating to appointments for officer positions, then the CEO of LG Pro will deputise.

## **D. The Selection Process**

### **(i) Merit-based selection**

The deliberative process of the Selection Committee for determining preferred candidates for vacancies to Boards and Committees is **merit-based**, focusing on the principle of 'best person for the job'.

Each vacancy subject to WALGA's selection process is assigned generic and specific selection criteria by the Secretariat. Selection criteria to be utilised will be as objective as possible and may include:

- being an elected member or serving officer;
- availability of the applicant to undertake the responsibility;
- relevant skills in the area;
- relevant experience and qualifications that are applicable to the position;
- demonstrated interest in the position;
- capacity of the applicant to represent the interests of Local Government and the Association;
- any specific requirements for the position being applied for (defined in consultation with the relevant Board or Committee); and
- whether the nominee has been sanctioned by the Local Government Standards Panel .

All applicants for a vacancy must address the generic and specific selection criteria for the position being applied for.

### **(ii) Nominations process**

The advertisement of vacancies to Boards and Committees is undertaken by the Secretariat under the authority of the Selection Committee.

A Newsletter notice is produced for each round of nominations, providing a synopsis of the current vacancies to Boards and Committees.

The following process of advertising vacancies for each round is currently undertaken:

- All nominations are advertised for a minimum of four weeks, but generally for six weeks, on WALGA's website
- Advertising for two appearances (or more) in Councillor Direct
- Advertising for two appearances (or more) in LG News
- An email to all CEO's advising of vacancies
- If necessary, an email to individual regional CEOs where the vacancy is specifically for that Region (ie South West)

- An email sent to all State Councillors and Zone Executive Officers

The nominations period is generally four to six weeks. Candidates seeking to lodge nominations for a vacancy can do so by e-mail, fax or mail. The majority of nominations are lodged via email, which allows the Secretariat to retain a record of their application.

In lodging a nomination, applicants must certify that the information contained within their application is true and correct, and declare that it is made in accordance with their Council's policy on representation (where such a policy exists).

The declaration also requires a commitment to allocate the necessary time and effort to undertake the responsibilities of the position, and to resign from the Committee/Board should they cease to be an Elected Member or serving officer within Local Government.

### **(iii) Insufficient/Inadequate Nominations**

When there is a lack of suitable candidates for a vacancy after two rounds of advertising, State Council has delegated decision making authority to the WALGA President (October 2002) to seek nominations and appoint preferred candidates to fill vacancies.

In practice, the Secretariat will utilise existing networks to approach suitable candidates to provide advice to the WALGA President.

### **(iv) Deliberative Processes of the Selection Committee**

The assessment of applicants under the Association's selection process utilises a merit-based process which enshrines the principle of 'best person for the job'.

To undertake the assessment process, a **selection matrix** is utilised to assess and competitively rank applicants on the basis of their performance against defined selection criteria.

Upon the close of nominations for a vacancy, the selection matrix is produced by the Secretariat listing all applicants and specifying the selection criteria which will be used in the assessment process. The matrix also includes weightings that have been assigned to each criterion, indicating the relative importance of each factor to the position.

Members of the Selection Committee complete the matrix prior to their meeting by scoring each applicant on the basis of their written response to each of the selection criteria. This assessment is limited to the information provided by each applicant in their written application. Interviews or reference checking are not integrated into the selection process, as they are considered to be too unwieldy and time consuming.

For nominations received from persons seeking re-appointment to a Board or Committee, State Council has determined that the performance of that representative can be considered by the Selection Committee. This input is to be based on a report from the Secretariat which includes the following information:

- regularity of meeting attendance;
- frequency of reports submitted to the Association on Board/Committee activities; and
- an assessment by the relevant Policy Team Leader as to whether the incumbent member has properly discharged the responsibilities of their position.
- external references are excluded, however, the Selection Committee may seek advice from the Chair or Executive of a Board/Committee on the appropriateness of Serving Board Members.

At the Selection Committee meeting, nominations are discussed, individual scores from members combined and applicants ranked in order of preference. Following discussion by the Selection Committee on the validity of the aggregate scores and / or any queries or concerns with applications or nominees, the candidate(s) with the highest overall score is deemed preferred for the vacancy.

Under the instrument of delegation given by State Council, the Selection Committee has both **advisory** and **decision-making** authority in relation to vacancies for particular Boards and Committees.

Where a Board or Committee has been identified as being of strategic importance to the Association, the Selection Committee is required to assess and make advisory recommendations to State Council.

Where a Board or Committee is not strategically important to the Association, the Selection Committee has been delegated the decision-making authority of State Council to resolve upon preferred candidates. A routine report on the exercise of delegated authority must be provided to State Council.

In making an advisory recommendation or decision concerning a vacancy, the Selection Committee must provide written reasons based on the assessment and ranking of all applicants.

Where a vacancy involves a ministerial appointment, State Council has resolved that a panel of at least three (3) names be put forward for consideration.

#### **(v) Diversity and Gender Equity**

WALGA is committed to providing equal selection opportunity for nominees reflective of the diversity of the wider community, including nominees of any:

- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Gender history
- Race
- Religion
- Cultural and linguistic background
- Age, and
- Ability or impairment

Accordingly, within WALGA's nominations process, nominees from all backgrounds and of all genders are encouraged to nominate for position on boards and committees.

In relation to diversity and gender equity in appointments to boards and committees, the policy endorsed by State Council (February 2003) is that *the practice of 'Best Person for the Job' will be the basis of recommendations for WALGA representatives on any boards or committees*. This is because WALGA is typically responsible for putting forward nominees for one position (or a minority of positions) to represent the interests of the Local Government sector.

Notwithstanding, diversity and gender equity considerations will inform the Selection Committee's deliberative process whenever possible, particularly in the composition of panels put forward to a Minister for consideration.

#### **(vi) Decision making process of State Council**

For Boards and Committee of strategic importance to the Association, State Council has retained responsibility for decision making on preferred candidates for vacancies. The role of the Selection Committee in the selection process for these bodies is to assess nominations and make advisory recommendations.

Once deliberations have been completed by the Selection Committee, and the quality assurance assessment process has been undertaken, the Committee will prepare a written report to State Council that specifies:

- The nominations received for a position;
- The preferred applicant for the vacancy or a panel of applicants in order of preference; and
- Supporting reasons for the recommendation in accordance with the selection criteria.

Recommendations submitted to State Council will be considered as a motion, with a simple majority carrying the motion. The method of voting will be a show of hands.

With ultimate decision-making authority, State Council is empowered to vote against a recommendation of the Selection Committee. If a recommendation is lost, then there will be the capacity for a State Councillor to move an alternative person for the position (by way of a motion which must be seconded), or to request the Selection Committee to reconvene to review and reconsider their assessment process.

Given the Selection Committee's diligent and merit-based selection process, putting forward alternative candidates in this way is not recommended. State Councillors are able to ask questions of the Selection Committee Chair prior to and at the State Council meeting to address any queries regarding the nomination and assessment process. The Selection Committee agenda, including received nominations, is available for State Councillors to view prior to the State Council meeting.

The reporting of minutes to the State Council's deliberations on nominations to boards and committees will include information on which applicant was endorsed and provide summary reasons in relation to the selection criteria for the position. This will significantly increase transparency in the process.

#### **(vii) Interview Component to the Selection Process**

As part of the selection process for certain key strategic boards and committees as identified by State Council, the Selection Committee is to shortlist the top three (3) to five (5) applicants on the basis of suitability for the vacancy. However, should there be only one applicant, or that one applicant's nomination is considered of 'stand out' quality and appropriate for the vacancy, the need to conduct an interview may not be required. In addition, as many key strategic boards and committees are subject to Ministerial appointment from a panel of between three and nine nominees, the Selection Committee has determined that interviews will not be required in these instances.

In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate for the Chair and/or Executive Officer of the relevant board or committee to attend the Selection Committee to provide advice at the request of the Selection Committee on the vacancy and suitability of candidates. Where this occurs, the Chair and/or Executive Officer is not to participate or seek to influence the Selection Committee when deliberating on the preferred applicant(s) to be short-listed for the position.

In the event that interviews are considered necessary, short-listed applicants are to be notified that they will be interviewed by a formal selection panel, comprising the Chair of the Selection Committee, a member of the Selection Committee and the Association CEO or their delegate. This interview may be conducted in person, by telephone or by video conference as required.

The report and recommendations stemming from the selection panel will be referred back to the Selection Committee for ratification (out of session) of the preferred applicant(s) prior to finalisation.

Once ratified, the minutes of the Selection Committee and the report from the selection panel will be submitted to State Council for ratification.

#### **(viii) Quality Assurance Assessment of the Selection Process**

Once the deliberations of the Selection Committee have been completed, a **quality assurance assessment** is undertaken by the Secretariat prior to finalising a decision or recommendation. This assessment verifies that each and every stage within the selection process has been completed correctly. Where a review of the selection process is subsequently requested by an aggrieved applicant, this instrument can be used to substantiate that proper process has been followed.

This will include, for example, a check to ensure that all nominations were received before the closing date, that all nominations addressed the selection criteria, etc. The assessment will be undertaken by the Secretariat and an Executive Manager of WALGA will certify that due process was adhered to.

The benefits of incorporating an assessment requirement at this stage includes the capacity to limit the potential for a breach of process, and to provide an accessible source for review if one is to be undertaken at a later stage.

#### **(ix) Review of the Selection Process**

Unsuccessful nominees are provided an opportunity to receive feedback on their nomination, in the first instance from the Secretariat, and subsequently from the Selection Committee Chair.

The selection framework includes a review mechanism by which aggrieved parties can seek an examination of the process followed to ascertain whether a **breach in process** has occurred. This appeal right does not extend to a review on the basis of merit or any other factor.

A request for a review must take the form of a written application to the Chief Executive Officer, and must be submitted within 14 days of the Selection Committees' or State Council's decision. Applicants will be advised in writing by the Secretariat of the decision of the Selection Committee or State Council within three (3) working days.

The review process will involve the WALGA Chief Executive Officer appraising the quality assurance assessment undertaken at the conclusion of the selection process, and providing the applicant with a copy of that assessment.

In addition, the applicant will also be able to access information on the assessment undertaken by the Selection Committee in regards to their application and that of the successful applicant. They will not, however, be permitted access to the nominations of other applicants.

Where WALGA cannot establish that proper process was followed by the Selection Committee, the CEO will reconvene the Selection Committee to repeat their deliberations and the matter will be referred back to State Council for reconsideration.

#### **(x) Review of Delegation**

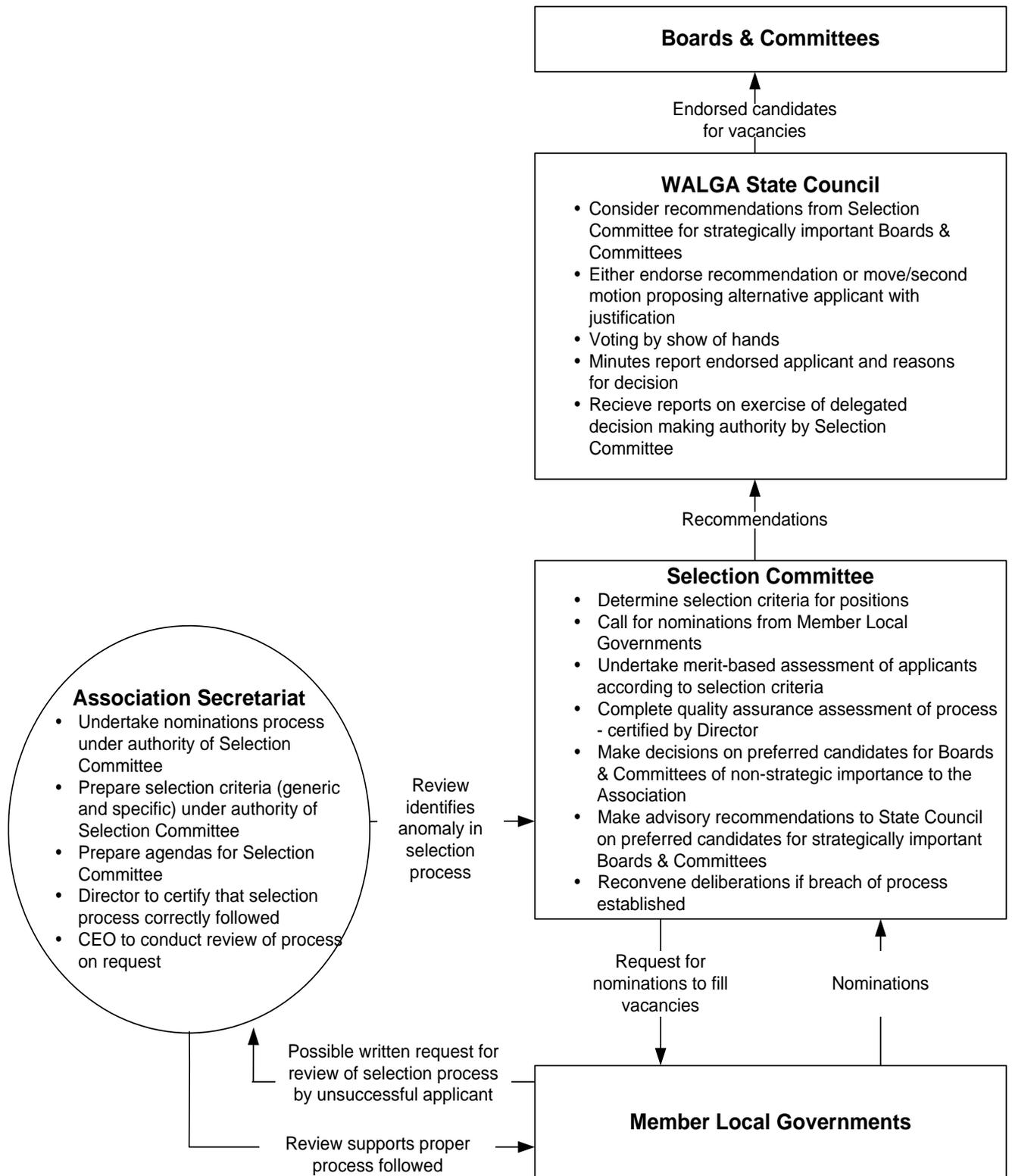
The Selection Committee is required to review its delegation regularly, and at least every six years. This review will include an examination of the Boards and Committee which have been identified as being of strategic importance to the Association.

The review will look at any new boards or committees that have been established since the previous review; consider relevant changes to the strategic priorities of WALGA; and determine whether any existing bodies have become redundant since the previous review.

The review will facilitate variations to be made to the Boards and Committees for which State Council reserves decision making authority and those which are delegated to the Selection Committee for determination.

**E. Model for the Selection Process**

The model for the selection process as proposed can be represented diagrammatically:



## Appendix 1

### Boards and Committees for State Council determination

<b>STATE COUNCIL DETERMINED</b>	
1.	Community Sporting & Recreation Facilities Fund Committee
2.	Heavy Vehicle Advisory Group
3.	LGIS
4.	Library Board of Western Australia
5.	Local Government Advisory Board (LGAB)
6.	Local Government Standards Panel
7.	Municipal Waste Advisory Council/Officer Advisory Group
8.	National Trust of Australia (WA) Council
9.	Regional Development Council
10.	Road Safety Council
11.	Swan River Trust Board
12.	WALGA Finance and Services Committee
13.	WA Local Government Grants Commission
14.	WA Planning Commission (WAPC)
15.	

The Boards & Committees from the above list, are identified as being of the highest strategic priority and therefore requiring a formal interview component as part of the selection process. (Refer appendix 3).

1.	LGIS

## Appendix 2

### Boards and Committees for Selection Committee determination

<b>SELECTION COMMITTEE DETERMINED</b>	
1.	Advisory Committee for the Purity of Water
2.	Air Quality Coordinating Committee
3.	Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse
4.	Australia Day Council
5.	Board of Australia's Golden Outback
6.	Biosecurity Council of WA
7.	Building Commission Advisory Committee
8.	Building Surveyors Qualifications Advisory Committee
9.	Bush Fire Brigade Volunteer Advisory Committee
10.	Caravan Parks & Camping Grounds Advisory Committee
11.	Control of Vehicles off Road Areas Advisory Committee
12.	Economic Regulations Authority Consumer Consultative Committee
13.	Edith Cowan Uni South West Campus (Bunbury Advisory Board)
14.	DFES Consultative Committees – Bush Fire Service (BFS) & Fire & Rescue Service (FRS)
15.	DFES ESL Capital Grants Committee – Bush Fire Brigade (BFB) & State Emergency Service (SES)
16.	Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Advisory Committee
17.	Geographic Names Committee
18.	Keep Australia Beautiful Council (WA)
19.	Local Health Authorities Analytical Committee (LHAAC)
20.	Main Roads Advisory Group for Management of Straying Stock in Pastoral Regions
21.	Metropolitan Regional Cemeteries Working Group
22.	Neighbourhood Watch Board
23.	North Metropolitan Perth Area Consultative Committee
24.	Outback Highway Development Committee
25.	Peel-Harvey Catchment Council
26.	Perth Region NRM
27.	Public Library Working Group
28.	Rural and Remote Education Advisory Committee
29.	Remote & Rural Medicine Advisory Committee (WACRM)
30.	Roadside Conservation Committee (RCC)
31.	Rural Towns Program
32.	State Emergency Management Sub-Committee
33.	Soil and Land Conservation Council
34.	South West Catchment Council
35.	State Emergency Management Recovery Sub-committee
36.	Telethon Institute for Child Health Research Development Pathways Project
37.	Tourism Industry Reference Group
38.	Trails Reference Panel

39.	WA Environment Health Officers Professional Review Board
40.	WA Health Promotion Foundation (Healthways Board)
41.	WA Land Information System (WALIS) Council & Core Management Group
42.	WA Freight & Logistics Council
43.	WA State Graffiti Taskforce
44.	WAPC Infrastructure Coordinating Committee
45.	WAPC Statutory Planning Committee
46.	Western Australian Council on Homelessness
47.	Wetlands Coordinating Committee
48.	Wheatbelt NRM
49.	Wild Dog management Advisory Committee
50.	Working Group to Review Health (Treatment of Sewerage & Disposal of Effluent & Liquid Waste) Regulations 1974

## Appendix 3

### Local Government Appointments to Boards and Committees Introduction of Interview Component to the Selection Process

#### Selection Process

In October 2005, State Council supported the extension of WALGA's Selection Process for key strategic boards and committee to include a formal interview process. 'Key strategic' boards and committees have previously been identified by State Council as those external bodies to which Local Government has a significant interest.

The rationale behind these changes are linked to the considerable importance of these strategic boards and committees to the Local Government sector, coupled with the competitive field of candidates that are normally attracted to the vacancy (part of the attractiveness of these positions, whilst related to the importance of the board or committee, undoubtedly also correlates to the significant stipend and allowances provided to sitting members). These factors make it imperative to get the very best people from Local Government into these vacancies to represent the interests of Local Government and WALGA.

The board and committees identified as being of the highest strategic priority, and therefore requiring a formal interview component as part of the selection process, are as follows:

- LGIS;

Changes to the selection process for these boards and committees are outlined below:

- The vacancy is advertised within Local Government using the normal medium.
- At the closing date of nominations:
  - a copy of nominations for the vacancy are to be sent to the Selection Committee, together with the Association's scoring matrix and supporting documentation;
  - a copy of nominations is to be provided to the Chair and/or Executive Officer of the board or committee with an invitation to consider the applicants on the basis of the written nominations and make comments as to their suitability for the position;
  - comments provided by the Chair and/or Executive Officer of the board or committee are to be added to the "Notes for the Chair of the Selection Committee".
- The Selection Committee will consider the applicants and assess each applicant on the basis of written responses to the generic and position specific selection criteria, taking into account any comments made by the Chair and/or Executive Officer of the relevant board or committee.
- The Selection Committee is to shortlist the top three (3) to five (5) applicants on the basis of written responses to the generic and position specific selection criteria, taking into account any comments made by the Chair and/or Executive Officer of the relevant board or committee.
- In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate for the Chair and/or Executive Officer of the relevant board or committee to attend the Selection Committee to provide advice at the request of the Selection Committee on the vacancy and suitability of candidates. Where this occurs, the Chair and/or Executive Officer is not to participate or seek to influence the Selection Committee when deliberating on the preferred applicant(s) to be short-listed for the position.
- In the event that interviews are considered necessary, short listed applicants are to be notified that they will be interviewed by a formal selection panel, comprising the Chair of the Selection Committee, a member of the Selection Committee and the WALGA CEO or their delegate. They are to be sent an overview which outlines the structure of the interview process, when candidates

should arrive for their interview, who is on the interview panel, how candidates should prepare for the interview, and what happens after the interviews are concluded in terms of finalising the appointment(s) to the board or committee. Interviews may be conducted in person, by telephone or by video conference as required.

- Interview Panel to be convened prior to commencing interviews to review the questions that will be asked to candidates. The Panel will utilize a combination of standard questions and position-specific questions to suit the vacancy.
- Candidates to be interviewed to be requested to attend interview 15 minutes prior to the interview is scheduled to start, and which time they are to be given the questions to review. To protect the integrity of the process, candidates are not to be given prior notice of the questions. Questions are to be taken from the candidate once they have completed the interview to avoid the potential for transferal to another candidate.
- The report from the Interview Panel, once ticked off by the members of the Interview Panel, must be e-mailed to the remaining members of the Selection Committee for ratification of the recommendations out-of-session. This should be done no later than 48 hours prior to the State Council meeting.
- Once ratified by the Selection Committee, the Chair of the Selection Committee needs to be advised that this approval has been granted and given a copy of the report(s) from the Interview Panel no later than 12 hours prior to the State Council meeting. The Chair will then read the recommendations in the report at the State Council meeting for endorsement of the preferred candidate(s).