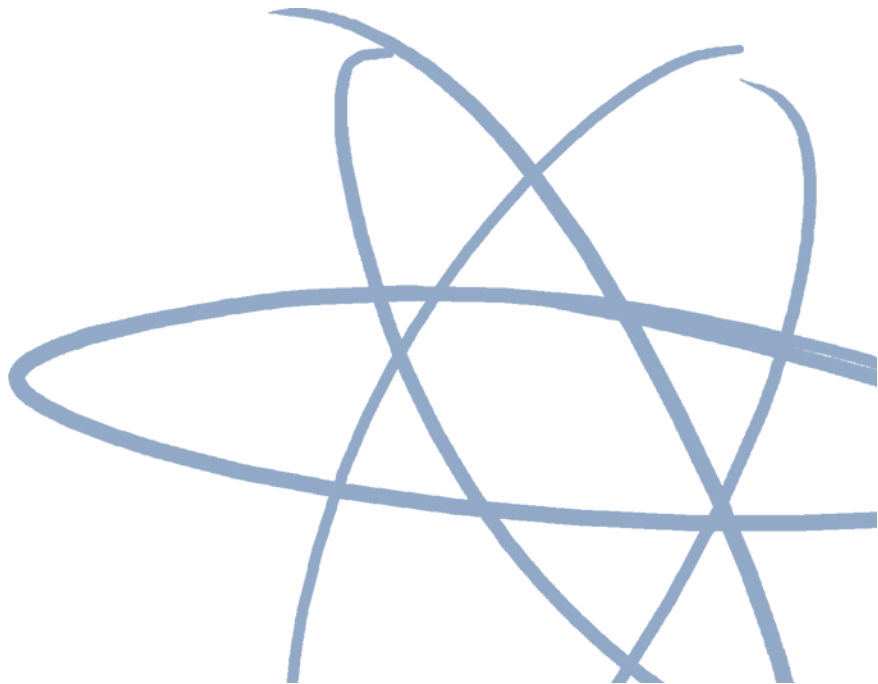


**Operational  
Delivery  
Profession**

# **Operational Delivery Profession**

## **Senior Talent Management Strategy**

**Refreshed December 2016**



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## **1. Context**

The Operational Delivery Profession (ODP) makes sure that people get the services and protection they need. We are a large diverse group: there are 250,000 of us, making up 70% of the Civil Service. Between us, we perform hundreds of job roles and work in most Departments and Agencies. Because we are so large and diverse, we define our jobs by the skills and behaviours we need to do them, rather than by our Department or Agency.

All of us work for the same customers – the public – and they expect more from us every day. At the same time, Civil Service Reform means that we are becoming leaner and there are fewer of us. Times of austerity mean we are even more accountable for our resources and what we spend.

The Civil Service Reform Plan, published in 2012 stated: that although there are some great managers running big and complex organisations, for too long operational management and delivery had been undervalued; that in the future, the leadership of the Civil Service would need to have operational experience and capability and; there should be more focus on developing people through more active career management.

The Civil Service Workforce Plan (2016-2020) builds upon this and reinforces the commitment to talent management. It makes it clear that organisational borders and silos need to become a thing of the past and the civil service needs to become a place where people from a broad range of backgrounds, professions and experiences can build successful careers and achieve their potential.

In the past talent management and succession planning traditionally took place within Departments rather than across the Profession. Departments seldom looked across government for suitable operational resource

## **2. Progress to date**

This (2016) refresh of the Senior Talent Strategy highlights our progress since the 2014 review, and also sets out what is still to be done.

We have:

- Continued to collate the nine box grid (talent indicator) markings for operational SCS and Grade 6/7s across government;
- Collated all available biographies at SCS pay band 2;
- Put in place a Senior Talent Board for our SCS pay bands 1 and 2 which meet quarterly;
- Commenced a review of our G6 and Grade 7 Talent Management process;
- Built our network across the civil service and beyond and have become recognised as the cross-government point of contact for leadership issues and succession planning for ODP.

### 3. Scope

Our Senior Talent Management Strategy covers SCS pay bands 1 and 2, Grades 6 and Grade 7s who are either in ODP or who have operational delivery as their career anchor.

### 4. Purpose

The purpose of our strategy is to ensure that, through talent management and succession planning, we have engaged and skilled operational leaders in the right posts at the right time. This supports our profession's objectives to:

- Identify and develop our most talented people;
- Work towards Operational Delivery becoming the career of choice for the most talented civil servants;
- Be professional in all that we do when working directly with the public;
- Ensure that everyone has transferable skills that are recognised and respected across the Civil Service and beyond;
- Achieve an equivalent level of esteem with more established professions;
- Share skills and people across government.

### 5. Vision and goals

#### Vision

Parity of esteem

Professionalism &  
recognition of the  
skills of operational  
leaders

Transferability

#### Goals

Identify and  
retain talent

Continuing  
professional  
development

Professional  
standards/ODP  
specific Indicators of  
Potential

Responsive to  
customer and  
business needs

Interchange  
between  
departments

Continuous  
improvement

## **6. Principles**

Our Senior Talent Management Strategy is based on the following key principles:

- It is aligned to the central Civil Service Talent Strategy, principles and tools, helping to ensure a consistent approach to talent management across government and builds on our on-going engagement with Cabinet Office Talent Team;
- It utilises the nine box talent grid (Annex A) to assess sustained contribution over time and potential;
- The assessment of “potential” will take into account ability and engagement alongside people’s aspirations and personal circumstances;
- To create a senior leadership that reflects the diversity of the citizens we serve;
- Where appropriate, sharing ‘sustained contribution and potential’ data with Departments and the Head(s) of Profession to ensure that the right people are deployed in the right places at the right times;
- It takes into account departmental and personal interests;
- We will focus on developing all our leaders;
- It uses the ODP SCS Indicators of Potential (launched Dec 2016) to identify leadership capability to supplement the generic SCS Indicators of Potential;
- The Critical Roles Succession Plan (Annex B) is used to match ODP’s most talented, skilled and high potential people with our most critical roles;
- The demographic needs of our people are taken into account;
- Openness and transparency – we will maintain a light touch to our process;
- Compliance with data protection principles;
- It anticipates Professions/Functions taking the lead for nine box grid talent assessments for our own people in 2017, as required by Cabinet Office.

**6.1** Our Senior Talent Management strategy and succession planning will be delivered by our Senior Talent Board and the Talent Management Forums that are set to be piloted in Quarter four of the operational year. They will work collaboratively to ensure talent is hosted, and not hoarded, by departments.

### **6.2 The Senior Talent Board**

We have changed to having only one Senior Talent Board which now covers both SCS pay bands 1 and 2. The Senior Talent Board has created a way for our senior operational leaders to further their experience across the profession.

The Board is chaired by the Head of Profession and includes the Head of the Operational Delivery Profession Central Team. Membership has expanded in 2016 to now include either the Heads of Profession or HR Directors from the following:

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- HMRC;
- Home Office;
- MoJ;
- DWP
- DfT;
- BEIS;
- DEFRA

Where there is no direct representation for a department, the Chair represents individuals from within.

The Board:

- Meets quarterly to discuss who and where the most talented SCS are in the profession and the roles that need exceptional performers. The aim is to facilitate managed moves for operational SCS bands 1 and 2 using the nine box grid and ODP SCS Indicators of Potential process;
- Has shared responsibility with Departments for talent management for all operational SCS bands 1 and 2 and exceptionally, the highest performing Grade 6 and Grade 7s;
- Is the first point of contact for cross-government vacancies at SCS pay bands 1 and 2;
- Provides opportunities for our people beyond their own department/agency

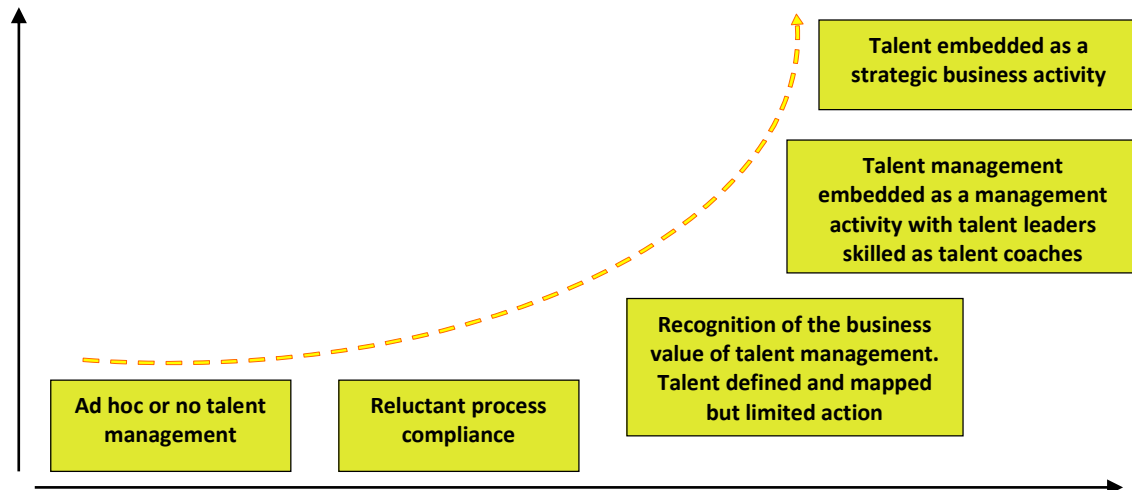
### **6.3. Talent Management Forums**

In autumn 2015 we reviewed our approach for G6 and 7 Talent Management and as a result we paused the Regional Talent Forums. We have completed a lessons learned report on these and aim to use the good practice from them, coupled with elements of the SCS Talent Management process to set up Grade 6 and 7 Talent Management Forums operating geographically, to better meet the needs of these grades.

From Nov 2016 we will pilot the Talent Management Forums in Wales, with the aim of full roll out in 2017/18.

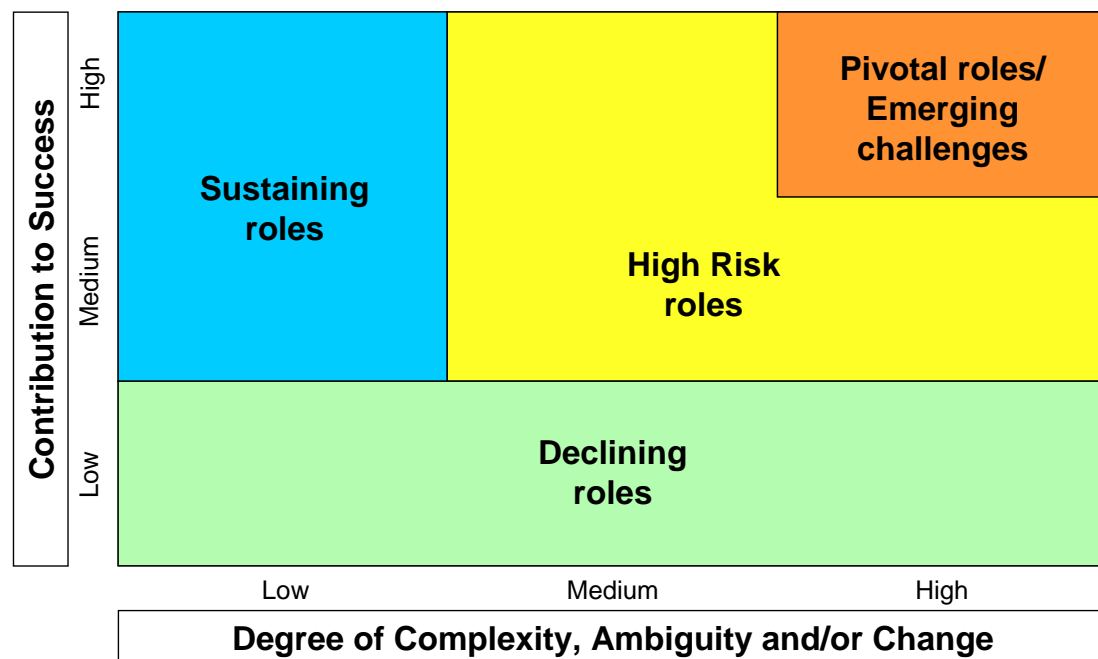
### **6.4 Talent Maturity Curve**

Between 2012 and 2014 we moved from “ad hoc or no talent management” to “recognition of the business value of talent management – talent defined and mapped but limited action”. Our aim was to move to “talent embedded as a strategic business activity” in 2015. We have certainly moved some way towards achieving this and we strive to continuously improve and move further through the curve.



### 6.5. Role criticality

Our strategy is to match our most talented, skilled and high potential people with the most important or critical roles, using the approach outlined in this Role (Criticality) Assessment Grid to measure the relative importance or criticality of our senior roles.



**6.6** A challenge still exists around us both identifying the critical operational delivery roles across the civil service, and gaining access to the information on the existing pool of resources we have available to help us fill them. We have a plan to create a more integrated way of accessing this information from individuals and departments in quarter 4 of 2016/17 and beyond. This will enable us to compare our pool of talent (people) against what is needed (roles) and identify our talent management and succession planning risks.

## 7. Current and future position

<b>Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>We will have accurate, complete and robust data that identifies talent across the profession.</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Current position</b>	<b>Future position</b>
<p>An agreed understanding of talent management and how it can benefit the profession.</p> <p>Nine box grid data held centrally for most operational SCS and Grade 6/7s.</p> <p>Biographies held for some SCS pay band 2s.</p>	<p>ODP SCS Biographies self-completed &amp; held for all SCS.</p> <p>Career conversations between talent board members and ODP SCS taking place regularly and recorded. ODP SCS Biographies held centrally for all so that when vacancies arise, the profession is able to respond quickly and match suitable candidates using the ODP SCS Indicators of Potential information.</p>
Conversations with departments when leadership issues arise.	Work together proactively on succession planning, particularly for critical roles.
Updated Website with Terms of Reference for Senior Talent Board, Information about the G6 and 7 pilot. Individual SCS approached by HoP to invite completion of the ODP SCS Biography. All HRDs, departmental HoPs and Heads of Talent aware giving increased transparency and understanding of the profession's talent offer	<p>Increased amount of centrally held data enabling greater capacity to identify capability gaps and take a strategic approach to talent management.</p> <p>Increased engagement in the process by individuals and departments.</p>

<b>Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>We will develop and deploy high potential staff corporately across the Civil Service.</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Current position</b>	<b>Future position</b>
There is a lack of opportunity for high potential staff to develop skills in other government departments.	Breadth and depth of experience is valued and senior operational talent is deployed across government rather than individual departments.
Managed moves are occasionally used across departments.	Managed moves are used for strategic succession planning, making the most of individuals' talents and meeting the development needs of staff. The Heads of



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	Profession are notified of all SCS vacancies and the Talent Management Forums of critical Grade 6 and 7 vacancies in order to consider managed moves as the first step to vacancy filling (Departments retain delegated authority for recruitment).
Loans and secondments are not actively utilised or marketed.	Loans, secondment and interchange are used as a regular part of development activity to enable the profession to grow and develop across departments, the wider public sector, and other industries.

**Strategy**

- **We will help our operational managers to understand the importance of the most critical roles and support mechanisms that are in place to fill these posts at short notice.**

<b>Current position</b>	<b>Future position</b>
There is a lack of opportunity for high potential staff to develop skills in other government departments.	Breadth and depth of experience is valued and senior operational talent is deployed across government rather than individual departments.
Succession plans are limited and where available are contained within departments.	A cross-government succession plan in place which is used for filling posts, drawing on talent from across the profession and harnessing it across government.
Critical roles across government are not defined.	Clarity and agreement on the most critical operational roles.

## 8. Roles and responsibilities

(Annex B sets out the full Operational Delivery Profession governance structure)

Stakeholder / Role	Responsibilities
<b>Head of Profession</b> Senior Responsible Owner for ODP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leads ODP; promotes corporate and collaborative working across government to develop and embed the profession.</li> <li>Takes a leading and influential role in talent management; oversees senior departmental appointments and succession planning across government.</li> <li>Leads and chairs the senior ODP Talent Boards and ODP Executive Committee.</li> <li>Know their people, carry out career conversations and broker managed moves.</li> </ul>
<b>ODP Executive Committee</b> Sets the strategy for ODP and oversees progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approves the ODP talent management strategy and direction of travel.</li> <li>Oversees progress of the talent management strategy.</li> <li>Promotes the ODP talent management strategy across government.</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Talent Board</b> Ensures high potential leaders are managed and developed corporately so that the best individuals are ready to fill future leadership roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know their people, carry out career conversations and being involved in the broker managed moves.</li> <li>Considers opportunities for managed moves as a first step to SCS vacancy filling.</li> <li>Takes an interest in the most talented individuals, supporting their development and career progression.</li> <li>Ensures consistency of standards across government through nine box grid moderation.</li> <li>Supports and promotes a corporate, government-wide approach to the profession and the sharing of talent.</li> </ul>
<b>Departmental Heads of Profession/ HRDs</b> To take forward the decisions made at the Senior Talent Board within their own department.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster the talent they are responsible for and ensure they are properly represented.</li> <li>Develop relationships within own department to make decisions taken at the Senior Talent Board happen – there is no ‘one size fits all’ process for talent management.</li> </ul>
<b>Talent Management Forums</b> Extends the principles of the Senior Talent Board for Grades 6 and 7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Considers opportunities for managed moves as a first step to Grade 6 and 7 critical vacancy filling.</li> <li>Takes an interest in the most talented individuals, supporting their development and career progression in the Civil Service.</li> <li>Ensures consistency of standards across government through nine box grid moderation.</li> <li>Supports and promotes a corporate, government-wide approach to the profession and the sharing of talent.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Central ODP Talent Team</b> Build a picture of where our talent is across the profession and act as secretariat to the talent boards.</p>	<p>Act as a central HR function.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with departmental talent leads to gather and maintain data and intelligence centrally.</li> <li>• Support Heads of Profession in filling critical roles.</li> <li>• Build relationships with smaller departments and ensure their talent is fully represented.</li> <li>• Co-ordinate career conversations for emerging posts.</li> </ul>
<p><b>ODP Talent Working Group</b> To support the Senior Talent Board in delivering an effective pipeline for future leadership roles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work within their departments to ensure successful implementation of the talent management strategy.</li> <li>• Implement robust frameworks, processes and tools to support delivery of the talent management strategy.</li> <li>• Ensure effective communications between ODP and departments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Senior leaders</b> Support the development of high potential staff and implement the ODP talent management strategy across government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage those with potential to take ownership of their careers and their development.</li> <li>• Become an ambassador for using the ODP SCS Indicators of Potential and ODP Biography</li> <li>• Complete talent management processes for themselves and their people to agreed timescales, embedding processes into regular development discussions.</li> <li>• Provide all staff with open and honest feedback on performance and potential, skill gaps and career prospects.</li> <li>• Support and encourage high potential staff to gain breadth and depth of experience, releasing staff where required to develop skills.</li> <li>• Leaders in large departments share knowledge and expertise with smaller departments and agencies to encourage consistency across government.</li> </ul>
<p><b>High potential leaders</b> Take ownership for personal development and career progression.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals commit to self-development to meet the needs of the Civil Service Reform, Capabilities Plans, Civil Service Workforce Plan and changing business requirements.</li> <li>• Ask for and act on feedback.</li> <li>• Look for opportunities to improve corporate contribution and breadth of knowledge to ensure success in future ODP recruitment initiatives.</li> </ul>

## 9. Success criteria

**Know who and where:** understand who makes up the profession across government

- A clear understanding of who is in ODP from Grade 7 to SCS
  - Identification of senior talent in ODP from Grade 7 to SCS
- Increased number of up to date Biographies held

**Increased capability:** high potential staff are developed to compete successfully for promotion across government and to secure places on corporate talent programmes

- Increased number of vacancies filled
- Increased operational delivery nominations and representation on talent schemes

**Flexible resources:** fluid movement of talent in and out of departments to build and fill key capability gaps

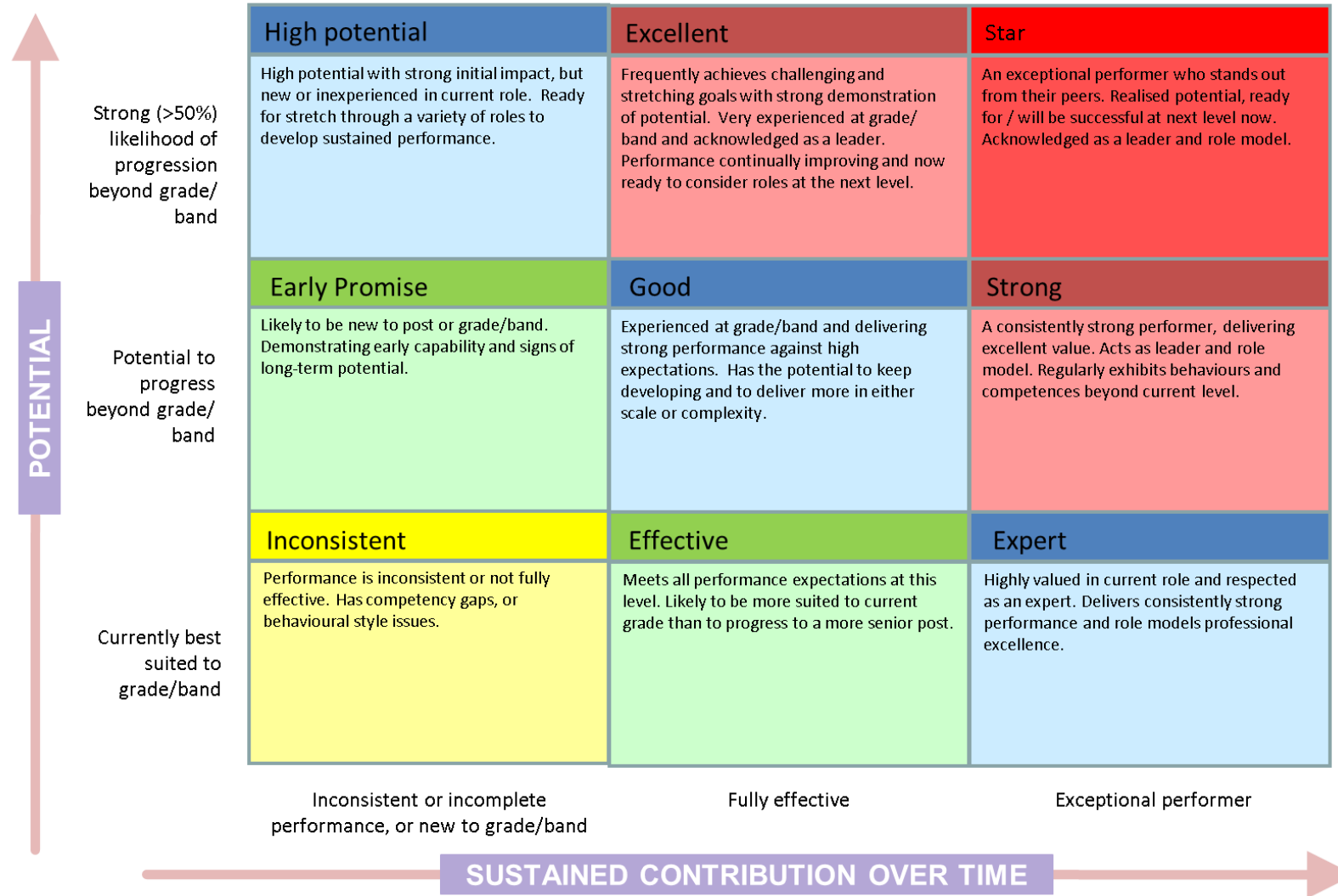
- Increased number of managed moves across government
- Increased number of loans across government

**Cross-government culture:** in line with Civil Service Workforce Plan cross-government assignments, moves and promotions, help create a culture of an Operational Delivery Profession

- Increased career conversations with talented leaders
- Senior operational leaders identify themselves as operational delivery professionals in the Civil Service
- Achievement of Civil Service Workforce Plan aims and Capability Plan objectives

## Annex A: Nine box talent grid definitions

## Grid Definitions

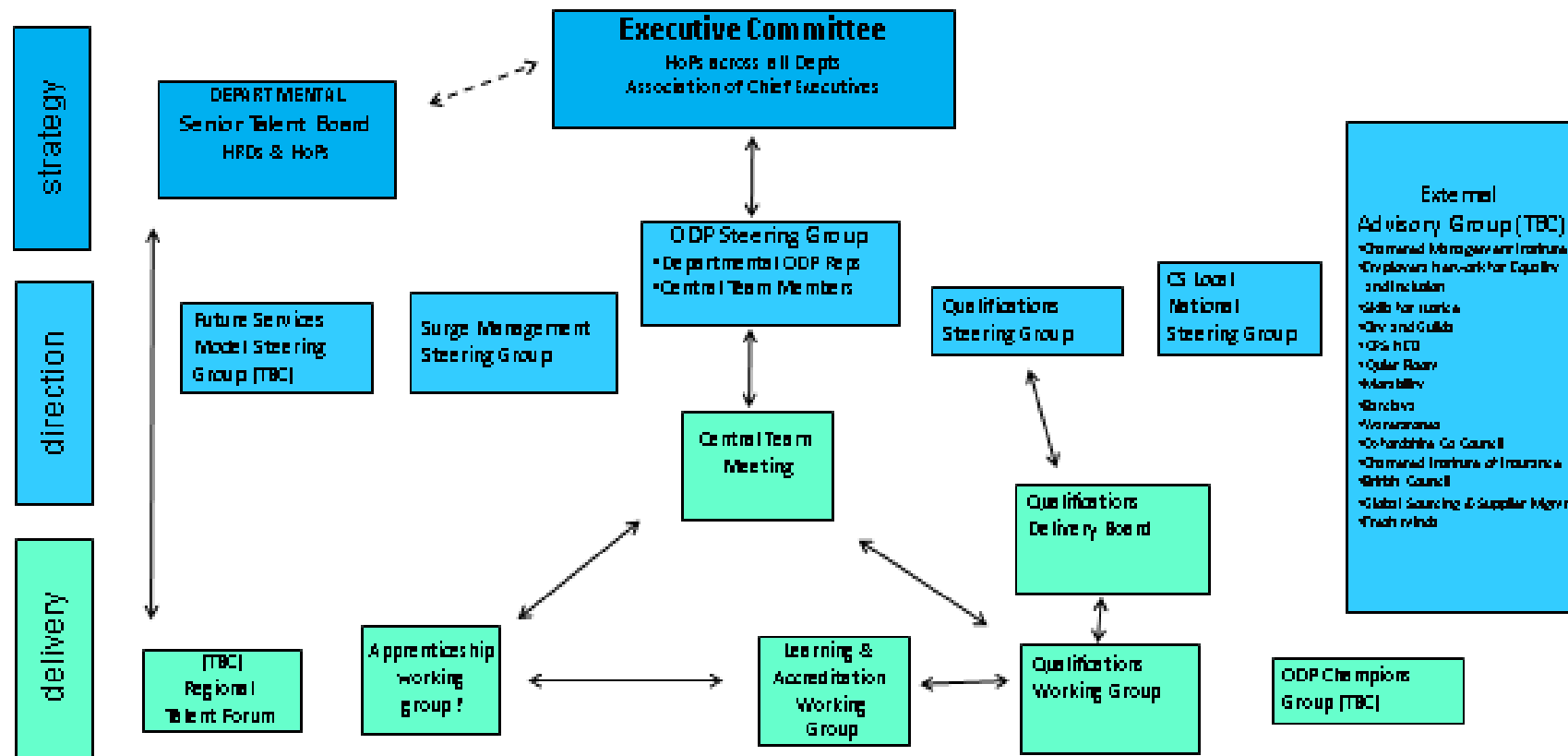


## Annex B: Critical Roles Succession Plan

Department/ Team:										
Date Completed:										
Role	Roleholder	Commenced Role	Due for Move:	Level	Emergency Cover	Ready Now	Ready 1-2 years	Ready 3-5 years	R/A/G Status*	Action

**R/A/G Status:**

- **Red** - Weak succession cover
- **Amber** - Reasonable succession cover with some gaps to address
- **Green** - Strong succession cover



## **Annex D: Senior Talent Board – Terms of Reference Updated April 2016**

### **1. Our purpose**

The Operational Delivery Profession (ODP) draft 3 year plan (from April 2016) aims to achieve stronger talent management, with talent identified, nurtured and shared corporately to give strengthened operational leadership and more robust succession planning across the profession.

We have agreed criteria of Operational Delivery Profession Senior Talent and aim to collect detailed information against this criteria to allow us to:

- a. Make informed decisions about the profession's capability and pipelines
- b. Fill critical roles swiftly, openly and transparently
- c. Provide people with stretching and interesting career development opportunities

This Board is responsible for driving forward the processes to make that happen.

### **2. Accountability**

We will be accountable to the ODP Executive Committee.

### **3. Our membership**

Our Board is chaired by the Head of the ODP Central Team. Members of the Board are the Cross Government Head of Profession, Ruth Owen, together with the following mix of HR leaders and departmental Heads of Profession:

#### **PB2 Board**

Operations DG DWP  
Talent Partner CS Talent  
HRD MoJ  
HRD Home Office  
DG UKVI Home Office  
HRD DfT  
HRD DEFRA  
DD Talent HMRC  
HRD BIS

#### **PB1 Board**

Operations DG DWP  
Talent Partner CS Talent  
HRD MoJ  
HRD Home Office  
Head of Profession Home Office  
HRD DfT  
HRD DEFRA  
DD Talent HMRC  
HRD BIS  
Head of Profession HMRC



#### **4. Our role**

**We will:**

- Work across government and departmental/agency boundaries to create opportunities to make managed moves happen
- Use the nine box grid process to facilitate managed moves across the profession at SCS level for individuals identified as having potential
- Follow all data protection protocols and observe full confidentiality with the data we hold
- Review management information for the profession to assist in long term strategic planning

#### **5. Meeting frequency**

- Meetings will be held every three months and will take place either face-to-face or by telephone/video conference
- The Board will commission a refresh of all the data in preparation for its quarterly meetings.