

12 Month Progress Report

Attempted Corrupt Payment and Submission of False Resumés to Public Authorities

Please update this schedule with information about the status of each item as at 26 September 2011. Include details of the latest action/update in respect of each initiative, dates where relevant and attach copies of any documents referred to, where possible, in support of implementation of particular initiatives. Please provide the name of a contact person in your agency from whom we can seek more detail if needed. Please return this document to the ICAC in writing and electronically to ashapiro@icac.nsw.gov.au by no later than 26 September 2011.

Recommendation 1.

That Cobar Shire Council ensures that:

- a) adequate employment screening checks are performed on preferred applicants in line with the current Australian Standard on Employment Screening (AS 4811-2006) and
- b) applicants for positions complete a form indicating that:
 - they consent to employment screening checks being conducted upon them
 - the information provided in support of their application is true and
 - they acknowledge that any employment or offer of employment may be withdrawn if they have provided false support in support of their application.

Summary of progress

- Implementation has not yet started
- The recommendation has been implemented
- The recommendation will be implemented differently
- The recommendation is no longer relevant
- The recommendation is partially implemented

Action taken to implement recommendation

Cobar Shire Council's Recruitment Policy and supporting material was audited to ensure adherence to AS4811-2006 with application forms, website information, etc amended to adhere.

For professional positions, such as Manager upwards, Council engages a Professional Recruitment Screening Company to undertake employment screening checks including checks of qualifications, experience, references, referees and memberships, etc.

Supporting material

Council's Recruitment Policy, Recruitment Procedure, website information, Employment Application Forms and Reference Checks Forms are available upon request.

Evaluation of implementation (Progress update)

It has been a healthy process to update the documentation and instigate processes to ensure Council's recruitment is undertaken properly and in accordance with AS4811-2006.

To ensure that adequate employment screening checks are undertaken Council has instigated a process and procedure that has been compared to and benchmarked against the processes undertaken by Council's peak industrial body, the NSW Local Government and Shires Association Employment Solutions Section.

Council's new Recruitment Procedure ensures that the Position Appointment Convenor checks against an appropriate procedures checklist to ensure that proper processes have been followed.

The Council will review the operation of the process and procedures over the next year to ensure that that they adequately address the recommendation. After the initial review period, policies and procedures will be reviewed at least every two years to ensure they continue to satisfy the standard.

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Recommendation 2.

That Cobar Shire Council engage the use of an employment screening company if they are recruiting senior staff and are having difficulty in verifying the information supplied by the preferred applicant.

Summary of progress

- Implementation has not yet started
- The recommendation has been implemented
- The recommendation will be implemented differently
- The recommendation is no longer relevant
- The recommendation is partially implemented

Action taken to implement recommendation

Council has been engaging a Professional Recruitment Screening Company (First Advantage Corporation) for positions of a least Manager level up and professional positions.

Supporting material

See documentation for Recommendation1 that is available on request. An Example Report for a Manager position is also available on request.

Evaluation of implementation (Progress update)

All Action Items/Matters have been completed.

The Contractual Requirements between Council and the engaged Employment Screening Company(s) is available upon request. This information also details the processes in accordance with AS4811-2006 that are followed.

Council will assess the performance of the Employment Screening Company(s) over the next year to ensure they are performing adequately and that all required checks are being performed.

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Recommendation 3.

That Cobar Shire Council ensures that it knows and is satisfied with the:

- a) verification checks performed by professional bodies before it relies on membership of them as evidence of a candidate's skills or experience and
- b) process used in relation to a migrant skills assessment before it relies on that assessment as evidence of a candidate's skills or experience.

Summary of progress

- Implementation has not yet started
- The recommendation has been implemented
- The recommendation will be implemented differently
- The recommendation is no longer relevant
- The recommendation is partially implemented

Action taken to implement recommendation

Council's Management Executive undertook an investigation into the verification checks of skills and/or experience performed by professional bodies that allow membership (relating to local government services). A similar investigation was undertaken in relation to migrant skills assessment.

The investigation found that the establishment of the criteria to be used for acceptability and education of staff responsible was particularly cumbersome and that the professional knowledge of the staff members responsible for the recruitment would need to be relied upon.

Council will consider the option of moving away from use of such information as professional body memberships as those professional bodies at most times do not have sufficient ability to properly screen unqualified and inappropriate persons from their membership. Cobar Shire Council is not in the position to be able to ensure Professional bodies have instigated the appropriate membership screening and so will do this screening itself.

Supporting material

Nil.

Evaluation of implementation (Progress update)

Until such time as Council is able to adequately assess the value of a professional memberships or decides not to consider such memberships, appropriately skilled and experienced council staff will review appointments to ensure that the staff responsible for each recruitment have followed the appropriate procedures and applied the policy correctly. Any issues that arise will be assessed and further changes to the policies and procedures may be made.

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Recommendation 4.

That Cobar Shire Council:

- a) obtains consent from employment applicants to verify memberships or other status that they claim to hold with professional bodies and
- b) ensures that this consent has been provided to these professional bodies.

Summary of progress

- Implementation has not yet started
- The recommendation has been implemented
- The recommendation will be implemented differently
- The recommendation is no longer relevant
- The recommendation is partially implemented

Action taken to implement recommendation

Applicants for positions at Cobar Shire Council in accordance with Council's amended Recruitment Procedures are required to provide consent in their applications to allow Council or its Agent (Employment Screening Company) to contact professional bodies for membership status or other details.

Supporting material

Council's Recruitment Procedures and Position Application Form are available upon request.

Evaluation of implementation (Progress update)

All Action Items/Matters have been completed. Applicants who fail to provide consent for Council or its Agent (Employment Screening Company) to verify professional body membership status or other details are not considered for employment with Council.