

STAFFING ASSISTANCE SCHEME IN AFRICA

Notes for Prospective Employees

General Description of Scheme

The basic purpose of Staffing Assistance Schemes is to assist in promoting development in the Third World. This is done through the provision of an accountable cash grant to Recipient Governments to allow them to attract skilled Australians to their countries to assist in their development effort.

Under the Staffing Assistance Scheme (SAS) the Australian Government provides financial assistance to a Recipient Government in the form of a contribution towards the difference in cost between the employment of local personnel and Australian personnel who may be recruited by the Recipient Government to fill established public sector positions which cannot be filled by suitably qualified local staff.

Positions covered by the Scheme are generally at the senior administrative officer, professional or technical officer levels. The positions are used to fill vacancies in government services.

The respective responsibilities of the Australian and Recipient Governments are set out in a signed Memorandum of Understanding between the two governments. The Memorandum of Understanding is a Government document not made available to Staffing Assistance Scheme appointees.

Operation of the Scheme

The Australian Government contribution is paid as a lump sum Accountable Cash Grant to the Recipient Government in respect of all appointees for that Australian financial year.

The level of funds available to a Recipient Government for the recruitment of personnel is determined annually between the Australian and Recipient Governments. Within the agreed level of funds the Recipient Government may appoint Australian citizens to a number of positions which have been agreed with the Australian Government (prior to recruitment action commencing).

Some countries appoint Australian firms to act as their agents in Australia for staffing assistance purposes. These agents are able to carry out recruitment, and to advise prospective applicants on positions in the recipient country. Some agents will have the authority to sign contracts on behalf of the Recipient Government, or to provide a service to appointees once a person has taken up a position in country.

The Australian Government responsibility under the Scheme is administered by the Australian Development Assistance Bureau. That responsibility is confined to Government to Government matters.

General Conditions

The following general conditions apply to persons occupying positions covered by the Scheme:

- (a) All persons appointed are to be Australian citizens.
- (b) The Recipient Government is responsible for all recruitment action required in the filling of positions covered by the Scheme.
- (c) SAS positions are advertised in the Australian national press and or professional journals and recruitment takes place only in Australia. Persons already employed in recipient countries under alternative arrangements will not be accepted for supplementation under the scheme except in exceptional circumstances. In the unlikely event of a person being accepted no retrospective payments will be made.
- (d) Contracts of service are signed between the Recipient Government and the selected appointee. The appointee is engaged as a servant of the Recipient Government, and not of the Australian Government.
- (e) Contracts of service will normally be for a period of two or three years. Short term appointments are not yet provided for under the Staffing Assistance Scheme operating in Africa.
- (f) All Conditions of Service are as determined by the Recipient Government. The Australian Government does not set the terms and conditions of any contract nor enter into individual cases.
- (g) The salary payable to recruits might generally be expressed as being in two parts:
 - (i) Local salary as applicable to the position in country and met directly from the Recipient country budget;
 - (ii) Supplementary salary, being the difference between the local salary and the agreed total rate as indicated in the contract;

In certain circumstances, allowances may be payable as per contract.

- (h) All salaries (and allowances if applicable) are paid by the Recipient Government. Local salary as per (g) (i) is paid by the Recipient Government in country. Salary and allowances as per (g) (ii) are generally paid in Australia by the Recipient Government, or its agent, into the an account nominated by the appointee.
- (i) In general all salary and allowances paid in the Recipient Country to persons employed under the Scheme are liable to taxation by the Recipient Government. Any portion of salary or allowances paid in Australia to the appointee is liable to taxation by the Australian Government. However, as arrangements in respect of taxation vary from country to country it is important to note that it is an individual's own responsibility to obtain advice regarding his/her own specific situation from the appropriate authorities in both Australia and the Recipient Country.
- (j) In addition to salary and allowances payable to appointees some other agreed expenses may also be met from the Staffing Assistance grant at the discretion of the Recipient Government. Enquiries regarding possible eligible expenses should be directed to the Recipient Government or their agents.
- (k) The Australian Government is not responsible in any way for the actions of an appointee and will not be involved in any litigation between the Recipient Government and the appointee, except to the extent of normal consular support given to any Australian citizen in the Recipient Country.
- (l) The Recipient Government will advise the Australian Government if the employment of any person engaged under the Scheme is completed or terminated for any reason.

Note:

There are individual variations in practice from country to country and prospective SAS appointees should seek advice on details from the Recipient Country or their agents.

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APR 1983

