COMMUNICATION POLICY

June 2006
PREFACE
Communication is a broad term. In our setting, communication ranges from the manner in which we process and disseminate Management Information System (IMS), to Public Relations; and use both the print and electronic media in its functions. These communication strategies have been organised and systematised in this policy to enable the Commission to communicate to teachers and stakeholders in a well co-ordinated, efficient and effective system. The communication Policy shall enable the Commission to respond to the diverse information needs of the management, Secretariat, teachers and other stakeholders.

This Communication Policy was developed in a participatory manner. The Policy Development Committee consisting of representatives from each division at the Commission identified communication gaps and barriers and in conjunction with the PPR (Policy Planning and Research) Division developed the Communication Policy. The Policy Analysis Committee moderated the draft policy before it was submitted to the Chief Executive Meeting for further deliberation and decision. Ultimately, the draft policy was presented to TSC Policy Board for further deliberation, amendment and adoption.

Basically of the Communication policy targets the Commission’s Public Relation Communication (RP) tactics that complement and enhance other communication strategies by the Commission: The Policy is a deliberate effort of the Commission at building its overall Corporate Identity/Image. Each department has developed policies to articulate its operations and aspects of the organisational communication relevant to its service areas.

GABRIEL K. LENGOIBONI
THE SECRETARY/CHIEF EXECUTIVE
TEACHERS SERVICE COMMISSION
FOREWARD

The Commission developed several policies in the financial year 2005/2006, as it heightened efforts to transform itself into a highly efficient service delivery organisation. These policies would rid the Commission of redundant processes, procedures and operations that have created delays and inefficiencies in service delivery.

Policy, Planning and Research (PPR) Division was established and charged with the responsibility of co-ordinating policy formulation processes in collaboration with Policy Development Committees (PDC) drawn from the various divisions of the Commission. The PPR Division, in association with PDC, has developed about a dozen policies, including this corporate Communication Policy.

With a teaching force of 235,000 teachers serving in 18,000 primary schools, 4,000 secondary schools and 80 tertiary institutions the Commission is faced by a huge challenge in designing communication strategies. The explosion of Information Communication Technology (ICT) feeds teachers’ and other stakeholders’ thirst for knowledge engendering a growing awareness of the right to information. In turn a greater need for efficiency and effective communication with stakeholders at the headquarters and TSC units has emerged.

It is my ardent desire to ensure that this Communication Policy enables the Commission to improve its service delivery to teachers and institutions of learning.

IBRAHIM M. HUSSEIN, EBS, HSC
CHAIRMAN
TEACHERS SERVICE COMMISSION
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ABBREVIATIONS

MIS  Management Information System
IPR  Institute of Public Relations
TSC  Teachers Service Commission
PR  Public Relations
ICT  Information Communication Technology
EMIS  Education Management Information System
CAP  Chapter
PPR  Policy, Planning and Research.
1.0 INTRODUCTION

Definition

In the context of this policy communication refers to the sending and receiving of messages. Good communication rests in clarity of message. For communication to be successful messages must be understood.

Levels of Communication

The Teachers Service Commission hereinafter referred to as Commission, operates at five levels of communication: Organisational Communication, Management Information System (MIS), Correspondence, Telecommunications and Public Relations.

1. Organisational communication consists of communication that follows authority or chain of command, and that which is required by Commission employees to do their jobs
2. Management Information System (MIS) provides management with the needed information on regular basis
3. Correspondence - letters, e-mail, fax, telegraphs, memos, circulars - between the Commission and its communication publics.
4. Telecommunications is basically the process of sending and receiving messages sent by telephone, radio, television and similar channels
5. Public Relation is defined as the ‘planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics’ (Institute of Public Relations, IPR). Public Relations (PR) Involves:
   ▪ Communicating the right messages to the commission employees, the management, teachers, and other specific targets
   ▪ Projecting the right message to target audience
   ▪ Media relations, sponsorship, exhibitions, events, public affairs and other corporate identity/image building activities and events
   ▪ Devising and implementing the Commission’s strategic campaigns, reacting to crises as they happen and ensuring that the organisation is always correctly represented

Essentially this policy dwells on PR for it is the chief communication vehicle that complements and enhances other communication strategies, and is charged with building the Commission’s overall corporate identity/image.
To augment this effort other departments have developed policies that articulate their operations and aspects of the organisational communication relevant to their service areas.

1.1 BACKGROUND

As a state corporation, the Commission exists for the purpose of rendering service to the public. An Act of Parliament CAP 212 1967 of the Laws of Kenya established and mandated the Commission to register, recruit, remunerate, deploy and discipline teachers and to maintain teaching standards in public schools, colleges and learning institutions. In the performance of its functions, the Commission relies on effective communication.

The communication instruments of choice between the Commission and its publics have been memos, circulars, and letters. Mass media have been used in some instances. These practices are now in need of review as a result of the growth and expansion of the Commission’s constituency, and environmental changes.

The increase in the number of teachers employed by the Commission from 39,725 in 1967 to the current 235,000; and the emergence of Information Technology (IT) combined with teachers’ and stakeholders’ growing awareness of the right to information has rendered the traditional communication practices inadequate.

1.2 RATIONALE

The demand for the development and implementation of the commission’s communication policy resulted from the identification of unresolved issues and problems arising from existing communication gaps/barriers in the current communication system that have led to:

- Delays in general correspondence especially with increased number of incoming and outgoing mail. The Commission receives 8,000 pieces of mail and dispatches 12,000 others each day. The manual handling of information makes the task slow and inefficient
- Inadequate responsiveness to teachers and other stakeholders’ enquiry through telephone, and personal visits
- Poor communication between TSC units and the TSC headquarters, and customers causing delay in service provision that has led to an influx of about 3,000 teachers to the TSC headquarters every month
The Commission’s communication with its employees, mass media and stakeholders lacking elaborate structures, and messages not always being effectively put across.

Management Information System (MIS), except at EMIS (Educational Management Information System) Section of IT Department, being generally manual leading to inaccuracy and delay in information processing and decision making.

Organisational communication has not been efficient resulting to many employees not meeting targets; and a high percentage of their output being rejected because it was faulty.

The Commission’s telecommunications network with its employees, mass media and stakeholders lacking elaborate structures, thus messages not always being effectively put across.

PR Section not performing its functions properly partly because it has no access to all information intended to reach the public, and partly because of inadequacy in PR Staff complement that is yet to be established.

Information gaps that lead to communication publics forming attitudes, negative opinions, and views of the Commission based on what they hear from other sources.

As part of the plan to improve its services, the Commission places communication and information services at the headquarters and TSC units. The aim of this policy is to create a uniform, consistent and effective approach to communication and information needs of the Commission.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

This policy shall enable the Commission to:

- Provide timely, accurate, clear, objective and complete information and communication to managers, employees, teachers and stakeholders on policies, programmes, initiatives and services.
- Identify and address communication needs and issues routinely in the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, programmes, services and initiatives.

3.0 AUTHORITY

This policy derives authority from the TSC Act Cap 212, Code of Regulations for Teachers, Teachers Service Code of Conduct and Ethics, and other related Acts of the Laws of Kenya.
4.0 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to enable the Commission to:

- Communicate in a well co-ordinated, efficient, and effective manner, and to be responsive to the diverse information needs of the management, secretariat, teachers and other stakeholders.
- Deliver consumer-centred service that is timely courteous, fair, efficient while paying due regard to privacy, safety, convenience and comfort of the customer.
- Employ a variety of ways and means to communicate and provide information in multiple formats both internally and externally through magazines, newsletters, newspapers, radio, television, memos, circulars and letters to accommodate diverse needs of its audience.
- Identify and meet its internal and external communication requirements when planning, managing or reviewing its policies, programmes, services or initiatives.
- Be visible, accessible and accountable to taxpayers.
- Achieve coherent and effective communication through teamwork.
- Utilise its public relations structures more aggressively for effective communication.

5.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all teachers, management, secretariat staff, agents and stakeholders.

6.0 PRINCIPLES

This policy shall be based, but not limited to the following principles:

- Transparency and accountability - that the provision of information shall be non-partisan, and consistent with the principles of transparency and accountability.
- Fairness and integrity - that the Commission shall treat individuals with due respect, fairness, and integrity; and that it shall make available, on request, published information to accommodate persons with disabilities and those with different abilities.
- Openness - communication between managers and staff shall be open and collaborative for the purpose of achieving the Commission’s goals and mission, and for the insurance of quality communication and
information service between the Commission, teachers and other stakeholders.

- **Diversity** - the Commission, being a state corporation, shall ensure that publications and other communication materials depict the diverse nature of Kenyan society in a representative and all inclusive manner
- **Standards** - the Commission shall meet set publishing standards and other communication requirements by the laws of the country.
- **Privacy rights** - the Commission shall respect privacy and ownership right in all online publishing and communication.

7.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Commission Secretary, in collaboration with heads of department, shall implement this policy (see annex 2).

8.0 GENERAL GUIDELINES

Part 1: Organisational communication management
Information system, and other forms of communication

8.1.1 Correspondence

All communication from an agent or a teacher or any other person to the Commission shall be addressed to the Secretary, Teachers Service Commission, Private Bag 00100, G.P.O, Nairobi. In all correspondence with the Commission the full name and registration number (in case of teachers and Secretariat staff) must be quoted.

8.1.2 Memos & circulars

Internal memos and circulars shall be sent, received and signed by intended recipients, or posted on notice boards where they are visible or staff briefed on their contents. If the message is intended for a large audience, newsletters, magazines, newspapers, radio and/or TV will be employed.

8.1.3 Corporate Identity/Image

TSC shall maintain a recognisable and unified corporate identity throughout the Commission offices. Functions, programmes, services and activities shall clearly be identified by the Commission’s logo,
letterhead, font type and size in all information and communication materials. Albertus medium 14 is commonly used by the Commission.

8.1.4 Management Information System

MIS shall be computerized to facilitate timely and accurate information dissemination of information to the management some of which may be shared with other users. Local Area Network (LAN) for intra-division/department communication, and Wide Area Network (WAN) for inter-organisational linkages in its MIS.

8.1.5 Internet & Website

The Internet and Website shall accord the Commission an opportunity to reach and interact with teachers, secretariat staff and stakeholders wherever they reside and deliver personalised services.

8.1.6 Publications

The Commission shall publish in-house journals, brochures, annual reports, manuals and fliers to enhance communication and the commission’s corporate identity/image.

8.1.7 Calendar of Events

A calendar of events shall be drawn for workshops, seminars conventions, and meetings. A copy shall be signed and returned to the source for confirmation of receipt.

(For more Information on organisational communication see annex 3)
Part II: Public Relations

8.2.1 PR Staff

PR shall be staffed with professionals responsible for the planning and coordination of PR matters in collaboration with other service areas.

8.2.3 Media Relations

The Commission shall cultivate a proactive relationship with the media to promote public awareness and understanding of the Commission and its mandate.

8.2.4 Spokesperson

The Commission Secretary shall be the principal spokesperson of the Commission on policy matters.

8.2.5 Crisis Management

In a crisis, effective communication with the media, the general public, employees and stakeholders is vital. Each audience shall be kept informed, and channels of communication with each target group shall be included in the Commission Action Plan.

8.2.6 Customer Relations

The Commission shall handle customer complaints through relevant Heads of Division. In case of dissatisfaction, the complainant shall channel their complaint to the PR Section where it shall be dealt with in liaison with respective heads of Departments. The Commission shall incorporate a mechanism into online services for receiving and acknowledging public feedback.

(For more Information on PR see annex 4, 5, 6)

9.0 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Commission shall design appropriate strategies, and use existing institutional framework, and specific tools to implement this policy. Multiple
channels of communication shall be used to publicise the policy among teachers and other stakeholders.

10. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The Commission shall use the existing administrative structures to implement this policy (annex 7).

10.2 IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

- Policy documents
- Press kits
- Website
- In-house journals
- Circulars/memos
- Legal and institutional framework.

11.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Commission shall monitor the policy regularly to ensure its relevance and effectiveness; it shall constantly evaluate its impact on the Commission’s employees and other stakeholders. Feedback from customers, reports, and opinion polls shall be used among other tools for monitoring and evaluation.

12.0 REVIEW OF THE POLICY

This policy shall be reviewed from time to time to ensure it complies with legislative and corporate policy requirements.
Annexe I

A. The Commission corporate identity/image is physically visible through:

- *The Commission Logo and colours:* it embodies the image of the Commission in a concentrated form, and remains the most obvious and elaborate symbol of the Commission’s corporate identity

- *The First impression:* is created by commission employees’ personal presentation, grooming, and voice – good appearance makes a good impression of the Commission, and promotes its image and standards of professionalism. The Commission considers as appropriate and professional, a suit and a tie for the male staff and a decent attire for female staff (Officers supplied with uniforms must wear them all the time).

- *The Annual Report:* is the most important and instantly recognisable piece of the Commission’s literature.

- *Social responsibility:* it involves raising funds and sponsoring worthwhile charities with the purpose of projecting the Commission as a responsible corporate citizen
THE COMMISSION SYMBOLS AND COLOURS

**Hands** - symbolise the Commission’s authority in the teaching service. The embracing in form of hands is a sign of the Commission’s warmth and compassion for its employees.

**Mortarboard** – is a symbol of the Commission’s duty to review the teaching standards, training and fitness to teach of teachers.

**Map of Kenya** – shows the Commission’s area of jurisdiction. The black board stands for the teaching service. " The book signifies teachers registers, the Commission’s policies, code, Act, records, knowledge and information.

**TSC letters and sun’s rays** – stand for the Commission’s function to supply teachers to all learning institutions in Kenya.

**The circle and platform** - the scroll carrying the Commission’s motto represents the unity of purpose in the Commission’s vision and mission, flexibility and adaptability to changes.

**Black** - national aspirations and values.

**Gold** – project the Commission as a leader in the teaching service.

**Blue** – stands for the Commission’s vision 'the sky is the limit'
Annexe 2:

Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Deputy Secretary/Administration (SDS/A)
- Co-ordinates communication activities in the commission
- Facilitate PR officers’ access to all parts of the Commission in order for the section to operate efficiently.
- Ensure that HODs keep PR section informed with up to date information on issues, changes and developments in their service areas - communication is vital for efficient running of the PR section.

Senior Deputy Secretary/Finance (SDS/F)
- Facilitates the implementation of the Communication Policy by providing the necessary funds to facilitate access to necessary communication tools.
- Monitor the use of financial resources for PR management.

Senior Deputy Secretary/Human Resource (SDS/HR)
- Ensures supply of suitable qualified officers to serve in PR and at an appropriate scale.

Heads of Departments (HOD)
- Responsible for PR matters in their respective departments. The PR section shall provide support services - PR officer will need to have the confidence of the HOD.
Assistant Deputy Secretary/Public Relations (ADS/PR)

- Process and disseminate corporate information to teachers and stakeholders.
- Liase with the media
- Monitor the media
- Identify Commission events that could be published
- Distribute press releases
- Develop and distribute press kits and hold media briefings when the need arises.
Annexe 3

Correspondence

All correspondence from the teacher to the Commission shall be submitted through the head of institution and/or the agency to which the teacher is subject. The head of institution or agency is obliged to forward such correspondence to the Commission. Failing to forward letters or other mail from the teacher to the Commission is contrary to this policy. Complaints and other feedback through e-mails, letters, fax and other forms are important in the monitoring and evaluation of customer service.

Network: LAN and WAN

The Commission shall collect and process data into relevant information for managers’ use. The Commission shall provide networked computers for its managers to facilitate the transmission of information with the management and the intra-communication between service areas via Local Area Network (LAN), and through Wide Area Network (WAN) (inter-organisational linkages). E-mail service reduces the manager’s dependence on telecommunication and traditional mail service.

Internet/Website

The Commission shall maintain an active presence on the Internet to enable a 24-hour electronic access to programmes, services and information to the public. E-mail and website services shall be used for direct communication between the stakeholders and the Commission. Internet-published information on policies, programmes, services and initiatives should be accurate and easy to understand. Printed materials for dissemination to teachers and other stakeholders shall be posted concurrently on the Internet. Information already published on website, prior to posting changes or updates, shall be recorded and archived to ensure long-term retention and preservation of institutional memory.

Memos/circulars

Designated officers in service areas shall receive memos and circulars and forward them to the head of section/division/department. Where the information is intended for all members of staff in the service area, the head
of division/section/unit shall call a meeting to brief the staff, or place the memo or circular on a notice board, or in an appropriate newsletter/magazine or where it shall be seen or read by all.

**Calendar of Events**

A calendar of events shall be drawn for workshops, seminars conventions, and meetings. It should also capture interview panels, discipline committees, Heads of Departments, chief Executive and Policy Board meetings. The programme shall be circulated at the beginning of the year to all service areas, and a signed copy of the programme shall be returned to the Administration Division to confirm receipt.
Annexe 4

Public Relations

Mass Communication

Communication with large publics shall include the use of:

- **Print media** – that is, magazines, newsletters, pamphlets, booklets, circulars, memos, letters, inserts, enclosures, newspapers, bulletin boards and posters.
- **Electronic media** – that is, radio, TV, Website
- **Spoken word** – comprise formal presentations in meetings, seminars, conventions, workshops, speeches
- **Other tools** – include exhibitions, displays, and sponsorship of events, programmes – sports, and donations to worthwhile charities.

Media Relations

The Commission shall cultivate a proactive relationship with the media to promote public awareness and understanding of the Commission’s policies, programmes, services and initiatives. As many channels of communication as possible shall be used to reach and communicate with teachers and other communication publics. For the commission to reach the general public it shall use mass media periodicals, magazines, newspapers, radio, television, books and other.

PR shall advise the Commission on matters related to media relations especially where such relations are likely to create adverse publicity to the Commission.

Spokesperson

Whereas the Commission secretary is the Principal spokesperson of the Commission, PR officers and other specialists may express their views, opinions, ideas and background facts on teacher management/education matters by use of articles, and/or letters to the editor columns in newspapers and specialist magazines. Where the aim of such communication shall be to create a favourable impression on the Commission, the head of PR Section shall edit and forward the document to the Secretary for approval. Any staff
communication initiatives through mass media must be well founded, honest and credible.

**Crisis Management**

The Commission shall plan for management of crises such as fire, theft, strike, accident and others before they occur. Employees shall be briefed, and drills carried out so that they know what to do in an emergency. An action plan shall be written so that everyone has access to it.
Annexe 5

A. CUSTOMER RELATIONS

PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING INQUIRIES, COMPETENCES AND LEGAL ACTION INVOLVING CUSTOMERS, STANDARD LETTERS FORMATS FOR RESPONDING TO ENQUIRIES COMPLAINTS AND SUGGESTIONS

How to launch your complaint/Case

You are entitled to free service at the Teachers Service Commission. If you have complaints, queries, issues or problems please write to the Secretary Teachers Service Commission. We shall acknowledge your letter within fourteen days (14) upon receipt. An identification number for your case will be issued.

The Teachers Service Commission shall endeavour to resolve your complaint, answer your queries, issues or solve your problem within 30 days, except where a complaint, query, issue or problem is complex or lacks appropriate documentation. However you will be informed of the cause of the delay.

Making an Inquiry on your complaint/Case progress

You may wish to enquire on the progress of the matter lodged with the Commission at any time by writing to the Secretary, Teachers Service Commission, Private Bag, Nairobi or emailing (info@tsc.go.ke), or by calling the Public Relations Office, telephone number 312067.

Please quote the date and the identification number of the case (and your TSC Number where applicable) when making your inquiry.

Refusal to make an Investigation on your case/complaint

The Commission may refuse to investigate your complaint, or respond to your query/issue if it is beyond its jurisdiction. In these circumstances the TSC shall, where appropriate, inform you the reasons of the decision.

Appeals against the Commission decision

You may appeal for a review of your complaint/case within fourteen (14) days from the date of receipt of your communication. If you have additional information or evidence required for the review of the decision you must provide it within 14 days failure to which your appeal shall not be accepted. The Commission will respond to your request within 60 days from the date of communication.
Figure 2: Corporate Communication management
# QUERIES/COMPLAINTS PROFORMA

**For official use only**

Case/Complain NO.__________________

Date _______ ____________________

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## PART I: BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE COMPLAINTS

Nature and details of complaint(s) (including, documents, offices, dates, and any staff member/s spoken to or seen where applicable)

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Name/Signature____________________________________ date_______

## PART II: ACTION SECTION.

Please briefly comment on the above complaint and take corrective actions to resolve it.

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Name ________________ Designation___________ Signature __________Date__________

## PART III: COMMENTS/ACTION OF PUBLIC RELATION OFFICER.

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Name ________________ Designation___________ Signature __________Date__________
B. PR SECTION COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURES.

PART A: Follow-up guideline for cases in the PR section where files requested for are availed promptly

1. Where the file is retrieved promptly on request by the PR section, the section shall study the case/issue/concern of the complainant and write a brief to the service station, and then mark ‘bring up’ date on the memo. The PR section shall give a 30-day allowance period for action.

2. If action has not taken place, the PR section shall ask, in writing, the head of section to advise the officer responsible for the delay and have them write an apology to the teacher/client explaining the cause of the delay and status of the case. While the letter is posted to the complainant, the file is minuted to the head of PR section for information and record.

3. If the complaint is not sorted out conclusively within 90 working days from the time it was reported/recorded at the PR section, then the PR head of section shall draw the attention of the CS as regards the delay.

PART B: Follow-up guideline for cases in the PR Section where files requested for are not availed promptly.

1. On receipt of letters of complaint or documents by the PR section, the file shall be requisitioned from the registry. Where it is not available, the requisitioning is done every consecutive day for 7 days from receipt of the complaint.

2. If the file is not available, then the PR section shall forward the complaint letter/document to the mail office with ‘bring up’ note.

3. Where there is delay in delivery of the file to the PR section within 14 working days, the section shall write a formal request to the ADS (TR) asking him to follow-up the delay in the retrieval with the relevant digit heads. Meanwhile, PR section shall communicate to the teacher at this time, letting him know that the case is being followed up. This is in compliance to the Service Charter (2b).

4. Where the file is not yet retrieved after 21 working days from the time of requisitioning, the head of PR section shall write a reminder to the ADS (TR) regarding the case. Meanwhile the complainant is once again assured that his/her concerns are being attended to.

5. If the complaint is not sorted out conclusively within 90 working days from when it was reported/recorded at the PR section, then the PR head of section shall draw the attention of the CS as regards the delay.
TEACHERS SERVICE COMMISSION

Telephone: Nairobi
312067/8 & 312091/3/6 & 312535
Telegrams: "MWALIMU".
Nairobi
When replying please quote
Ref. №:
and date

THE BAZAAR
MOI AVENUE/BIASHARA STREET
PRIVATE BAG
NAIROBI, KENYA

Date:

RE: ENQUIRY/ COMPLAINTS

Your query/complaint refers. Should you have not received a response by the time of the receipt of this letter kindly complete and post the attached pro-forma to the undersigned.

Thanks.

FOR SECRETARY
TEACHERS SERVICE COMMISSION
Annexe 7

Figure 3: TSC advocacy and dissemination of policies, services programmes and initiatives
Eliza Chege  
Assistant Commission Secretary (PR)  
Commission for Higher Education  
P. O. Box 54999 00200  
NAIROBI

RE: PROFILE ON COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Your letter dated May 4 2006 regarding the above mentioned refers.

The management and staff of the Teachers’ Service Commission wishes success to the Commission of Higher Education in its role and responsibility in enhancing quality assurance and control of higher education in Kenya.

We thank you for your high regard for TSC and your recognition of this Commission as a key stakeholder in the higher education sub-sector.

It is the desire of TSC to support the supplement on the profile on Commission for Higher Education that will feature in the *East African Manufacturers and commercial News Magazine*. However, this office has no allocation for such an activity in the financial year 2005/2006.

Yours

PATRICK BIRGEN  
FOR SECRETARY  
TEACHERS SERVICE COMMISSION