

JOB PROFILE

Chief Executive Officer: Tax Ombud

Reference #: RP-2026-01

Purpose

The Office of the Tax Ombud (OTO) plays a critical role in ensuring fairness, transparency, and accountability in South Africa's tax administration system. Established in terms of the Tax Administration Act, the Tax Ombud reviews and addresses taxpayer complaints relating to service, procedural, or administrative matters arising from the application of tax legislation by SARS. The OTO also identifies and investigates systemic and emerging issues impacting taxpayers, contributing to improved service delivery and trust in the tax system.

Job Details

Job ID:

21005655

Theme of Work:

Strategy Formulation – L5

Job Family:

Administration and Support

Minimum Experience:

15 – 18 years' experience in a similar environment, of which 6 – 8 years at a senior management level

Alternative Minimum Experience:

18+ years related experience, of which 6 – 8 years at a senior management level

Minimum Qualification:

Relevant Master's Degree (NQF 9)

Alternative Qualification:

Relevant Honours Degree / Postgraduate Diploma (NQF 8)

Minimum Functional Requirements:

Leadership Level:

Executive (EX)

Additional Technical Competencies:

GOC Top Secret – (a) sensitive information, the disclosure of which may cause serious or irreparable harm to the national interest of the Republic or may cause other states to sever diplomatic relations with the Republic; (b) commercial information, the disclosure of which may—(i) have disastrous results with regard to the future existence of an entity; or (i) have disastrous results with regard to the future existence of an entity; or (ii) cause serious and irreparable harm to the security or interests of the State;(c) personal information the disclosure of which may endanger the life of the individual concerned. E.g. Cabinet Memoranda

Outputs

Process

- Balance and integrate divisional resources, resolve competing requirements and allow for contingencies in support of strategic objectives. (I)
- Champion policy framework and objectives with internal partners to ensure organisation wide integration. (I)
- Communicate meaningful strategic context that articulates divisional purpose, vision and philosophy in support of overall org. strategic objectives. (I)
- Create the context to continuously improve divisional functions and systems in line with national, regional and international changes. (I)
- Develop annual and long-term divisional plans, set clear priorities and measurable milestones for reporting units in line with organisational strategic plan. (I)
- Evaluate and assess the impact of decisions on the long-term strategic objectives and the integrity of the organisation. (I)

- Influence national and regional industry trends and policies in alignment with long-term strategic objectives. (I)
- Influence the understanding and adoption of the organisational direction across all levels of the organisation and its stakeholders. (I)
- Participate in developing enterprise vision and strategy in line with Government Policy, SARS mandate and operating model. (I)
- Plan for the future by setting priorities to shape and structure the org.; providing a framework for long term initiatives and milestones to be achieved. (I)
- Proactively identify mission critical problems, determine impact on long term intent of the org. and develop divisional strategies to direct the future. (I)
- Take accountability for the development of a divisional strategy that clearly aligns to the organisation's strategic objectives. (I)
- Use insights and knowledge gained from high level reports and analyse complex comparative information to create scenarios to direct strategic intent. (I)
- Strategically influence the development, adoption, implementation and adherence to, organisational control, risk and compliance frameworks.
- Manage and oversee the continuous improvement processes and effective relationship management to elevate customer complaints due to internal inefficiencies, lack of best practice or the lack of continuous improvement.
- Ensure the executive of customer service, compliance risk and evaluation of the fairness and transparency through fair treatment of all tax payers based on clear rules, principles, and procedures backed by governance and zero corruption at all levels.
- Set planned priorities to shape and structure the organisation for the future and provide a framework for achieving long-term initiatives and milestones.
- Oversee the identification of areas where the organisation's policies need to be modified and enhanced.
- Develop strategies for staffing growth and footprint expansion for the Office of the Tax Ombud.

Client

- Strategically define and influence relationships and service level agreements made with internal and external stakeholders. (I)

Finance

- Ensure that the divisional strategy is adequately budgeted for through the development and implementation of a requisite budget. (I)
- Strategically influence implementation of effective financial control, management of costs and corporate governance in the division. (I)

Governance

- Influence the creation of enterprise-wide reports that meet all statutory requirements. (I)
- Strategically influence the development, adoption, implementation and adherence to governance, risk and compliance frameworks. (I)

People

- Influence and direct the development of human capability and accountability framework in the division in support of people management strategies. (I)
- Lead the development and cultivation of a divisional culture where the organisational values are demonstrated and lived. (I)
- Provide leadership and direction by articulating and reinforcing the vision or direction for a division. (I)

Behavioural Competencies

Accountability (V)

Level 5

Competency Definition:

The acknowledgement and assumption of responsibility for actions, products, decisions, and policies within the scope of the role or employment position.

Behavioural Indicators:

Articulate strategic direction and how the division contributes to the achievement of the goals. Demonstrates willingness to declare practices open for scrutiny of others. Promote transparency with both internal and external stakeholders. Take responsibility for the welfare of the entire portfolio under one's lead. Build a sense of personal and social obligation to contribute meaningfully to your work, the work of SARS and the society at large. Take ownership of the decision made as a collective. Stand by difficult decisions and openly acknowledge errors. Lead by example by influencing and inspiring others. Admits own mistakes and weaknesses and seeks help from others when unable to deliver.

Fairness and Transparency (V)

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Build diverse and inclusive workplaces where decisions, practices, processes and transactions are transparent and fair.

Behavioural Indicators:

Be a role model in leaving the SARS values to colleagues and partners. Promotes a SARS culture of building respectful, multilingual, diverse, and an inclusive environment where decisions and transactions are transparent and fair. Reward and acknowledge people for their contribution, based on merit. Be impartial in enhancing tax and customs compliance. Be transparent, just and fair in your dealings with all stakeholders. Be a role model in leaving the SARS values to colleagues and partners.

Honesty and Integrity (V)

Level 5

Competency Definition:

The quality of being upright, truthful, sincere and freedom from deceit or fraud (H). Guided by values, ability to demonstrate moral judgement and doing the right thing consistently (I).

Behavioural Indicators:

Coaches and mentors others in acceptable honesty and integrity behaviours. Ensures that all stakeholders are trained to understand and practice the organisations Code of Ethics and holds self and others accountable, by arranging for training and dissemination of information. Ensures that policies and programmes for preventing waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement are in place and enforced. Models behaviour, attitudes, and actions expected of all staff. Instigate changes in behaviour to improve working relations in SARS. Act consistently with what you say and demonstrate consistent character.

Respect (V)

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Ability to be considerate for self and others.

Behavioural Indicators:

Recognise personal boundaries and make effort not to offend others. Know and understand personal and professional boundaries so as do not offend others. Admits own mistakes and weaknesses and seeks help from others when unable to deliver. Treats all colleagues with equal respect. Uses work time for organisational matters and not for personal matters. Encourages, recognizes and incorporates diverse points of view. Treats people with dignity and respect in line with SARS values. Trust others with relevant information and communicate frankly and honestly. Be a role model in leaving the SARS values to colleagues and partners. Use the language understood by all. Build professional relationships with taxpayers, traders, public and fellow colleagues.

Stakeholder Engagement and Management

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Recognises the importance of relationships as a fundamental business resource and makes attempts to build and maintain solid working relationships with others

Behavioural Indicators:

Builds strong networks among the different stakeholders of the organisation and forms partnerships with them in various areas, which work towards achieving the vision of the organisation. Evaluates the value of strategic relationships against organisational outcomes. Creates, participates in, and facilitates forums to develop new alliances and formal networks. Masterfully uses diplomacy for relationship building. Acts as a thought leader in field of expertise for competitive advantage. Articulates self with credibility and conviction, encouraging buy-in to corporate position. Ensures that the organisation communicates inclusively with staff and external stakeholders.

Trust (V)

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Firm belief in the reliability, truth or ability of someone or something.

Behavioural Indicators:

Promotes a culture that encourages subscription to the highest standards of trust and integrity within the organisation. Builds an image of unquestionable integrity for the institution.

Leadership Competencies

Concern for Impact of own behaviour on others

Level 5

Competency Definition:

The ability to influence a wide range of diverse individuals and groups positively.

Behavioural Indicators:

The ability to strategically influence people management practices: Varies leadership style to meet the needs of individual's teams. Manages expectations of staff and sets realistic progression targets that encourage staff to reach their potential. Delegates responsibility appropriately, gives others scope to use initiative and gives them authority to make decisions and accomplish tasks effectively. Evaluates the transfer of skills and knowledge into the workplace. Provides leadership at the entire organisation level and demonstrates a strong sense of collective responsibility.

Develops teams and nurtures interdependency

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Leverage collaborative relationships. The ability to apply the right technology to the right process at the right time with the right people.

Behavioural Indicators:

Leverages strategic partnerships to advance SARS's mandate. Draws on own and others' internal networks to help ensure buy-in and ownership. Provides strategic advice on the value and types of partnership arrangements that SARS should be pursuing.

Inspires others to Positive Action

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Inspirational leadership is about energising and creating a sense of direction and purpose for employees and excitement and momentum for change. It involves energising individuals to strive towards a compelling vision of the future by embracing and embodying SARS's values in all aspects of their work. It includes offering clarity around goals and objectives and ensuring that those who are led work collaboratively towards a shared purpose.

Behavioural Indicators:

Provides leadership to others around how to execute strategies that transition the organisation from current to future state. Takes action to ensure that others understand and endorse SARS's strategy and mandate; creates an engaged and energised climate to help enable it. Genuinely listens to and addresses any resistance or concerns about the future of the organisation; promotes a climate of continuous transformation that will keep the organisation agile and "best in class." Reinforces the vision of change and ensures organisational processes and practices are aligned accordingly. Leads and inspires others to create something truly innovative and distinguishing for SARS; publicly champions SARS's culture and/or strategy to gain broad support and commitment.

Nurtures Future Talent

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Develops the technical skills and leadership abilities of SARS personnel to create sustainable delivery capability. The drive to further the development and learning of others.

Behavioural Indicators:

Arranges appropriate and helpful assignments, formal training, or other experiences for the purpose of fostering the employee's learning and development (could include career path or career plan development). Understands and identifies training or developmental need and establishes new programmes or materials to meet them. Creates an environment where the employee's rights are respected.

Stewardship and Service Orientation

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Steward leaders have a sense of purpose, which helps them to align their actions to the organisation's vision, goals, and values. Regard leadership as an inordinate privilege without a sense of entitlement. Capture the collective aspirations of those that they lead, foster a sense of commitment, and place the interest of others ahead of their own.

Behavioural Indicators:

Stewardship at the institutional level involves ensuring that organisational vision, values, and mandate remain appropriate. The act of stewardship by leaders in an organisation can be invaluable ensuring that individuals work well in effective team and establishing environments where individuals can improve their sense of well-being. Drives organisational cohesiveness by promoting diversity and inclusivity in decision making.

Strong Results Orientation

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Consistently delivers required business results; sets and achieves achievable, yet aggressive, goals; consistently complies with quality standards and meets deadlines; maintains focus on organisational goals.

Behavioural Indicators:

Models excellence and motivates fellow organisational members to follow his and/or her example. Encourages constructive questioning of policies and practices; sponsors experimentation and innovation. Holds staff accountable for achieving standards of excellence and results for the organisation. Displays high levels of commitment to the cause.

Values and Manages Diversity

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Understands and respects the customs and norms of others and modifies own behaviour. Contributes actively to a working environment that recognises, responds to and acknowledges the value proposition of SARS; acts as a catalyst for promoting SARS values and influences others to translate vision into action.

Behavioural Indicators:

Thinks about impact of own behaviour on another, given the context of the culture and modifies behaviour to improve and make personal sacrifices for the organisation.

Ability to translate strategy into execution

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Execution leadership means having a strategic mind-set and the leadership skills to perform a function, implement a process or execute a project.

Behavioural Indicators:

Translates the organisation's strategic objectives to the workforce. To ensure that management is able to track and monitor activity and progress to ensure strategic objectives are completed successfully in the timeframe allotted to them; typically, a quarter, half year or financial year.

Technical Competencies

Business Acumen

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Understands main business drivers in order to impact on decision making and get things done

Behavioural Indicators:

Displays excellent insight into the business implications of decisions and helps others to understand such considerations. Contributes to profitability by consistently focusing on the bottom line. Is highly knowledgeable about the market & closely monitors competitors' activities. Makes a significant contribution by continually aligning efforts with the organisation's goals. Expertly performs cost benefit analyses.

Change Management

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Transforming individuals, teams and organisations to a desired new state

Behavioural Indicators:

Reviews, sponsors, and approves recommendations for enterprise-wide change programs that impact cross-functional key processes. Partners with other business leaders to identify opportunities for significant technology/process enhancements. Lobbies for changes that impact strategic business direction. Approves strategic monitoring criteria and reviews high impact enterprise performance trends. Evaluates progress against key performance drivers and assesses organisational opportunities and risks. Solicits the support of business leaders in planning and spearheading enterprise change initiatives. Establishes and communicates a clear vision, mission and value statement for the change initiative. Establishes and supports leadership for the change project. Ensures change initiatives support the vision and sustainability of the organisation at a strategic level.

Customer Relationship Management

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Able to demonstrate concern for customer expectations and needs

Behavioural Indicators:

Proactively seeks feedback from customers and uses this information to make improvements in systems, processes, etc. Actively seeks out the customer to discuss business challenges in an effort to provide products and services that meet the customer needs even before the customer recognises the need as critical. Anticipates how plans and actions of the business will affect the customer in the long term.

Decisiveness

Level 5

Competency Definition:

The confidence and ability to take timely and appropriate decisions

Behavioural Indicators:

Reconciles the conflicts between short-term requirements and long-term objectives. Anticipates obstacles and overcomes challenges in highly complex situations. Balances a commitment to excellence with the best interests of clients and the organisation when making decisions.

Effective Business Communication

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Must be able to communicate information and ideas in a clear and concise manner appropriate for the audience in order to explain, persuade, convince and influence others to achieve the desired outcomes.

Behavioural Indicators:

Communicates with a level of accuracy and fluency, as communication is subject to varied contexts and settings. Takes cognisance of ensuing impact due to appropriateness of message content, timing and forum of communication. Presents organisational, legislative and regulatory, long-term departmental/organisational objectives, strategies and goals to senior management, administrators, organisation's stakeholders, outside organisations and the public within scope of communication.

Functional Policies and Procedures

Level 5

Competency Definition:

The knowledge and interpretation of the functional policies and procedures, including monitoring their consistent application internally within SARS.

Behavioural Indicators:

Has sufficient expertise to be able to scan the market to obtain examples of best practice. Can develop new policies and procedures where required, aligning them with SARS's strategy and appropriate legislation.

Managerial Budgeting

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Must be able to plan the work unit budget and manage income and expenditure, through responsible implementation of policies, practices and decisions, in order to achieve unit objectives effectively and efficiently.

Behavioural Indicators:

Provides rationale to management for budget allotments, adjusts budgets as appropriate or directed. Applies financial planning strategies to develop budgets. Re-allocates resources and resets priorities in response to unexpected events and/or demands.

Planning and Organising

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Ability to organise, prioritise and, where applicable, delegate work activities to efficiently accomplish tasks and meet objectives

Behavioural Indicators:

Identifies and acts on opportunities to partner with other units in the department to achieve desired results. Develops partnership agreements that ensure win-win outcomes for all parties. Develops integrated plans for the work unit and others that interfaces with the function's budget.

Planning, Management and Measurement

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Plans, Manages and Measures

Behavioural Indicators:

Long-term strategic planning. Sets SARS strategic intent, organisational goals, and translates these into strategic programmes and projects; Creates frameworks conducive to execution and measurement of deliverables in relation to strategy. Demonstrates the ability to set measures for productivity. Measurement includes reference to operational excellence using international benchmarks and measurement relating to collaboration across the business.

Problem Analysis and Judgement

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Identifies problems, analyses the problem in a logical way, defining the root cause and formulating the correct solution or line of action.

Behavioural Indicators:

Ability to anticipate problems of a strategic nature (multiple systems) and its impact at multiple internal and external systems. Assesses various solutions, choosing solutions that solves the problem, ensuring decisive implementation.

Strategic Planning

Level 5

Competency Definition:

Formulates objectives and priorities, and implements plans consistent with the long-term interests of the organisation

Behavioural Indicators:

Develops long-term (3 to 5 year) strategy that aligns with organisational vision. Leverages knowledge of the organisational strengths and weaknesses to make excellent strategic decisions. In-depth analysis of the market and competition helps provide consistent alignment to national and international trends.

Tax Knowledge

Level 3

Competency Definition:

Depth of understanding on tax related issues and the ability to mentor and coach others on technical matters with the purpose of ensuring that SARS is interpreting and applying the legislative framework effectively and accurately.

Behavioural Indicators:

Broad working knowledge of all forms of tax (integrated) as applied to all transactions of the business. Interpretation and application of tax laws in area of expertise. Can resolve moderately complex queries, where legal interpretation is required. Can refer to past experience, on how matters have been resolved in the past, to provide advice on a course of action. Can explain how different tax types work to the relevant audiences. Able to interpret and apply tax laws in own area of expertise. Can resolve complex queries with the assistance of legal support.