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Israel Public Broadcasting
Corporation

Processes for Hiring Candidates Who Are Former Israel Broadcasting Authority Employees for the Israel Public Broadcasting Corporation

Abstract



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Background

The Public Broadcasting Law, 5774-2014, based on which the Israel Public Broadcasting Corporation (IPBC) was established, was approved in the plenum of the Knesset in July 2014.

According to the law, the IPBC was established with the aim of establishing high-quality, efficient public broadcasting in Israel, and to replace the television and radio broadcasts of the Israel Broadcasting Authority (IBA) and the broadcasts of Israel Educational Television and serve as a source of creativity and content on the Internet and on a range of other digital media.

When it was passed, the law stated that the IPBC would start broadcasting on April 1, 2015. The commencement day was deferred a number of times, and its formation involved extreme difficulties and uncertainty, until the IPBC started its broadcasting on May 15, 2017. The law states that the IPBC must offer jobs to 510 former employees of the IBA without a tender. In addition to this, the IPBC's Director General was allowed to hire, before the commencement day, up to 600 employees necessary for the corporation's preparations without a tender.

Out of about 1,000 workers employed at the IPBC as of late 2019, about 100 are members of the Arab population (10.1%), 13 employees are from the ultra-orthodox population (1.3%) and 11 are of families from Ethiopian background (1.1%). In 2017-2019, 334 employees left the corporation, of whom 83 were former IBA employees and 251 were not.

Key figures

May 15, **2017**

The day of actual commencement of broadcasting

Approx. **1,600**

The number of people employed at the IBA before the decision to close it down

Approx. **470**

The number of IBA employees hired at the IPBC upon its formation

NIS **770** million

The IPBC's budget in 2019

987

Workers employed at the IPBC at the end of 2019

420

Former IBA employees who were employed at the IPBC at the end of 2019







Audit Actions



From July to November 2018, the State Comptroller's Office intermittently reviewed a number of actions of the IPBC related to hiring of IBA employees by the corporation, which were undertaken before the commencement day, as well as the documentation and protection of information in the IPBC's databases. The review was conducted in the corporation, and supplementary checks were performed at the Civil Service Commission and State Archive. Supplementary inquiries were also conducted in the corporation in 2019.

The Situation Reflected in the Audit Findings









-  The rules for recruiting employees for the corporation and the corporation's procedures have not formalized all aspects related to hiring of employees, which effectively impairs its ability to conduct a formalized, equal hiring process.
-  The corporation does not have full documentation of decision making processes related to acceptance of former Israel Broadcasting Authority employees.
-  In hundreds of cases, the corporation did not follow the legal provisions related to the date of giving notices to candidates for employment, in circumstances in which the hiring process was lengthy and involved high uncertainty.
-  Before starting to hire many workers for the IPBC without a tender, the Director General contacted various parties and asked for "unofficial" assessments of IBA employees. These assessments or results from processing them sometimes affected the processes of hiring former IBA employees in the corporation. In some cases, one of the writers of these assessment lists delved into parameters that had nothing to do with the professionalism of the workers, but rather offensive, degrading considerations related to their age, ethnicity, character, appearance, weight, marital status and pay. These considerations and other negative assessments were not communicated to candidates for jobs in the IPBC, and they were not given an opportunity to respond to them in any case.
-  Written comments that the corporation provided on its conduct during the recruitment of former IBA staff did not always fully reflect the use or products of the "unofficial" assessments.
-  All email boxes of employees who had left the corporation by the end of 2018 were closed and their contents erased. This move impaired the corporation's organizational memory and continuity of keeping necessary information in general and information related to personnel management in particular.



The circumstances in which the Israel Public Broadcasting Corporation were established are exceptional, and the conditions in which the heads of the corporation operated during its formation period were extremely challenging. Despite this, the corporation started to operate by the time specified in the amended law after its managers acted to accomplish its statutory tasks.

The corporation updated its procedures and prepared an orderly work procedure for employing former Israel Educational Television workers in 2018, and some of the audit's observations were taken into account and implemented in their hiring processes.

Main Audit Recommendations

-  Even in cases where the law establishes a tender exemption, employee selection and acceptance procedures must be undertaken in a manner that will ensure equality and propriety of procedures, while ensuring flexibility in cases of special circumstances.
-  It must be ensured that the digital system for documenting all hiring processes is kept up to date and that the information stored in it is precise and reliable.
-  If a process is initiated to receive candidate assessments, it should be supported by preliminary actions: updating the reviewers of the initiation and implementation of the process, prior legal consultation, reflecting the names of the evaluators who will be contacted and the nature of the evaluators' relationship and familiarity with the evaluated individuals, ensuring that the evaluations provided do not contain information that has been provided by unidentified third parties, clarifying to the assessors the character of the information being requested, formalization of the use of information while guiding the candidate selection staff as to the purpose, weight and treatment of the evaluations, and establishing review arrangements to ensure that only relevant, reliable information will be taken into account.
-  Given the importance of the documentation, protection and retrieval of the IPBC's information and information related to managing employee affairs in particular, the IPBC should work with the State Archive to advance the application of the provisions of the Archives Law, 5715-1955 to it. This way it will be ensured that important information possessed by the IPBC, which by nature is a public entity, will be properly saved, both for the corporation's future use and for supervision and review purposes.
-  It must be ensured that if new governmental units are established to replace existing ones, a detailed, orderly outline is to be established to ensure that the manner of recruiting human capital for the new units will be in accordance with the relevant legal provisions and will follow the values of equality and transparency.
-  It is recommended for the IPBC to establish an orderly plan for encouraging increased representation of all populations of Israeli society within the workforce of the corporation, and that the data on the resignation of personnel since its formation be examined.

Summary

The safeguarding of public broadcasting, its quality and proper practice is a cornerstone for establishing its standing and importance in Israel's public sphere and for ensuring public trust in it. The circumstances of the foundation of the Israeli Public Broadcasting Corporation are exceptional, owing to the repeated deferrals of the day of starting operations and the examination that was conducted on closing down and restructuring the corporation. The findings of this report may serve as a compass of sorts for examining the way in which the corporation treats other administrative apparatuses that it maintains, insofar as the principles underlying the audit presented here, most of which are related to aspects of good governance, also apply to other fields.

The flaws related to obtaining and using worker assessments and their products

