Communication with the shortlisted candidates is only undertaken by COMU after the Minister has agreed a shortlist. The initial approach is generally by phone, and is intended to ascertain whether the individual has any interest in the role.

The preliminary discussion will also cover any obvious conflicts of interest or logistical issues, and the proposed timing of the due diligence process.

Candidates may require some time to consider the possibility and may seek further information. Potential candidates should always be fully informed and not forced into making a hurred decision, but that needs to be balanced by the timeline to which COMU is working. (That is, the timeline will be aiming at a scheduled Cabinet Committee meeting. There will be a certain window of time for due diligence and determining the final recommended appointee, and it will be important to remain within that timeframe.)

The short-list should be communicated to the Chair as soon as possible after it has been agreed by the Minister, at which the first discussion can commence around the arrangement of due diligence meetings with the candidates.