

Cabinet hears new rules for NBTC picks

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New qualification conditions for recruitment of NBTC commissioners are to be submitted to the cabinet for approval today to ensure qualified candidates after the previous procedure was turned down by the National Legislative Assembly (NLA) in April 2018.

After being approved by the cabinet, the new qualification conditions have to pass Council of State vetting before being sent back to the NLA and added as an amendment to the NBTC Act.

The next government must decide whether or when a new recruitment process will start.

Takorn Tantasith, secretary-general of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC), and his team were called to present details of new qualification conditions to the cabinet today.

The existing NBTC board is working as an acting NBTC because its six-year term expired in October 2017.

The new NBTC Act that became effective in June 2017 requires the government must recruit new NBTC commissioners to replace those moving on.

At least seven conditions were amended for more flexible procedures.

Only seven candidates can be selected as commissioners, instead of 14 in the existing process.

The candidates are not restricted based on their field, meaning one business field can have more than one member.

Each candidate can become a new commissioner only when they receive more than half the votes from NLA members.

Candidates who are working in a related field of telecom and broadcasting can apply for recruitment and need not resign. But they must resign after they are selected.

Those working on social activities must have at least 20 years of experience. The existing condition requires only a decade of experience.

Candidates working in the courts or judiciary must be ranked at least deputy director-general of the department or equivalent.

Candidates working in the Army or Royal Thai Police Department must have a rank of major general or police major general as a minimum requirement, compared with the existing condition requiring a rank of only colonel or police colonel.

Mr Takorn said the NBTC office believes the amended conditions for NBTC recruitment will make the next commissioner search more efficient, as it has been adjusted in a more practical way in terms of candidates as well as the voting process.

He said he has no idea when the new recruitment process will begin.