

Role Description

Principal Solicitor



Role Description Fields	Details
Cluster	Stronger Communities
Department/Agency	Crown Solicitor's Office
Division/Branch/Unit	Legal Operations
Role number	TBC
Classification/Grade/Band	Legal Officer Grade VI
Senior executive work level standards	Not Applicable
ANZSCO Code	271311
PCAT Code	1118192
Date of Approval	31 March 2015
Agency Website	www.cso.nsw.gov.au

Agency overview

The Crown Solicitor's Office (CSO) is the largest provider of legal services to the NSW Government and its agencies, and the sole provider of legal services in all matters which are regarded as being core to Government functions. The CSO exists to be the NSW Government's most trusted legal advisors. The core aims of the CSO are to deliver high-quality, cost-effective legal services, provide exceptional customer service to the NSW Government and its agencies and foster a culture of continuous improvement in the way we work.

The CSO, headed by the Crown Solicitor, is a Public Service Executive agency related to the Department of Communities and Justice under the Government Sector Employment Act 2013. For more information, go to www.cso.nsw.gov.au

Primary purpose of the role

Conduct highly complex legal matters (advice, transaction and/or litigation) and supervise the conduct by solicitors Grades I-III, IV, V and Graduates of legal matters within a specialist Practice Group to ensure the provision of high quality, cost effective and client focussed legal services which contribute to the achievement of the CSO's business goals.

Key accountabilities

- Conduct highly complex assigned legal matters in accordance with clients' instructions, tender and legislative requirements and CSO policies, procedures, guidelines and precedents to ensure the highest quality of legal advice and representation.
- Supervise legal matters in accordance with CSO policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure that high client service standards are met.
- Manage assigned staff in relation to non-legal matters including time and attendance, work allocation, conduct performance planning and development reviews, provide regular feedback and address training needs to ensure achievement of performance levels and progression of capability development.
- Participate in file reviews of the role's legal matters and conduct reviews of files assigned for review to identify and manage risk in matters and to ensure compliance with CSO practice management standards and procedures.

- Apply a project management approach such as cost estimates (matter calculators) and matter programs in the conduct of legal matters and provide information to comply with legal services panel requirements and CSO policies and standards.
- Comply with CSO practice management standards, policies and procedures including: accurately and contemporaneously recording time spent on legal matters; estimating costs and disbursements; checking draft bills; updating client reports and contributing to the development and maintenance of precedents; in order to assist the commercial operation of the CSO.
- Contribute (as required) material for tenders submitted by the CSO relevant to the Group, prepare draft articles for the CSO Newsletter and group e-bulletins and participate in the delivery of legal seminars and training to clients to promote CSO as the legal service provider of choice.
- Enhance legal knowledge and skills by attending professional development and in-house training opportunities to ensure achievement of agreed performance levels and capability development.

Key challenges

- Responding to competing and urgent demands of legal matters of significance to the State whilst balancing the supervision of staff and keeping abreast of current developments in the areas of law in which the Practice Group specialises.
- Perform untied legal work in competition with the private sector given budget constraints and operating as a Public Service Executive Agency.
- Assume the responsibilities of Director when the Director is absent and no officer is temporarily assigned to their role whilst managing the conduct of own highly complex legal matters.

Key relationships

Internal

Who	Why
Assistant Crown Solicitor, Director Legal Practice Group, Special Counsel	• To receive supervision, guidance and advice in the conduct of legal matters and to provide assistance to them in the conduct of their matters. • To provide assistance to the Director in the management of the Practice Group.
Solicitors I-III, IV, V, Graduates and Para-legals	• To supervise and/or give appropriate instructions re assistance to be provided.
Solicitor Advocate	• To provide instructions.

External

Who	Why
Clients	• To receive instructions, conduct legal matters and build positive relationships.
Counsel, witnesses, experts, other members of the legal profession and court officials	• To conduct legal matters.

Role dimensions

Decision making

Decide the priority to be afforded to the performance of work relating to matters assigned to the role, subject to any direction by the supervising solicitor, court requirements and clients' instructions.

Make decisions in relation to the supervision of legal work supervised by the role.
Make decisions in relation to the management of assigned staff in relation to non legal matters, subject to legislation and CSO policies and guidelines.

Reporting line

On legal matters - to the Director Legal Practice Group.
On non-legal matters – in accordance with supervision structure.

Direct reports

On legal matters – Paralegals, Graduates, Solicitors I-III, IV and V.
On non-legal matters – Paralegals, Graduates, Solicitors I-III, IV and V.
Budget/Expenditure

Budget/Expenditure

The role exercises financial delegations in accordance with the CSO's Delegation

Essential requirements

- Completion of a law degree from an accredited law school or completion of the Legal Practitioners Admission Board's Diploma in Law Course.
- Admission or eligibility for admission as a legal practitioner in NSW.
- Highly developed legal skills and extensive experience which enable provision of advice and representation in highly complex legal matters in areas of law in which the Practice Group specialises.
- Undertake Criminal Record Check and Working with Children Check.
- Travel for regional or interstate court and other commitments subject to the application of any discrimination legislation (including in respect of carer's responsibilities).

Capabilities for the role

The [NSW public sector capability framework](#) describes the capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed to perform a role. There are four main groups of capabilities: personal attributes, relationships, results and business enablers, with a fifth people management group of capabilities for roles with managerial responsibilities. These groups, combined with capabilities drawn from occupation-specific capability sets where relevant, work together to provide an understanding of the capabilities needed for the role.

The capabilities are separated into focus capabilities and complementary capabilities

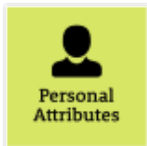
Focus capabilities

Focus capabilities are the capabilities considered the most important for effective performance of the role. These capabilities will be assessed at recruitment.

The focus capabilities for this role are shown below with a brief explanation of what each capability covers and the indicators describing the types of behaviours expected at each level.

Focus capabilities

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
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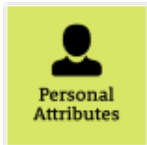


Display Resilience and Courage

Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change

- Remain composed and calm and act constructively in highly pressured and unpredictable environments
- Give frank, honest advice in response to strong contrary views
- Accept criticism of own ideas and respond in a thoughtful and considered way
- Welcome new challenges and persist in raising and working through novel and difficult issues
- Develop effective strategies and show decisiveness in dealing with emotionally charged situations and difficult or controversial issues

Advanced

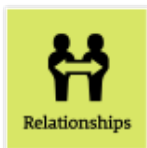


Manage Self

Show drive and motivation, an ability to self-reflect and a commitment to learning

- Act as a professional role model for colleagues, set high personal goals and take pride in their achievement
- Actively seek, reflect and act on feedback on own performance
- Translate negative feedback into an opportunity to improve
- Take the initiative and act in a decisive way
- Demonstrate a strong interest in new knowledge and emerging practices relevant to the organisation

Advanced

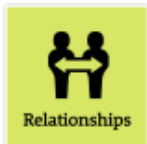


Communicate Effectively

Communicate clearly, actively listen to others, and respond with understanding and respect

- Present with credibility, engage diverse audiences and test levels of understanding
- Translate technical and complex information clearly and concisely for diverse audiences
- Create opportunities for others to contribute to discussion and debate
- Contribute to and promote information sharing across the organisation
- Manage complex communications that involve understanding and responding to multiple and divergent viewpoints
- Explore creative ways to engage diverse audiences and communicate information
- Adjust style and approach to optimise outcomes
- Write fluently and persuasively in plain English and in a range of styles and formats

Advanced

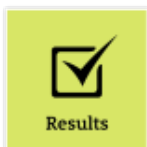


Work Collaboratively

Collaborate with others and value their contribution

- Build a supportive and cooperative team environment
- Share information and learning across teams
- Acknowledge outcomes that were achieved by effective collaboration
- Engage other teams and units to share information and jointly solve issues and problems
- Support others in challenging situations
- Use collaboration tools, including digital technologies, to work with others

Intermediate

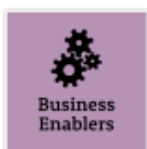


Deliver Results

Achieve results through the efficient use of resources and a commitment to quality outcomes

- Seek and apply specialist advice when required
- Complete work tasks within set budgets, timeframes and standards
- Take the initiative to progress and deliver own work and that of the team or unit
- Contribute to allocating responsibilities and resources to ensure the team or unit achieves goals
- Identify any barriers to achieving results and resolve these where possible
- Proactively change or adjust plans when needed

Intermediate

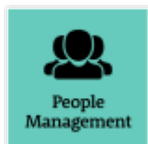


Project Management

Understand and apply effective planning, coordination and control methods

- Understand all components of the project management process, including the need to consider change management to realise business benefits
- Prepare clear project proposals and accurate estimates of required costs and resources
- Establish performance outcomes and measures for key project goals, and define monitoring, reporting and communication requirements
- Identify and evaluate risks associated with the project and develop mitigation strategies
- Identify and consult stakeholders to inform the project strategy
- Communicate the project's objectives and its expected benefits
- Monitor the completion of project milestones against goals and take necessary action
- Evaluate progress and identify improvements to inform future projects

Adept

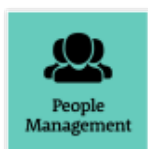


Manage and Develop People

Engage and motivate staff, and develop capability and potential in others

- Define and clearly communicate roles, responsibilities and performance standards to achieve team outcomes
- Adjust performance development processes to meet the diverse abilities and needs of individuals and teams
- Develop work plans that consider capability, strengths and opportunities for development
- Be aware of the influences of bias when managing team members
- Seek feedback on own management capabilities and develop strategies to address any gaps
- Address and resolve team and individual performance issues, including unsatisfactory performance, in a timely and effective way
- Monitor and report on team performance in line with established performance development frameworks

Adept



Inspire Direction and Purpose

Communicate goals, priorities and vision, and recognise achievements

- Promote a sense of purpose, and help the team to understand the strategic direction of the organisation and the needs of customers and stakeholders
- Translate broad organisational strategy and goals into tangible team goals and explain the links for the team
- Ensure that team objectives and outcomes lead to the implementation of government priorities and create value for customers and stakeholders
- Work to remove barriers to achieving goals

Adept

Complementary capabilities

Complementary capabilities are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identifying performance required for the role and development opportunities.

Note: capabilities listed as 'not essential' for this role are not relevant for recruitment purposes however may be relevant for future career development.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
	Act with Integrity	Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	Adept
	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Demonstrate inclusive behaviour and show respect for diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Adept

	Commit to Customer Service	Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	Adept
	Influence and Negotiate	Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	Advanced
	Plan and Prioritise	Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances	Adept
	Think and Solve Problems	Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions	Adept
	Demonstrate Accountability	Be proactive and responsible for own actions, and adhere to legislation, policy and guidelines	Intermediate
	Finance	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Intermediate
	Technology	Understand and use available technologies to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness	Intermediate
	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and apply procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Intermediate
	Optimise Business Outcomes	Manage people and resources effectively to achieve public value	Intermediate
	Manage Reform and Change	Support, promote and champion change, and assist others to engage with change	Adept