

Role Description

Senior Legal Officer Grade IV



Cluster	Stronger Communities
Agency	Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW)
Division/Directorate/Branch/Unit	Governance & Legal Office/Legal Services
Location	Sydney
Classification/Grade/Band	Legal Officer Grade IV
Kind of Employment	Ongoing
Role Number	52015294
ANZSCO Code	271299
PCAT Code	1228192
Agency Website	www.fire.nsw.gov.au

Agency overview

Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW) is one of the world's largest urban fire and rescue services and is the busiest in Australia. Our overriding purpose is to enhance community safety, quality of life, and confidence by minimising the impact of hazards and emergency incidents on the people, property, environment and on the economy of NSW. Our capabilities extend far beyond fighting fires. FRNSW firefighters are among the most highly trained in the world. Our teams provide fire prevention, they respond to hazardous materials incidents, natural disasters and medical emergencies. Our teams also undertake counter terrorism and urban search and rescue operations. We are prepared for anything – helping anyone, anywhere, anytime.

Primary purpose of the role

Provide legal advice and assistance on a range of law and policy issues that relate to the operational and administrative functions of FRNSW.

Key accountabilities

- Assess and manage cases, and monitor and follow-up issues
- Coordinate briefs to obtain legal services from external service providers
- Provide appropriate technical support and assistance to FRNSW staff subpoenaed to appear
- Contribute to the development of legal capability within FRNSW and conduct legal education and training programs for FRNSW
- Undertake legal/policy research and provide advice as requested.
- Provide advice on the development and implementation of legal standards and practices, strategies, systems, procedures, and processes for the area
- Draft and present accurate, clear and concise documents and advice within required timeframes to enable effective responses to changing and challenging issues.
- Prepare reports, correspondence, memoranda and other legal documents.

Key challenges

- Providing professional accurate and appropriate legal advice in a high-volume environment
- Exercise sound judgment in the day to day conduct of legal work, recognising the organisation's role as the NSW Emergency Services sector and the duty to act as a model litigant.
- Balance competing demands and ensure professional standards are met in high volume environment
- Keeping abreast of relevant legal precedent, government policies and regulatory and legislative changes
- Dealing with sensitive, issues requiring the synthesis of facts and the detailed analysis of relevant data
- Achieving the best possible outcome for the organisation, within a complex legislative and policy framework

- Ability to carry out duties in an honest, consistent manner with uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles and values

Key relationships

Who	Why
Internal	
Executive Director Office of the Commissioner /Executive Leadership Team/Senior Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide professional legal advice, support and opinions • Provide advice to officers involved in determining government information access applications on legislative provisions and legal interpretations • Consult with management on a suitable course of action in matters that are sensitive, high-risk or business-critical, or for those issues that have far reaching implications with respect to resources or quality advice provision
Principal Solicitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation and discussion of case work • Support the Principal Solicitor • Receive instructions, guidance and feedback for assigned work • Provide regular updates on status of legal matters and priorities •
Legal and Governance Business Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Principal Solicitor, Governance, other Legal Officers and Legal Support Officer within in the Unit • Provide regular updates on status of legal matters and project priorities • Share knowledge, expertise and information • Collaborate on matters and implement ideas and innovative approaches • Assist the Unit with work program planning as required • Attend team meetings and contribute to the development of effective team systems and procedures
Witnesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with Firefighters as witnesses for other government agencies such as NSW Police, EPA, the Coroner.
Internal Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide specialist and legal advice and reports to support internal committees
External	
External Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent FRNSW at various forums ensuring that FRNSW position is articulated consistently and appropriately
Government panels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate/negotiate with and arrange access to other governmental panels for access as a cluster group to their established panels
Other NSW Government Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact with other Emergency Services agencies and related agencies such as the Crown Solicitor, EPA, Property NSW

Role dimensions

Decision making

- A source of expert advice to internal stakeholders across FRNSW as well as externally to Ministerial level
- Work is allocated commensurate with legal experience and qualifications held
- Integrate knowledge of the work of FRNSW and the workings and complexities of government, makes decisions and provides legal services based on a clear analysis of the policy implications inherent in an issue

- Make decisions and provide clear legal advice and analysis
- Decide the priority to be afforded to the performance of work relating to the conduct of legal matters assigned to the role, subject to any direction by the supervising solicitor, court requirements and clients' instructions.
- Responsible for managing their own workload of matters and is expected to operate with a high degree of independence to ensure timely and effective case management of matters.
- May be required to work closely with and receive guidance from the Principal Solicitor and Senior Legal Officer Grade V to support them on specific projects

Reporting line: This role reports directly to the Principal Solicitor

Direct reports: This role has no direct reports

Budget/Expenditure: As per FRNSW Delegations Manual

Key knowledge and experience

1. Demonstrated experience in procurement and contract management desirable.
2. Demonstrated experience and Knowledge of relevant legislation concerning emergency services in NSW or the ability to quickly acquire same.

Essential requirements

1. Must hold a Legal qualification that permits the holder to be admitted as a legal practitioner with the right to appear in the Supreme Court of New South Wales.
2. Must have developed legal skills and experience which enable provision of advice in appropriate legal matters in areas of law relating to emergency services.

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
	Act with Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent the organisation in an honest, ethical and professional way and encourage others to do so • Act professionally and support a culture of integrity 	Adept
	Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and explain ethical issues and set an example for others to follow Ensure that others are aware of and understand the legislation and policy framework within which they operate Act to prevent and report misconduct and illegal and inappropriate behaviour 	
	Manage Self Show drive and motivation, an ability to self-reflect and a commitment to learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep up to date with relevant contemporary knowledge and practices Look for and take advantage of opportunities to learn new skills and develop strengths Show commitment to achieving challenging goals Examine and reflect on own performance Seek and respond positively to constructive feedback and guidance Demonstrate and maintain a high level of personal motivation 	Adept
 Relationships	Communicate Effectively Communicate clearly, actively listen to others, and respond with understanding and respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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
 Results	Deliver Results Achieve results through the efficient use of resources and a commitment to quality outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use own and others' expertise to achieve outcomes, and take responsibility for delivering intended outcomes Make sure staff understand expected goals and acknowledge staff success in achieving these Identify resource needs and ensure goals are achieved within set budgets and deadlines Use business data to evaluate outcomes and inform continuous improvement Identify priorities that need to change and ensure the allocation of resources meets new business needs Ensure that the financial implications of changed priorities are explicit and budgeted for 	Adept
	Think and Problem Solve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and apply critical-thinking techniques in analysing information, identify interrelationships and make recommendations based on relevant evidence 	Adept

Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions

- Anticipate, identify and address issues and potential problems that may have an impact on organisational objectives and the user experience
- Apply creative-thinking techniques to generate new ideas and options to address issues and improve the user experience
- Seek contributions and ideas from people with diverse backgrounds and experience
- Participate in and contribute to team or unit initiatives to resolve common issues or barriers to effectiveness
- Identify and share business process improvements to enhance effectiveness

Demonstrate Accountability

Be proactive and responsible for own actions, and adhere to legislation, policy and guidelines

- Assess work outcomes and identify and share learnings to inform future actions
- Ensure that own actions and those of others are focused on achieving organisational outcomes
- Exercise delegations responsibly
- Understand and apply high standards of financial probity with public monies and other resources
- Identify and implement safe work practices, taking a systematic risk management approach to ensure own and others' health and safety
- Conduct and report on quality control audits
- Identify risks to successfully achieving goals, and take appropriate steps to mitigate those risks

Adept




Technology

Understand and use available technologies to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness

- Demonstrate a sound understanding of technology relevant to the work unit, and identify and select the most appropriate technology for assigned tasks
- Use available technology to improve individual performance and effectiveness
- Make effective use of records, information and knowledge management functions and systems
- Support the implementation of systems improvement initiatives, and the introduction and roll-out of new technologies

Intermediate

FOCUS CAPABILITIES - Occupation specific capability set

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
	Statutory Interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply understanding of the legislative process and common law to identify and solve statutory interpretation issues. • Make use of extrinsic materials to resolve statutory interpretation issues, consistent with legislative and common law requirements. • Solve issues of statutory interpretation by applying current legislation relating to interpretation of statutes. • Read and interpret Acts and subordinate legislation, drawing on knowledge of the structure and operation of legislation 	Level 2
	Legal Research Undertake Legal Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve reliable and accurate legal research results through an understanding of the applicable legal system and application of case law and precedent. • Undertake legal research tasks in an efficient and targeted manner, identifying the most valuable sources and progressively adjusting research plans based on results. • Evaluate the results of legal research and where necessary, direct the further research to be undertaken. • Demonstrate a sound understanding of technology relevant to legal research and assist others in using the technology available 	Level 3

FOCUS CAPABILITIES - Occupation specific capability set

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
	Legal Advice		Level 2
	Provide quality independent legal advice and explanation of legal issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the client, purpose, scope and form of legal advice required, and factors such as urgency or sensitivity. • Obtain relevant information in complex matters and seek clarification or further information where necessary. • Manage legal issues relating to vulnerable clients, including where capacity may be in issue or where ethical or cross-cultural issues arise, with minimal guidance. • Analyse and apply relevant law to the facts, and advises on available options, while identifying the relevant policy, probity and operational considerations, with minimal supervision. • Identify legal risks attached to particular courses of action and appropriate policies, processes and controls to manage legal risks, with minimal supervision. • Review and approve the use of external legal services providers based on task and expertise required; supervises briefs. • Manage relationship between external legal services providers and legal staff, with minimal supervision. • Ensure legal work is completed to a high standard, and in a timely and cost-effective manner. 	

FOCUS CAPABILITIES - Occupation specific capability set

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
	Legal Drafting Prepare legal documents and achieve client outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt precedents and templates to draft legally and procedurally correct court and tribunal documents with minimal guidance. Apply knowledge of relevant procedural, evidentiary and ethical rules to draft effective court or tribunal documents. Use relevant precedents to draft logically organised transactional documents which meet the requirements of the transaction or project. Assist clients by using legal knowledge to draft, review or amend legal documents which achieve the client's intended purpose, comply with policy and minimise legal and commercial risk. Apply knowledge of the law and stylistic and mechanical requirements to drafting transactional documents to ensure that documents drafted are legally effective 	Level 2
	Litigation and Dispute Resolution Litigate and resolve disputes effectively in relevant forums and jurisdictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct litigation in accordance with model litigant requirements; deal fairly with self-represented litigants and treat opponents and other members of the legal profession with respect. Conduct litigation efficiently and effectively in accordance with court and/or tribunal rules and practice notes, directions and timetables. Apply relevant legal knowledge and experience to analysis of facts, pleadings and evidence, identify legal issues and develop a case plan. Gather and organise relevant evidence, including conferring with lay and expert witnesses to identify and prepare relevant evidence. Identify matters suitable for early resolution and undertake dispute resolution processes including negotiation, while protecting the client from risks and unnecessary costs. Review and approve the use of external legal services providers based on task and expertise required; supervises briefs. Brief and manage external legal services providers and ensure legal work is performed to the required standards, with minimal supervision 	Level 2





Refer to: NSW Public Service Commission – Legal Professionals Capability Set for behavioural indicators per level:

<https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workforce-management/capability-framework/occupation-specific-capability-sets/legal-capability-set>

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.

COMPLEMENTARY CAPABILITIES			
Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Personal Attributes	Display Resilience and Courage	Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	Adept
	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Demonstrate inclusive behaviour and show respect for diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Adept
 Relationships	Commit to Customer Service	Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	Adept
	Work Collaboratively	Collaborate with others and value their contribution	Intermediate
	Influence and Negotiate	Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	Intermediate
 Results	Plan and Prioritise	Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances	Intermediate
	Finance	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Foundational
 Business Enablers	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and apply procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Intermediate
	Project Management	Understand and apply effective planning, coordination and control methods	Foundational