

Role Description

Principal Solicitor

Cluster/Agency	Justice / Crown Solicitor's Office
Division/Branch/Unit	Legal Practice Group
Location	Sydney
Classification/Grade/Band	Legal Officer Grade VI
ANZSCO Code	271311
Role Number	Various
PCAT Code	1118192
Date of Approval	31 March 2015
Agency Website	www.cso.nsw.gov.au

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 provides core legal services to the NSW Government on a cost recovery basis and competes with the private sector for general legal work.

The CSO, headed by the Crown Solicitor, is a Public Service Executive agency related to the Department of Justice under the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013*. The CSO's business initiatives are linked to the Department's and Government's goals and directions in terms of the delivery of quality client services and responsiveness to the needs of the NSW Government and its agencies.

The CSO's vision is to be:

- the legal service provider of choice for NSW Government Agencies.
- the legal services employer of choice.

The CSO provides quality legal services to the NSW government and its agencies.

Legal services are provided to the clients of the Crown Solicitor through specialist Legal Practice Groups. The Crown Solicitor heads a Legal Practice Group focusing on Government Law issues. Other Legal Practice Groups are organised into four Legal Divisions, and each Division is headed by an Assistant Crown Solicitor. Each Legal Practice Group is headed by an executive lawyer at Director level.

The Corporate Services Division comprises: Finance and Support Services; Human Resources; Information Technology; Information Services and Marketing and Communications. The Division drives practice consistency and excellence in corporate service delivery. With a strong client focus, it delivers critical corporate functions to support the delivery of excellent legal services.

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

Who	Why
Internal	
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.

Who	Why
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	
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

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

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 applies to all NSW public sector employees. The Capability Framework is available at www.psc.nsw.gov.au/capabilityframework

Capability summary

Below is the full list of capabilities and the level required for this role. The capabilities in bold are the focus capabilities for this role. Refer to the next section for further information about the focus capabilities.

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Capability Group	Capability Name	Level
 Personal Attributes	Display Resilience and Courage	Advanced
	Act with Integrity	Adept
	Manage Self	Advanced
	Value Diversity	Adept
 Relationships	Communicate Effectively	Advanced
	Commit to Customer Service	Adept
	Work Collaboratively	Intermediate
	Influence and Negotiate	Advanced
 Results	Deliver Results	Intermediate
	Plan and Prioritise	Adept
	Think and Solve Problems	Adept
	Demonstrate Accountability	Intermediate
 Business Enablers	Finance	Intermediate
	Technology	Intermediate
	Procurement and Contract Management	Intermediate
	Project Management	Adept
 People Management	Manage and Develop People	Adept
	Inspire Direction and Purpose	Adept
	Optimise Business Outcomes	Intermediate
	Manage Reform and Change	Adept

Focus capabilities

The focus capabilities for the role are the capabilities in which occupants must demonstrate immediate competence. The behavioural indicators provide examples of the types of behaviours that would be expected at that level and should be reviewed in conjunction with the role's key accountabilities.

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
Personal Attributes Display Resilience and Courage	Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay calm and act constructively in highly pressured and unpredictable environments Give frank, honest advice in the face of strong, contrary views Accept criticism of own ideas and respond in a thoughtful and

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
		<p>considered way</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, difficult and controversial issues
Personal Attributes Manage Self	Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Maintain a high level of personal motivation • Take the initiative and act in a decisive way
Relationships Communicate Effectively	Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present with credibility, engage varied audiences and test levels of understanding • Translate technical and complex information concisely for diverse audiences • Create opportunities for others to contribute to discussion and debate • Actively listen and encourage others to contribute inputs • Adjust style and approach to optimise outcomes • Write fluently and persuasively in a range of styles and formats
Relationships Work Collaboratively	Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a supportive and co-operative team environment • Share information and learning across teams • Acknowledge outcomes which were achieved by effective collaboration • Engage other teams/units to share information and solve issues and problems jointly • Support others in challenging situations
Results Deliver Results	Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete work tasks to agreed budgets, timeframes and standards • Take the initiative to progress and deliver own and team/unit work • Contribute to allocation of responsibilities and resources to ensure achievement of team/unit goals • Seek and apply specialist advice when required
Business Enablers Project Management	Adept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare clear project proposals and define scope and goals in measurable terms • Establish performance outcomes and measures for key project

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
		<p>goals, and define monitoring, reporting and communication requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare accurate estimates of costs and resources required for more complex projects • Communicate the project strategy and its expected benefits to others • Monitor the completion of project milestones against goals and initiate amendments where necessary • Evaluate progress and identify improvements to inform future projects
<p>People Management Manage and Develop People</p>	<p>Adept</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and clearly communicate roles and responsibilities to achieve team/unit outcome • Negotiate clear performance standards and monitor progress • Develop team/unit plans that take into account team capability, strengths and opportunities for development • Provide regular constructive feedback to build on strengths and achieve results • Address and resolve team and individual performance issues, including unsatisfactory performance in a timely and effective way • Monitor and report on performance of team in line with established performance development frameworks
<p>People Management Inspire Direction and Purpose</p>	<p>Adept</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a sense of purpose within the team and enable others to understand the strategic direction of the organisation • Translate broad goals into operational needs and explain the links for the team • Link team performance goals to team/unit goals to ensure implementation of government policy • Ensure team objectives and outcomes lead to implementation of government policy • Recognise and acknowledge high individual/team performance