



PAPUA NEW GUINEA PUBLIC SERVICE

JOB DESCRIPTION

1. IDENTIFICATION

AGENCY: Department of Justice & Attorney General	SEQ. NO: DJAGSS 08	POSITION NO.: DJAGSS 08
DESIGNATION/CLASSIFICATION: Principal Legal Officer 6 - Contracts / Grade 18	OFFICE/AGENCY: Office of the State Solicitor	LOCAL DESIGNATION: Principal Legal Officer - Contracts
DIVISION: Legal Policy & State Legal Services	BRANCH: State Solicitor's Office	IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR: Deputy State Solicitor - Commercial / Grade 20
SUPERVISOR POSITION NO.: DJAGSS 02	SECTION: Commercial Law	LOCATION: Waigani

HISTORY OF POSITION

FILE REF	DATE OF VARIATION	DETAILS
OASTB:1/00:	31 Mar 2013 - Revised	REVISED
HRM8.10SS:08:		Revised
I&ER/PP:010/02		
HRM 8.1.20/SS: 31/13:	20 AUGUST. 2024	REVISED

3. PURPOSE OF THE JOB

The Principal Legal Officer 6 - Contracts is responsible for leading and managing the Contracts Unit within the State Legal Services Division. This unit provides legal advice to the State and its instrumentalities on all matters relating to commercial contracts and agreements. The role ensures that all legal services delivered meet the highest standards of professionalism and integrity, particularly in the negotiation and drafting of State contracts.

4. DIMENSIONS

- **Supervision:** Directly supervises legal officers and support staff within the Contracts Section.

- **Financial Responsibility:** Oversees the legal aspects of commercial contracts, ensuring the State's financial interests are protected in all agreements.
- **Legal Representation:** Provides legal opinions, drafts commercial contracts, and negotiates on behalf of the State.

5. PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Effective management of the Contracts Unit, ensuring that all outputs are of high quality and delivered in a timely manner.
- Provision of sound, well-researched legal advice to the State through client departments, State agencies, and other instrumentalities.
- Uphold the highest ethical and professional standards in delivering legal services to the State.
- Ensure that legal opinions and advice are coherent, credible, and beneficial to the State's interests.

6. MAJOR DUTIES

- Lead and manage the Contracts Section, ensuring that all legal advice meets quality standards.
- Advise on and assist in the negotiation of all State contracts and projects, ensuring the State's interests are safeguarded.
- Provide prompt and efficient service to the State Solicitor, Attorney General, and all government agencies on matters referred for advice and opinion.
- Liaise with the Attorney General and senior management on matters requiring coordination and cooperation, providing briefs as required.
- Draft commercial contracts and agreements, ensuring legal soundness and alignment with State interests.
- Negotiate on behalf of the State in major land disputes and resource projects, ensuring favorable outcomes.
- Represent the State Legal Services at meetings and on committees requiring legal input.
- Monitor staff performance, providing ongoing mentoring and professional development to ensure high levels of competence and job satisfaction.
- Ensure that the Contracts Section's job rotation and succession planning programs are effectively implemented and maintained.
- Perform other duties as directed by the immediate supervisor, consistent with the role's responsibilities.

7. NATURE AND SCOPE

7.1 WORKING RELATIONSHIP

(a) Internal:

- Regular interaction with the State Solicitor and Deputy State Solicitors.
- Coordination with all officers within the State Legal Services.

(b) External:

- Consultation with government agencies for instructions or assistance on legal matters.
- Liaison and negotiation with commercial entities, developers, foreign governments, and financial institutions.
- Coordination with private legal firms where necessary to support or enhance legal services.

7.2 WORK ENVIRONMENT

- The role involves handling high-stakes commercial legal matters, requiring a high degree of professionalism and expertise.
- Must maintain integrity and adhere to ethical standards while managing complex legal issues.

8. CONSTRAINTS FRAMEWORK AND BOUNDARIES

- **Rules/Procedures:** Must adhere to PNG legal procedures, court rules, and departmental policies.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Authorized to make decisions on legal strategies, representation, and negotiations related to commercial contracts.
- **Recommendations:** Provide recommendations for legal policies, procedural improvements, and strategic initiatives within the Contracts Section.

9. CHALLENGES

- Managing the demands of multiple complex commercial projects while maintaining high standards of legal practice.
- Adapting to legal and regulatory changes and effectively managing a team of legal professionals.

10. QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

(a) Qualifications:

- Law Degree from UPNG or another university with a similar legal system to PNG.
- Admitted to practice as a Barrister and Solicitor of the National and Supreme Courts of PNG, with at least 6 years of experience in legal practice.
- Possessing a Masters of Law is an advantage.

(b) Knowledge:

- Extensive knowledge of commercial law, legal principles, and government legal procedures.
- Comprehensive understanding of commercial contracts and State legal practices.

(c) Skills:

- Proven ability to lead and manage a team of professionals.
- High level of oral and written communication skills.
- Strong legal research, analytical skills, and the ability to draft and negotiate complex contracts.

(d) Experience:

- Significant professional experience in legal practice, especially in commercial law and handling State legal matters.