Office of the Prime Minister
Kōutu Mana Tūtara o te Ipukarea
GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS
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POSITION SUMMARY

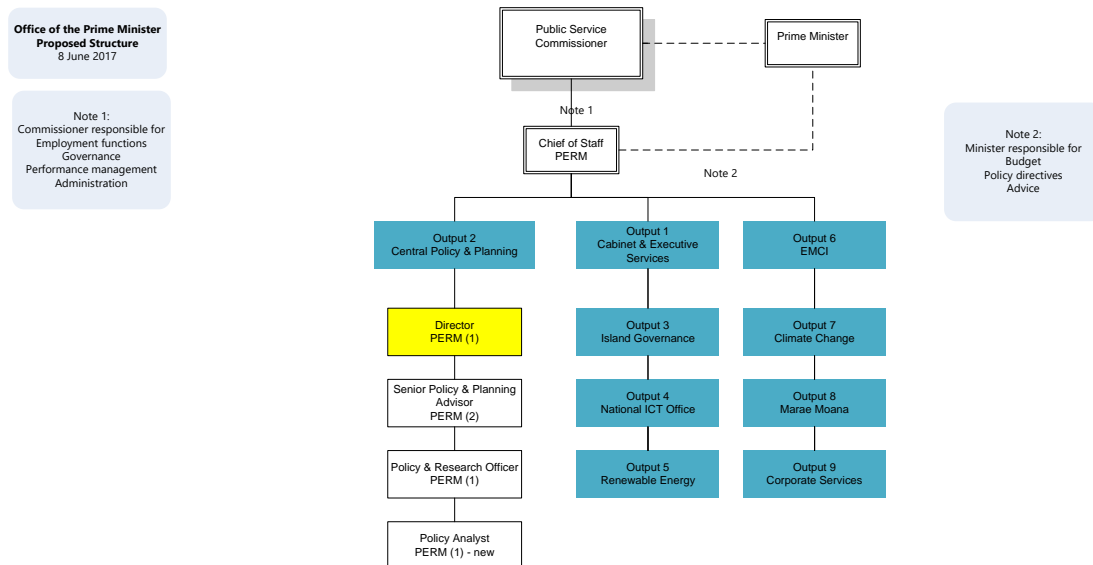|	
Job Title:	Director of Policy
Division:	Central Policy and Planning Office (CPPO)
Responsible To:	Chief of Staff of the Office of the Prime Minister
Responsible For:	4
Job Purpose:	The Policy Director will lead the formulation and implementation aspects of public policies that support the strategic objectives of the Cook Islands Government. This role ensures that policy development is timely, objective, and aligned with Ministerial priorities, while adhering to Ministry, Cabinet Office, and consultation requirements. The Director is responsible for presenting complex policy issues with high levels of accuracy and professionalism. Additionally, the role involves ensuring that public sector policy advice is robust and consistent with public sector systems and processes. The Director will also coordinate Ministry accountability requirements and ensure that performance information effectively informs decision-making.
Scope	The Director will work and engage with national, regional and international partners and forums on country priorities and national goals, engage and present in forums that influence positive change for the country to improve its development status and encourage growth. The Director and team are the custodians of the nation's Te Ara Akapapa'anga Nui 2020+ and monitor it through the annual indicator report which influences the annual budget process priorities. The Director has day-to-day management of staff and their engagement in strategic policy development across the public sector, regionally and internationally and will lead the implementation of the sector-based approach across the government. The Director will support the Chief of Staff in facilitating and developing the reports as required and high-level discussions that have a strategic impact on the Cook Islands. The Director provides Policy development and interpretation advise to all of Government and assists in commenting on all strategic documents on a case by case basis- ensuring consistency with Govenrment processes and objectives.

	The Director has discretionary powers to make decisions which are outlined in the contract of employment. Any final decisions ultimately rest with Chief of Staff.
Job Classification:	Leadership
Job Band:	
Jobwise Code:	
Date updated:	July 2024

AGENCY VISION

'A confident, well-governed and resilient Cook Islands'
Turanga tūkatau 'akatere'anga tau'ē te mātūtū

The Office of the Prime Minister supports the Prime Minister and Cabinet to ensure that the government of the day meets its obligations for sound governance in the Cook Islands. It has core responsibilities for implementing sound processes and policy advice on the national sustainable development goals (SDG's), Information Communications and Technology, Pa Enua governance and influencing the priorities for the Cook Islands. As a central agency, the Office of the Prime Minister is responsible for contributing and coordinating the delivery of core services by line agencies and assisting end users with IT issues. OPM has added responsibilities for building resilience to the effects of climate change, investing in renewable energy, preparing for emergencies, and implementing Marae Moana Act 2017.

ORGANISATIONAL STAFFING STRUCTURE

KEY RESULT AREAS (KRA'S)/OUTPUTS

KRAs for this position	Key Performance Indicators
KRA 1: Policy Analysis, Development, and Advice • Leading and contributing to robust policy /strategy development of multiple pieces of policy work and contribute to successful implementation processes	*Jobholder is successful when:* • Policies/strategies are completed effectively and in agreed timeframes • Opportunities and problems are identified and solutions to complex problems are produced • Passage of legislation is assisted by providing high quality information and advice to Ministers and Cabinet and

KRAs for this position	Key Performance Indicators
• Leading and driving policy/strategy development using project management methodology and effective policy tools	supported where necessary with influencing drafting instructions to ensure accurate reflection of Cabinet's decisions • A range of quantitative and qualitative frameworks, tools and approaches, and research that align with best practice are applied. • As far as possible valuing our Maori knowledge by applying it in practise • Information gathering and gaps identification produces accurate, evidence-based robust policy analysis • Policies anticipate and include plan for associated risks
• Working collaboratively and constructively across the public sector and with staff in own Ministry to achieve policy outcomes that meet national policy requirements	• Scoping and planning for national policy requirements to ensure that policy advice is relevant is available and accessible • Policy impacts on the wider system are identified and included in relevant sector plans • Provide advice and secretariat through team on various committees and working groups across government as appropriate
• Developing and maintaining for self and team a range of relevant, professional relationships and networks, with both internal and external stakeholders	• Clear and accurate communication of policy rationale and recommendations is available in writing and presented verbally • Consultation with relevant stakeholders is undertaken and any issues resolved. • Ensuring that Mana Pou Toru are consulted on major Policy issues.
• Lead on National research and ethics advice	• Guide and provide advice to the secretariat for the National Research Committee and National Ethics Committee Consistently look at better ways of improving research with Maori knowledge and Maori methodologies. Being research active would be ideal.
KRA 2: Contributing to broader policy capability and capacity • Contributing and promoting policy work that is being led by others across the public sector and within OPM • Supervising the accurate development of documents and material prepared by policy advisors across the public sector and within OPM • Managing and supporting the development of new team members to ensure that there is a high level of policy capability within the policy areas	*Job holder is successful when:* • Advice provided is objective and accurate within specified timeframes • Work produced by policy advisors is accurate, consistent and of a high quality • Peer review response is accurate, specific, objective, solution driven and structured • Performance agreements identify policy capability development needs • Opportunities for active learning and development are promoted and pursued

KRAs for this position	Key Performance Indicators
• Working with regional or international partners in providing capability and capacity trainings for policy/staff • Collaborating with all agencies across government and Non-government agencies.	• Responds to constructive feedback in order to continually improve the quality of policy work produced
KRA 3: Chief of Staff and Prime Minister Support • Support the Chief of Staff in developing advice on national policy implications through review of Cabinet papers and policy briefs • Lead, facilitate and contribute to national budget processes, national priority setting, and international affairs, and facilitate sector planning and infrastructure priority setting • Contribute and support implementation of the work of the National Sustainable Development Commission • Lead, and contribute, to the development and review of corporate documents including the organisational strategy, budget planning, and reporting requirements • Lead and drive the maintenance and monitoring of national policy issues for the drafting of briefing, speeches and prime ministerial and other ministerial correspondence, including preparing responses to ministerial and parliamentary questions • Contribute, support and participate in discussions with central agencies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration to develop the national and international agenda with key development and international partners	*Job holder is successful when:* • Advice routinely provided on national policy implications for Cabinet papers and policy decisions as requested. • Lead and provide advice on special projects as requested by the Prime Minister or Chief of Staff. • Actively participate in the national budget process including development of the annual Budget Policy Statement and other national statements • Facilitate and support sector planning in developing and designing strategic policies and national priorities • National infrastructure priority setting is supported, as determined by the Infrastructure Committee • Regular analytical reporting and effective secretariat support for NSDC • Initiative is used to identify potential impacts and reported to the NSDC • Organisation strategy and plans are evaluated, reviewed and monitored regularly • Develop and coordinate organisational accountability documentation and responses as directed by Chief of Staff • Timely and accurate advice is provided to Chief of Staff, Prime Minister and other ministers as required • Relevant consultation is undertaken with government agencies to contribute to the advice • Regularly meet with central agencies and MFAI to stay abreast of policy changes and impacts • Regularly contribute to policy discussion on international interests as it impacts on country priorities
KRA 4: Team Effectiveness • Lead and contribute towards a positive team culture towards wellbeing that enables the high	*Job holder is successful when:* • Performance agreements with each staff member in place

KRAs for this position	Key Performance Indicators
performance of the immediate team and the organisation overall • Lead the identification of work priorities, seeking the feedback of the wider team • Manage and support team members to deliver on work priorities within agreed time frames and quality standards • Share knowledge, time and expertise to build capability and assist members of the team • Provide constructive feedback to team members and be receptive to receiving feedback	• Work plans, are developed and regularly monitored • Individual and team meetings are regularly scheduled
KRA 5: Ensuring Workplace Health, Safety and Wellbeing • Comply with health and safety procedures and ensure you don't harm yourself or anyone else • Report all incidents and help to identify and manage hazards	*Jobholder is successful when:* • Number of incidents and hazards reported

WORK COMPLEXITY

	Most challenging problem solving duties
1	Ability to react to rapidly changing circumstances in a highly politically focused office. Control, harmonise and motivate policy coordination and development in all major sectors across the public sector environment including private, community and international development partners.
2	Directing and leading a whole-of government approach for solving complex policy problems with potential political ramifications at the national, regional and international level
3	Problems are varied and the solution requires extensive research through diverse approaches and perhaps contradictory cases, initiative and judgement is necessary in interpretation. Majority of the issues are of a strategic nature requiring analysis and the evaluation of several alternative solutions, particularly where they have unexpected elements which have not been previously encountered. Need to operate in a highly ambiguous environment and therefore be proactive and prudent in responses without compromising the Ministry and the government. Dealing with sensitive matters requires the highest confidentiality even within the office.
4	Determines own strategies to meet the overall objectives of the nation. Expected to resolve and provide solutions to major and contentious issues.

AUTHORITY

Financial	Recommends routine expenditure within budgetary limits and is accountable for the division's expenditure budget (approximately $155,000), relevant administered payments and project funding
Staff	Yes
Contractual	Review and recommend entering into contracts with external contacts e.g development programmes, memoranda of understandings, cooperation agreements. Contracts to be passed by Chief of Staff

FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Internal	Nature of Contact	External	Nature of Contact
Chief of Staff	**Heavy**: Position requires daily contact with Chief of Staff on agency advice that contribute to national decision-making, particularly matters of national/political sensitivity at the Cabinet level, ministerial, HOM and sector agency level across the public service	Prime Minister' Support Office Other Ministers' offices	**Routine**: Significant, regular discussions and contact to resolve day to day difficulties and problems. **Minimal**: Minimal external contact is required.
Senior Management	**Medium**: Position requires regular engagements with all other senior managers across the agency, including leading on corporate, strategic planning and support on division specific policies	Central Agencies (MFEM, PSC Crown Law)	**Negotiating**: Considerable contact as the prime negotiator on major business dealings or on highly sensitive matters requiring highly developed negotiating or human relations skills.
Division staff	**Heavy**: Position requires daily and direct management, monitoring, guidance and support towards division staff	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration	**Negotiating**: Considerable contact as the prime negotiator on major business dealings or on highly sensitive matters requiring highly developed negotiating or human relations skills.
Cabinet Services Division	**Medium**: Position requires regular engagement with Cabinet Services on decisions and cabinet papers	Other government departments	**Promoting**: Significant contact to promote the organisation and achieve prescribed goals. Also included are those positions having daily and continual contact with people and in a role requiring advanced human relations skills.
Staff across the agency relevant to your work area	**Light**: Position may require engagement with all staff on corporate planning, consultations or with specific division in supporting national policy development as required	Professional and community groups	**Promoting**: Significant contact to promote the organisation and achieve prescribed goals. Also included are those positions having daily and continual contact with people and in a role requiring advanced human relations skills.
		Interdepartmental working groups and other interagency bodies	**Routine**: Significant, regular discussions and contact to resolve day to day difficulties and problems. **Promoting**: Significant contact to promote the organisation and achieve prescribed goals. Also included are those

Internal	Nature of Contact	External	Nature of Contact
			positions having daily and continual contact with people and in a role requiring advanced human relations skills. **Negotiating**: Considerable contact as the prime negotiator on major business dealings or on highly sensitive matters requiring highly developed negotiating or human relations skills.

QUALIFICATIONS (OR EQUIVALENT LEVEL OF LEARNING)

Level of education required to perform the functions of the position. This combines formal and informal levels of training and education.

Essential: (least qualification to be competent)	Desirable: (other qualifications for job)
• Post-graduate level in public management, public administration, policy development, international relations, law, development economics.	• Post-graduate level or working towards a PhD in relevant fields of public policy.

EXPERIENCE

The length of practical experience and nature of specialist, operational, business support or managerial familiarity required. This experience is in addition to formal education.

Essential: (least number of years to be competent)	Desirable: (target number of years you are looking for)
• Minimum of 10 years' experience in leading, managing and shaping the development of extensive and diverse policy with demonstrable leadership • At least ten year experience in strategic policy development in senior management and leadership roles • Broad experience at a high level advisory and analytical role, with the ability to resolve complex, ambiguous and wicked policy problems • Proven ability to manage an effective policy team in a supportive, nurturing environment and grow capability and capacity across a range of organisations • Extensive knowledge of the Cook Islands with excellent understanding of regional and international challenges facing the country	• At least 15 years strategic high level experience in policy management and development with at least 10 year experience in senior management and leadership roles in policy development • Engaging and presenting in international and regional forums on policy frameworks and provide advice at the highest levels • Ability to anticipate threats and challenges to the Cook Islands at a global level and proactively engage with relevant powers to mitigate

	Excellent relational skills and solving complex challenges	
	Reo Maori and understanding of Akono'anga Maori	

KEY SKILLS /ATTRIBUTES/JOB SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES

Level of ability required for the job	
Expert	• Complex, creative, innovative problem solving in new/emerging environments • Strategic thinking, planning, analysis and evaluation of public policy alternatives • System wide conceptual thinking and ability to cope/resolve a variety of strategic, national, and organisation problems • Exceptional knowledge and practical application of rigorous policy logic methodology, problem solving techniques and frameworks, horizontal and vertical analysis, project management methodology • Initiative, proactive, active critical thinking and questioning • Engage in strategic discussions and articulate the country priorities at the highest level • Explaining and exploring synergies and inter-linkages across multilateral agreements • Negotiating and reporting across diverse audiences at a national and international level • Excellent communication skills (written, verbal, active listening, professional presentation) • High level of professional standards • Negotiation skills in mediation and conflict resolution and able to feedback constructively • Team leadership; ability to delegate and direct teams, people • Coaching and mentoring skills
Advanced	• Proven practical application in using a range of quantitative and qualitative frameworks, tools and approaches, and research that align with best practice • Information gathering and gaps identification produces accurate, evidence-based robust policy analysis • Retain objectivity and ensure advice is structured, accurate, specific and objective • Policies anticipate and include plan for associated risks • Meeting facilitation skills • Stakeholder management
Working	• Public Service management experience • Resource management • Excellent report writing, peer review and editing skills • Accurate consistent, high quality reporting • Advanced computer, information literacy • Organisational development and performance management • Networking and relationship building
Awareness	• Cook Islands economic, legal, policy, political, cultural, social, environment context • International issues that may impact the Cook Islands

| | • Public policy governance concepts |
| | • MFEM, PERCA, PSC Acts |

Competencies

Core Competencies
1. Ethical Leadership:
    o Demonstrates a strong understanding of ethical principles and practices.
    o Promotes a culture of integrity and ethical behavior within the organization.
    o Ensures compliance with ethical guidelines and regulations.
2. Research Expertise:
    o Possesses in-depth knowledge of research methodologies, design, and analysis.
    o Keeps up-to-date with advancements in the field of research.
    o Provides guidance on best practices for conducting high-quality research.
3. Regulatory Knowledge:
    o Thorough understanding of local, national, and international regulations governing research.
    o Ensures that research activities comply with all relevant legal and ethical standards.
    o Maintains up-to-date knowledge of changes in regulatory requirements.
4. Policy Development:
    o Develops and implements policies and procedures related to research ethics.
    o Reviews and updates policies to reflect current best practices and regulatory requirements.
    o Ensures that policies are effectively communicated and enforced.
5. Conflict Resolution:
    o Effectively manages conflicts of interest and ethical dilemmas in research.
    o Provides a clear process for reporting and addressing ethical concerns.
    o Acts as a mediator in disputes involving research ethics.
6. Education and Training:
    o Develops and delivers training programs on research ethics and compliance.
    o Ensures that researchers are knowledgeable about ethical standards and procedures.
    o Promotes ongoing professional development in research ethics.
7. Communication Skills:
    o Communicates complex ethical and research concepts clearly and effectively.
    o Engages with stakeholders, including researchers, institutional review boards (IRBs), and regulatory agencies.
    o Prepares reports, presentations, and publications on research ethics.
8. Analytical Thinking:
    o Applies critical thinking to assess and address ethical issues in research.
    o Conducts thorough analyses of research proposals and protocols for ethical compliance.
    o Evaluates the potential impact of research on participants and society.
9. Strategic Planning:
    o Develops long-term strategies for promoting ethical research practices.
    o Aligns research ethics policies with the organization's strategic goals.
    o Identifies emerging ethical challenges and prepares the organization to address them.
10. Leadership and Management:
    o Provides strong leadership to the research ethics team.
    o Manages resources effectively to support ethical research practices.
    o Fosters a collaborative and supportive work environment.
Additional Competencies
1. Cultural Competence:
    o Recognizes and respects cultural differences in research practices.
    o Promotes inclusivity and diversity in research.
2. Technology Proficiency:
    o Utilizes technology to enhance research ethics oversight and compliance.

o   Stays informed about technological advancements that impact research ethics.
3.   Interdisciplinary Collaboration:
   o   Works effectively with researchers from various disciplines.
   o   Facilitates interdisciplinary approaches to addressing ethical issues in research.

Customer Focus	Is dedicated to meeting the expectations and requirements of internal and external customers; gets first-hand customer information and uses it for improvements in products and services; acts with customers in mind; establishes and maintains effective relationships with customers and gains their trust and respect.
Integrity & Trust	Is widely trusted; is seen as a direct, truthful individual; can present the unvarnished truth in an appropriate and helpful manner; keeps confidences; admits mistakes; doesn't misrepresent him/herself for personal gain.
Decision Quality	Makes good decisions (without considering how much time it takes) based upon a mixture of analysis, wisdom, experience, and judgment; most of his/her solutions and suggestions turn out to be correct and accurate when judged over time; sought out by others for advice and solutions.
Organisational Agility	Knowledgeable about how the Ministry works; knows how to get things done both through formal channels and the informal network; understands the origin and reasoning behind key policies, practices, and procedures; understands the cultures of organisations.
Drive for Results	Can be counted on to exceed goals successfully; is constantly and consistently one of the top performers; very bottom-line oriented; steadfastly pushes self and others for results.
Problem Solving	Uses rigorous logic and methods to solve difficult problems with effective solutions; probes all fruitful sources for answers; can see hidden problems; Is excellent at honest analysis; looks beyond the obvious and does not stop at first answers. Thorough understanding and use of a range of project management methodology and effective policy tools to identify problems and solutions to highly complex problems.
Informing	Provides the information people need to know to do their jobs and to feel good about being a member of the team, unit, and/or the organisation; provides individuals information so that they can make accurate decisions; is timely with information.
Interpersonal Savvy	Relates well to all kinds of people; builds rapport; builds constructive and effective relationships; uses diplomacy and tact; can diffuse even high-tension situations comfortably.
Research and ethics	

CHANGE TO JOB DESCRIPTION

Changes to the Job description may be made from time to time in response to the changing nature of the Agency work environment - including technological or statutory changes.

Approved:

HoM/Manager	Date

Employee	Date