



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Legal Counsel
Division:	Land & Legal
Responsible To:	General Manager – Land & Legal
Responsible For:	Nil direct reports. May provide guidance and mentoring to junior staff, interns, or contractors as required.
Job Purpose:	To provide high-quality legal advice and support across the Corporation, assisting with Crown land administration, commercial transactions, governance, statutory compliance, litigation management, policy development and legal projects. The position supports the General Manager – Land & Legal in ensuring the effective delivery of legal services and sound administration and management of Crown land interests. The Legal Counsel is expected to exercise sound professional judgement, work independently on allocated matters and escalate significant legal or strategic issues to the General Manager – Land & Legal where appropriate.
Date updated:	August 2026

AGENCY VISION

The vision that CIIC aspires to contribute to is:

Ko te turanga tiratiratu i te puapinga o te iti tangata ka riro te reira i te akamatutu i te tupu'anga o te iti tangata, to tatou tango, no te tuatau ki mua.

Quality public assets that empower our people, our places, our future.

CIIC's vision has an extensive remit, therefore has a vast scope of responsibilities and contributes in a number of ways to the National vision and the national development sustainable plan.

CIIC's vast scope of responsibility includes:

1. Crown land, Government infrastructure including Government buildings,
2. The Ports and Airports of Rarotonga and Aitutaki,
3. Te Aponga Uira Power Authority and Te Mana Uira o Araura,
4. Bank of the Cook Islands,
5. Investments in reticulated Water and Sanitation,
6. Telecommunications infrastructure and enterprises including Avaroa Cable,
7. Facilities management including Punanga Nui Market; and
8. Seabed mineral assets and enterprises

The CIIC has a vast scope of responsibilities with technical ownership of all crown assets and contributing to national development across a number of areas.

AGENCY VALUES



ORGANISATIONAL STAFFING STRUCTURE



POSITION SUMMARY

The Legal Counsel is responsible for providing high-quality legal advice and support to the Cook Islands Investment Corporation (CIIC) across a broad range of legal, commercial and Crown land matters. Working under the direction of the General Manager – Land & Legal, the Legal Counsel assists in protecting the CIIC's legal interests by providing timely legal advice, preparing and reviewing legal documentation, supporting Crown land administration, assisting with litigation and dispute resolution, and ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and corporate governance requirements.

The Legal Counsel works collaboratively with all divisions of CIIC, Government agencies, Crown entities, external legal counsel, landowners and other stakeholders to support the effective delivery of the Corporation's functions.

Accountability for performance will be assessed through regular meetings with the General Manager – Land & Legal, achievement of agreed work programmes, and annual performance reviews against key performance indicators.

KEY RESULT AREAS (KRA'S)/OUTPUTS

KRAs for this position (maximum of 6)	Key Performance Indicators (<i>use SMART principles</i>)
KRA 1: Strategy and Policy Contribute to the development and implementation of the CIIC Strategy,	- Effective contribution to CIIC's strategic and annual business planning. - High-quality legal input into organisational strategies, policies and projects.

Statement of Corporate Intent and Annual Business Plan. • Assist in the development, review and implementation of policies, strategic initiatives, annual work plans and legal frameworks that support the Corporation's objectives. • Provide strategic legal advice and recommendations to support organisational planning, decision-making and risk management. • Identify legal opportunities and risks associated with strategic initiatives and recommend practical solutions. • Support the General Manager – Land & Legal in implementing divisional priorities, strategic projects and continuous improvement initiatives.	• Timely identification and management of legal risks. • Policies and legal frameworks reviewed and maintained. • Strategic legal advice delivered within agreed timeframes.
KRA 2: Legal Operations and Service Delivery • Manage assigned legal matters and projects to ensure timely and effective delivery of legal services. • Support the General Manager – Land & Legal in achieving the objectives of the Division through effective planning, prioritisation and delivery of allocated legal work programmes. • Prepare, review and provide advice on legal documents, contracts, leases, licences, deeds and other legal instruments. • Assist in developing, reviewing and implementing legal policies, procedures, precedents and operational guidelines. • Contribute to continuous improvement of legal systems, knowledge management and document management practices. • Contribute to the preparation of divisional reports, work plans, budget information and management reporting as required. • Identify legal risks and recommend practical mitigation strategies. • Provide guidance and mentoring to junior staff, contractors or interns where appropriate. • Contribute to a positive, respectful and collaborative team environment, supporting the wellbeing of colleagues and promoting a sustainable work-life balance within the Division. • Comply with CIIC's Health and Safety policies and procedures and actively contribute to a safe and healthy workplace.	• Effective contribution to CIIC's strategic and annual business planning. • High-quality legal input into organisational strategies, policies and projects. • Timely identification and management of legal risks. • Policies and legal frameworks reviewed and maintained. • Strategic legal advice delivered within agreed timeframes.

• Assist in preparing legal cost estimates, budget information and financial reporting relating to legal matters and projects. • Contribute to the effective delivery of Government and CIIC services by providing practical, timely and solution-focused legal support that meets the needs of stakeholders and the public.	
KRA 3: Crown Land Advice, Support & Management • Provide timely and accurate legal advice and guidance on Crown land matters. • Assist in the management and administration of Crown land interests throughout the Cook Islands. • Prepare and review leases, licences, warrants, easements, proclamations, memoranda of understanding and other land-related legal documentation. • Undertake legal research and prepare written legal opinions on Crown land matters. • Assist with maintaining accurate Crown land records and information systems, including AssetFinda. • Assist in monitoring Crown land obligations, rent reviews, lease renewals, compensation payments and compliance with contractual obligations. • Represent the Corporation professionally at meetings, consultations and negotiations relating to Crown land matters as delegated. • Develop and maintain positive and proactive working relationships with landowners, tenants, Government agencies, Crown entities and other stakeholders involved in Crown land matters. • Assist with consultations, negotiations, valuations, technical reports and other processes relating to new or existing Crown land arrangements. • Prepare background memoranda, supporting documentation and instructions for Crown Law Office or external legal counsel on Crown land matters. • Assist with ancillary Crown land matters affecting the Corporation, including maintenance, access, boundary and tenure matters where required. • Participate in and assist with negotiations involving landowners, tenants, Government agencies, Crown entities and other stakeholders in relation to Crown land, leases, licences, compensation, acquisitions and other land tenure arrangements.	• Accurate and practical Crown land advice. • Land transactions progressed efficiently. • AssetFinda records maintained accurately. • Positive stakeholder relationships. • Compliance with statutory and contractual obligations. • Positive and proactive stakeholder engagement maintained. • Crown land matters progressed in a timely and well-documented manner. • Clear and complete instructions provided to Crown Law Office and external legal counsel.

KRA 4: Legal Advice and Corporate Governance • Provide high-quality legal advice across all areas of CIIC. • Draft, review and negotiate commercial agreements, contracts, employment agreements, leases, deeds, memoranda of understanding and other legal documentation. • Prepare and assist with Board papers, Decision Papers, Cabinet submissions, legal opinions, Official Information Act responses, procurement documentation, governance advice and statutory instruments to support the Corporation's decision-making processes. • Support statutory compliance and corporate governance obligations. • Develop, maintain and continuously improve legal precedents, templates and knowledge management systems to support consistency of legal advice and practice across the Corporation. • Maintain current knowledge of legislation relevant to the Corporation and provide advice on legislative developments affecting the Corporation. • Contribute to legal thought leadership through legal research, legislative analysis and the sharing of legal knowledge across the Corporation. • Provide robust, practical and solution-focused advice on legal matters of complexity or urgency, escalating significant risks to the General Manager – Land & Legal where appropriate. • Support and promote a consistent legal position across the Corporation by working collaboratively with colleagues and external legal advisers. • Work with Crown Law Office and relevant stakeholders on the development, review or amendment of legislation applicable to CIIC and its subsidiaries. • Undertake and, where appropriate, peer review legal advice and legal documentation to ensure consistency and quality. • Provide legal advice and assistance on corporate governance matters, including statutory registrations, Companies Office requirements, constitutions, annual returns and other corporate compliance obligations. • Provide legal advice on procurement processes, supplier arrangements and commercial negotiations. • Provide practical, commercially sound and risk-based legal advice that supports	• Accurate, practical and commercially focused legal advice. • High-quality legal drafting. • Legislative compliance maintained. • Governance documentation prepared accurately and on time. • Positive feedback from internal clients. • Legal advice is practical, commercially focused, solution-oriented and consistent. • Legal precedents, templates and knowledge systems are current and used consistently. • Legislative developments affecting CIIC are identified and communicated promptly. • Significant legal risks are escalated appropriately.
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informed decision-making and enables the Corporation to achieve its strategic and operational objectives.	
KRA 5: Litigation, Dispute Resolution and Legal Projects • Assist in managing litigation, arbitration, mediation, judicial review and other dispute resolution matters involving the Corporation. • Liaise with Crown Law Office, external legal counsel and other professional advisers. • Prepare and coordinate legal briefs, evidence, correspondence, background memoranda and formal instructions to Crown Law Office and external legal counsel. • Contribute to legal aspects of organisational projects, commercial transactions and strategic initiatives. • Identify legal risks associated with projects and recommend practical solutions. • Monitor progress of assigned legal matters and ensure deadlines are met. • Coordinate and manage allocated legal projects from commencement through to completion, including project planning, stakeholder engagement, monitoring of milestones and reporting. • Obtain necessary approvals and sign-offs for assigned legal matters and projects. • Communicate progress, risks, issues and outcomes to the General Manager – Land & Legal and relevant stakeholders.	• Litigation matters progressed efficiently. • Effective coordination with external legal advisers. • Legal risks identified and managed. • Timely completion of assigned projects. • High-quality legal support provided. • Project milestones and legal deadlines achieved within agreed timeframes. • Clear approvals and sign-offs obtained where required. • Progress, risks and issues reported accurately and promptly. • Professional and effective coordination with Crown Law Office, external counsel and project stakeholders.
KRA 6: Stakeholder Relationship Management • Develop and maintain effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders. • Provide professional legal advice and assistance to Government agencies, Crown entities, landowners, tenants and members of the public where appropriate. • Promote collaborative, solution-focused and professional working relationships. • Maintain effective communication with internal clients regarding legal matters and project progress. • Demonstrate professionalism, integrity and sound judgement, particularly when dealing with sensitive, contentious or high-profile matters. • Assist with public consultations, stakeholder engagement and communications on legal and Crown land matters where required.	• Strong stakeholder relationships maintained. • Timely responses to stakeholder enquiries. • Positive stakeholder feedback. • Effective collaboration across the organisation. • Professional representation of the Corporation maintained at all times. • Stakeholder expectations are managed appropriately and commitments are followed through. • Consultations and communications are timely, clear and appropriate.

• Maintain effective working relationships with the CEO, Board, Government agencies, Crown entities, Pa Enua governments, landowners, tenants, community leaders and commercial stakeholders, as appropriate to the role. • Represent the Corporation professionally at meetings, conferences, committees, consultations and stakeholder forums as delegated.	
KRA 7: Professional Development and Continuous Improvement • Maintain professional legal knowledge and complete continuing professional development requirements. • Contribute to continuous improvement of legal systems, templates, precedents and work practices. • Share legal knowledge with colleagues and assist in developing organisational capability. • Undertake special projects and other duties, and provide support on matters reasonably related to the position, as assigned by the General Manager – Land & Legal. • Contribute positively to team outcomes and collaborate effectively across the organisation. • Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability in responding to changing priorities, urgent matters and organisational needs. • Share legal knowledge and provide guidance or mentoring to junior staff, interns or contractors where appropriate.	• Continuing professional development maintained. • Contribution to continuous improvement initiatives. • Legal precedents and templates maintained. • Additional projects completed to a high standard. • Positive contribution to team and organisational outcomes. • Demonstrates adaptability and professionalism when priorities change. • Legal knowledge is shared appropriately to strengthen organisational capability.
REQUIRED KEY RESULT AREAS/OUTPUTS	
Values – Displays the CIIC Values	• Employees displays consistently the CIIC Values of Kia • Orana (Cook Islands Pride), Akairo (Legacy), Tu Rangatira (Professionalism) and Ora’anga Matutu (Health & Wellbeing) in the workplace. • Act honestly, truthfully and abides by the laws of the Cook Islands at all times • Provides impartial advice and makes decisions based on merit • Serves the people of the Cook Islands faithfully. • Treats people with courtesy and respect. • Takes action and makes decisions in an open and transparent way. • Is able to explain reasons for actions taken and takes responsibility for those actions.

	• Achieves good results for CIIC, government and the people of the Cook Islands in an efficient and effective way.
Professional Ethics & Code of Conduct Understands CIIC professional Ethics & Code of Conduct and is recognised by colleagues in this area.	• Employee is on time to work each day. • Employee is always dressed appropriately for their role • Promotes teamwork and works with team to meet agreed objectives and goals • Communicates regularly with colleagues • Looks for ways to improve work methods and solve workplace problems • High quality of job performance • Healthy behaviour displayed at all times • Has a commitment to the vision and values of the CIIC • Responsible use of resources • Maintains privacy and confidentiality
Health & Safety Adheres to Public Sector Health & Safety standards and adheres to the CIGOV Health & Safety Policy as well as Agency requirements.	• Works in a manner that does not create a hazard to their own safety or the safety of others • Promotes healthy and safe working environment for self and others. • Identifies and reports hazards and ways to eliminate or mitigation risks in the workplace • Uses the correct tools and equipment in the manner prescribed for the job • Uses the required safety equipment and protective clothing (where required) • Reads, understands and complies with the agency OSH work processes and practices • Complies with reasonable instructions from Managers on OSH work processes and practices • Reports OSH-related incidents, accidents, or illnesses to managers and/or employers

WORK COMPLEXITY – INDICATE CHALLENGING PROBLEMS SOLVING DUTIES TYPICALLY UNDERTAKEN – 3–4 EXAMPLES

The Legal Counsel is required to exercise sound legal judgement across a broad range of Crown land, commercial, governance and public law matters. The role requires the ability to manage multiple legal files concurrently, analyse complex legal issues, interpret legislation, provide practical legal advice and contribute to organisational projects within agreed timeframes. The Legal Counsel is expected to work independently on allocated matters while escalating significant legal risks or strategic issues to the General Manager – Land & Legal.

1	Managing multiple legal files simultaneously while maintaining quality and meeting deadlines.
2	Providing legal advice on complex Crown Land, commercial and governance matters.
3	Identifying legal risks and recommending practical and commercially sounds solutions.
4	Assisting with litigation, negotiations and stakeholder engagement involving multiple parties.

AUTHORITY – EXPLAIN THE AUTHORITY, IF ANY

Financial	Limited delegated authority in accordance with CIIC Delegations Policy.
Staff	No direct reports. May provide guidance and mentoring to junior staff, contractors or interns as required.
Contractual	May prepare, review and negotiate legal documentation. Execution subject to approved delegations.

FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS – LIST THE EXTERNAL & INTERNAL TYPES OF FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Internal (Within the Agency)	Nature of Contact	External (Outside the Agency)	Nature of Contact
General Manager – Land & Legal	Medium Provide legal advice Prepare Board and governance documentation	Crown Law Ministry of Finance & Economic Management Ministry of Justice	Routine Provide legal advice and support Liaise with Crown Law Office and external legal counsel
CEO	Medium Support commercial negotiations	External Legal Counsel Infrastructure Committee Government agencies SOEs and Island Governments	Medium Provide legal advice Concern for Quality and Standards
Board of Directors	Medium Assist with legal risk managements	Contractors, suppliers and Consultants Development Partners	Medium Assist with litigation and dispute resolution Participate in negotiations and stakeholder engagement
Management & Staff	Medium Collaborate on strategic and operational projects	Other project stakeholders i.e. landowners, civil society organisations, etc	Medium Building Relationships and Networks with key stakeholders Maintain professional relationships and provide timely legal advice
Land & Legal Staff and contractors	Routine Oral, written and presentation skills. Analytical and report writing skills. Negotiating skills		

	Investigative and reconciliation		
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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)
• Bachelor of Laws (LLB) or equivalent recognised legal qualification. • Admitted as a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of the Cook Islands, or eligible for admission.	• Current practising certificate. • Postgraduate legal qualification. • Experience or demonstrated interest in Crown land, commercial law, public law, property law or corporate governance.

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)
• Minimum 4–6 years' post-admission legal experience. • Experience providing legal advice within a law firm, public sector, Crown entity or commercial environment. • Experience drafting legal documents. • Experience managing legal files independently.	• Experience within the public sector, or private legal practice, Crown entity or commercial environment. • Experience in Crown land or property law. • Experience in litigation or dispute resolution. • Experience preparing Board papers, governance documentation and legal opinions.

KEY SKILLS /ATTRIBUTES/JOB SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES

Level of ability required for the job	List Key Skills/Attributes/Specific Competencies
Expert	• Sound legal knowledge across commercial, property, public and corporate law. • Excellent legal drafting and analytical skills. • Strong negotiation and problem-solving ability.
Advanced	• Knowledge of the Cook Islands legal framework. • Knowledge of the Cook Islands Investment Corporation Act and related legislation. • Understanding of Crown land administration. • Understanding of Government planning, policy and decision-making processes. • Corporate governance. • Contract law. • Statutory interpretation. • Legal research.
Working	• Project management. • Procurement processes. • Government decision-making.

	• Risk management. • Microsoft Office. • Electronic document management systems. • Smartsheet, AssetFinda or similar corporate information management systems.
Awareness	• Professional judgement. • High ethical standards. • Excellent written and verbal communication. • Strong stakeholder management. • Ability to work independently. • Strong organisational skills. • Ability to prioritise competing deadlines. • Collaborative team member. • Adaptable and solutions focused. • Attention to detail. • Commitment to continuous improvement. • Excellent analytical and problem-solving skills.

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:

CEO

Date

Employee

Date