



Environmental Defenders Office

Managing Lawyer – Position Description

EDO relies on our people to use their skills and experience to provide the best possible support to our clients and other staff. While this job description aims to outline the fundamental reason the role exists, the role may evolve as EDO evolves.

If you see a way to play to your strengths in a way that achieves EDO outcomes, please don't be limited to this list. We have important work to do and need everyone to be operating at their best.

Job title: Managing Lawyer, Corporate Commercial

Reporting to: Deputy Director, Early Legal Interventions

Direct Reports: Corporate Commercial Team

1. Position overview and purpose of the position

Environmental Defenders Office (EDO) is the largest environmental legal centre in the Australia-Pacific, dedicated to protecting our climate, communities and shared environment by providing access to justice, running ground-breaking litigation and leading law reform advocacy.

The Managing Lawyer, Corporate Commercial (ML) is responsible for EDO's Corporate Commercial team within the Legal practice and will provide legal services surrounding climate change, environmental protection and justice.

The Managing Lawyer will be expected to work closely with the Deputy Directors and other Managing Lawyers as relevant to develop and actively manage the legal practice. In this role, you will have the opportunity to work with a high level of autonomy and self-direction. This will include leading on media work, seminars, publications, as well as having carriage of litigation, law reform and advice work, supervision of staff and practice management. It is expected that you will be largely self-directed in the carrying out of day-to-day duties of the position with responsibility for managing staff and relationships within your practice area.

As Managing Lawyer, we expect you to carry out the responsibilities listed below, as well as supervise legal staff in delivering on all legal services, within funding and resourcing constraints.

Managing Lawyer is a leadership position, responsible for EDO's Legal Practice. You will hold expertise in corporations law or related disciplines, be an expert in relevant legal frameworks and have a working knowledge of how the corporations law can be applied to the purpose of protecting the climate and environment.

2. Key responsibilities & duties

Legal work and practice management and direction

- Develop and implement an annual work-plan for your team which is within the teams' resource envelop and deliver collectively as One EDO on our strategy.

- Provide legal advice and representation to the public on a wide range of legal matters relevant to corporations law and its application to the protection of the climate and environment, including misleading/deceptive conduct, directors duties and greenwashing.
- Supervise and have carriage of litigation undertaken within a relevant region or at the federal level, as appropriate.
- Undertake public education and outreach, including developing online resources and fact sheets, and conducting workshops or seminars.
- Engage in law reform related to corporations law and policy as it applies to the protection of the climate and environment, including participating in government policy processes and developing and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders.
- Manage and oversee the provision of legal services and compliance with professional obligations.
- Supervise the solicitors within your team and ensure the quality and accuracy of the legal work delivered by other EDO solicitors where relevant.

Leadership

- Work closely with the Deputy Directors to implement effective legal practice management in the delivery of legal services, ensure your practice is operating in alignment with EDO's practice management settings and drive consistency across EDO's legal practice.
- Provide advice and recommendations to the Deputy Directors on appropriate practice management as part of the continuous improvement of the practice.
- Participate in, and occasionally develop and lead, training programs for EDO staff.
- Operate within a national and geographically distributed EDO team.
- Travel, from time to time, to spend time with team members.
- Contribute positively to EDO's profile and reputation within a particular region or federal jurisdiction (as applicable).

Team Culture and Communication

- Demonstrate effective oversight and supervision of the lawyers within your practice team.
- Translate EDO's strategy into accountable workplans relevant to the practice team's context and to funding commitments.
- Demonstrate the ability to lead with humility, prioritising the needs of the team and the EDO above personal ambitions. Managing Lawyers need to value and respect all contributions.
- Cultivate and foster a positive, inclusive and collaborative work environment which encourages mutual respect, testing of ideas, open communication and team cohesion.
- Play a key role in ensuring team communication and collaboration at EDO, providing timely updates across your team.
- Mentor and coach team members, offering guidance and support to foster professional growth and development.
- Effectively manage and resolve interpersonal and professional conflicts within your practice team and, as appropriate, with members of your practice team and other EDO staff.

Risk Management

- Develop an understanding of EDO's risk management principles and risk appetite.
- Present work that is deemed complex or high risk to EDO's risk committee.

- Engage in, and uphold, a culture of robust testing of ideas and work theories both promoting cooperation, collaboration and team buy-in as well as improving outcomes for clients, achieving better alignment with strategy and effectively mitigating risks.

Resource allocation and project management

- Understand financial constraints on service delivery, work within budgets and communicate budget decisions.
- Work closely with the Deputy Directors to finalise annual work plans and continuously assess work which arises outside of those plans.
- Ensure resource allocation within your practice area is efficient and, where appropriate, will foster project-based collaborations.

Stakeholder and external relations

- As directed by the Deputy Director, build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders, including government, the legal profession, environmental NGOs, traditional owners and other community-based organisations within your region or in the Federal jurisdiction, as appropriate.
- Represent EDO in the media as required and in accordance with relevant EDO policies.
- Participate in, and support, EDO fundraising and communication activities, including taking responsibility for acquittal of grants tied to delivery of services and deliver any locally focused fundraising activities in collaboration with other members of the EDO team.

3. Corporate Commercial Law

The Managing Lawyer, Corporate Commercial ought to have:

- Extensive experience of domestic and international laws relevant to corporate conduct and action, including but not limited to the Corporations Act 2001 and the Australian Consumer Law.
- A strong and detailed understanding of the legal frameworks which operate within the Region in respect of a Safe Climate and a demonstrated capacity to think about how those frameworks can be used, and improved, to drive the changes sought by the EDO's strategic plan.
- The ability to think creatively and ambitiously about how we achieve systemic change.
- An instinct for how legal tools can be best used, alongside other non-legal tools, to effect legal change and a willingness to push your team to advance the law.
- An instinct for the effective use of strategic litigation as part of a broader change strategy.
- The ability to plan and implement a Transformative Legal Strategy. Specifically, an ability to demonstrate an understanding of and the strategic potential of law reform, education and litigation work.
- Supervise the legal work of the EDO's Corporate Commercial Team in line with the approved Strategic/Annual Plan.
- The confidence to manage the provision of legal services by the Corporate Commercial Team – including compliance with professional obligations (PII insurance, trust accounts and solicitor conduct obligations).
- The ability to ensure the quality of the legal work delivered by the Corporate Commercial Team.

- The ability to competently supervise and mentor solicitors within the Corporate Commercial Team (degree dependent on seniority and experience) in line with the approved Strategic/Annual Plan.

7. Qualifications

- Law degree and at least 5 years (8 years highly desirable) of post-admission experience in legal practice.
- Acknowledged technical experience in the legislative frameworks applicable, and capacity to lead and supervise litigation, law reform and policy, community legal education/early intervention.
- Practice management experience and eligibility for a Principal Practising Certificate within the relevant jurisdiction/s.
- Proven experience in a leadership role within a legal setting.
- Proven experience in a leadership role within a not-for-profit.
- Proven experience in a leadership role within a geographically dispersed team.
- Demonstrated ability to develop and implement strategic objectives within a legal practice.

8. Professional competencies and behaviours

- **Strong leadership qualities with the ability to inspire and develop high-performing teams.**
Motivation: Regularly recognises and rewards team achievements, fostering a culture of appreciation and motivation.
Empowerment: Effectively delegates tasks, empowering team members to take ownership and responsibility for their work. Encourages team members to take initiative and lead projects or segments of work as appropriate.
- **Excellent organisational, communication and interpersonal skills.**
Clarity and precision: Communicates complex legal and strategic information clearly and concisely, ensuring all stakeholders understand the key messages.
Active listening: Practices active listening to understand the perspectives and needs of team members and stakeholders.
Self-awareness: Regularly seeks feedback on their own performance from across the organisation and demonstrates awareness of personal limitations and knowledge gaps. Actively seeks to improve and is open to learning from others, regardless of their role or level within EDO.
- **Proficient in managing budgets and resourcing.**
Financial acumen: Demonstrates a thorough understanding of budgeting principles and financial management.
Cost control: Demonstrates an ability to effectively manage workloads/costs within a budget.
- **High level of integrity and professional ethics.**
Ethical decision making: Makes decisions that align with the organisation's values and ethical standards, even when facing pressure or adversity.
Transparency: Maintains transparency, fostering trust and credibility.
Accountability: Takes responsibility for actions and encourages the same level of accountability from members of their team.
- **Ability to drive innovation and adapt to changing legal environments.**

Curiosity and open-mindedness: Stays informed about emerging trends and developments in their field of expertise.

Flexibility: Able to adapt quickly to changes in the environment and is comfortable with ambiguity.

- **Inclusivity and ability to work closely with a diverse range of internal and external stakeholders.**

Inclusive: Committed to fostering an inclusive and diverse workplace, through active promotion of equity, thorough understanding of diversity and leadership of initiatives that ensure all employees feel valued and respected.

Ensuring varied perspectives: Involves team members in decision-making, ensuring diverse perspectives are considered.

Open and honest: facilitates open and honest discussions among team members.

Cultural competence: Shows respect for, and understanding for, diverse cultures, backgrounds and viewpoints.

9. General

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Develop and maintain a good knowledge of EDO's role and policies.
- Represent EDO in a positive and effective manner by actively demonstrating EDO Values.
- Attend and contribute actively and constructively at staff meetings.
- Actively engage with and contribute to EDO's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).
- Maintain appropriate records, assist with office administration, such as files, computer and precedent systems.
- Seek opportunities for personal and professional development, particularly related to the team and position's specific areas of responsibility.
- Respond to requests by clients and fellow staff in a knowledgeable, professional, constructive and respectful manner.
- Provide accurate and timely data and information for reporting, fundraising and communications purposes.

10. Commitment to EDO's Values:

Commitment

- We are committed to; a united organisation, to each other, to collaboration, to justice, to our communities and to creating a world where nature thrives.
- We are committed to providing excellent legal services and resources, informed by the best available science, in order to empower clients and communities.
- We are committed to improving our planet and society.
- We care for EDO's clients and stakeholders.
- We are fearless in the face of adversity, and care for each other as we face this adversity.

Diversity

- We are respectful of and welcome diversity of staff, volunteers, offices, environmental regions, communities, stakeholders.
- We respect First Nations Peoples' knowledge and experience, and work with them to protect their country and culture.
- We acknowledge that the law has not always been just.
- We dedicate ourselves to understanding the diversity of our people and culture.

- We welcome and respect our own differences and learn from them and collaborate to achieve our greatest potential.
- We are great lawyers and great people, with open hearts and open minds.
- We respect the different places our stakeholders come from and strive to help them, even if their worldviews don't align completely with ours.

Integrity

- We work effectively, efficiently, strategically, professionally and ethically; “justice is in our nature”.
- We are truthful with ourselves and others.
- We are nonpartisan and inspire trust in our clients, stakeholders and government.
- We respect the world's resources and make maximum productive use of the resources entrusted to us.

Vision

- We lead change and environmental empowerment using innovation, creativity, and courage.
- We expand the boundaries with creativity and skill, pioneering new legal pathways to a healthier, safer world and inspiring others.
- We are inquisitive, curious and persistent: exploring new ideas and embracing change.
- We boldly challenge the status quo while providing solutions to our most pressing challenges.