



PACIFIC ISLANDS
FORUM SECRETARIAT

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT

Applicant Information Package

LEGAL OFFICER

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About the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

Founded in 1971, the Pacific Islands Forum is the region's political and economic policy organisation.

The work of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) is guided by the Framework for Pacific Regionalism (FPR), endorsed by Forum Leaders in 2014, which embraces, their Vision for:

A region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives: and calls for;

The expression of a common sense of identity and purpose, leading progressively to the sharing of institutions, resources, and markets, with the purpose of complimenting national efforts, overcoming common constraints, and embracing sustainable and inclusive development within Pacific countries and territories and for the Pacific region as-a-whole.

The FPR is underpinned by the Blue Pacific narrative, endorsed by Forum Leaders in Samoa in 2017, which calls for a long-term regional commitment to act as one “Blue Continent” as the means to achieve its development aspirations. The Leaders ambition is for the Blue Pacific to serve as the platform to reinforce and inspire the region in its shared stewardship of the Pacific Ocean, and to reaffirm the connections of Pacific peoples across the vast oceanic continent, with its natural resources and environment, biodiverse ecosystems, cultures and, livelihoods and prospects.

For more information about PIFS visit www.forumsec.org.

About the Position

The Legal Officer's role is to support the work of the Governance and Engagement Division, by providing support to the International Legal Adviser (ILA) in the discharge of the duties and responsibilities associated with the Key Responsibility Areas (KRAs) assigned to the ILA.

The position is expected to carry out legal tasks in support of the role of the ILA, and other KRAs as may be directed/approved by the Director Governance & Engagement (DGE) through the ILA; and to carry out any other duties and responsibilities as may be assigned by the Director and supervisor(s).

The incumbent will be an expert in legal writing, and formulating legal opinions and advice through thorough research, analysis and translation of related legal sources, including legislation / literature. The Legal Officer must be able to determine own priorities, in discussion with the DGE & ILA, for the assigned workload and / or workplans. In addition, he/she should have a strong personal drive and integrity, including a commitment to finishing tasks and achieving a high standard of work, a willingness to learn and taking responsibility for mistakes.

General Capabilities

The organisational structure of the *Forum Secretariat* aims to achieve greater consistency across the organisation in the way workforce capability is developed, and capability gaps are identified and addressed. As such, PIFS has a Capability Framework (CF) that provides a common platform to clarify performance expectations and job behaviours required for roles at various levels. Details of each CF Competency may be different for the position's Band Level, refer Annex 1.

CORE CAPABILITIES:

Planning & Prioritising	“Developing and committing to personal, team, KRA and organization wide plans”
Communicating with Purpose and Effect	“Clear communication while knowing your target audience and the outcomes you are seeking”
Leading and Collaborating	“Actively leads self, others and organization to establish a positive and productive organization culture”
Applying Critical Thinking	“Gathering, organizing and analyzing information for effective decision making”
Developing and Strengthening Relationships	“Working cooperatively and establishing, developing and maintaining business relationships”
Delivering Value	“Deliver Outcomes that meet agreed quality and timeliness measures”

SUPPLEMENTARY CAPABILITIES:

Supplementary Capabilities required include: building for the future, promoting effective workplace practices, managing and coordinating projects as well as using systems, tools and technology.

Position Accountabilities

The position reports to the Director Governance & Engagement through the International Legal Adviser and will work closely with the Governance & Engagement Team to advance the responsibilities of the unit.

The Legal Officer will be responsible, but not limited, to the following Key Result Areas:

1. Support the work of the ILA:

- Support the legal advisory function led by the ILA, including implementing the treaty functions of the Secretary General;
- Contributing to legal research, analysis and review of international and regional issues related to the priority areas, and as may be assigned by the ILA and / or the Director, G&E;
- Contributing to the development of legal papers related to priority areas;
- Contributing to the development of legal opinions and advice to members on issues related to the priority areas, or as may be assigned by the Director G&E;
- Developing the necessary tools to support implementation of international treaties and conventions;
- Support to members at international negotiations, or through convening of Regional conferences and workshops;
- Ensures that work in priority areas are progressing and/or concluded within set time-frames;
- Regional coordination achieved and reports are produced on time; and
- Capacity building.

2. Law of the Sea – Sea-level rise, Maritime Zones, BBNJ and other UN Processes

- Provide Legal advice and technical support to the Secretariat and Members to advance the Leaders Oceans priorities, in collaboration with the relevant CROP Agencies, Partners and

Members (current focus on the work around sea-level rise and maritime zones, BBNJ negotiations and related national, regional and global processes (UN processes);

3. Nuclear Legacy Issues and the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Rarotonga Treaty)

- Provide Legal advice and technical support to the Secretariat and Members to advance the Leaders decisions around the issue of nuclear contamination in the Pacific, in collaboration with the relevant CROP Agencies, Partners and Members. The current focus of the work is around support to Members impacted by Nuclear Testing Programs, an independent scientific assessment; and operationalizing the provisions of the Rarotonga Treaty);

4. Undertaking other delegated legal duties, including:

- Convening of Forum Meetings and Representation of the Forum's interests to relevant international bodies;
- Management of the Secretariat's treaty depositary role, and assistance in the provision of other in-house legal advice and services;
- Manage the Secretary General's role as Depositary of regional treaties, and providing other in-house legal services and advice;
- Provide and assist in the analysis and facilitation of Forum membership/observer status applications; Contribute to the formulation and application of PIFS policies with legal implications; Coordinate the provision of legal assistance to Member countries as required.
- Legal advice and support to advance KRAs 1 and 2, including Forum meetings, regional policy development, and regional priorities (including SIS priorities) focused on climate change and disaster resilience, nuclear issues, regional security, fisheries, social inclusion, the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, good governance, and Post-Cotonou negotiations;
- Strengthen cooperation and engagement with legal advisers in Member countries, CROP agencies, and other regional and global partners to advance Leaders' priorities; and
- The discharge of any other duties as may be assigned by the Director, Governance and Engagement.

Note: The above performance requirements are provided as a guide only. The precise performance measures for this job will need further discussion between the jobholder and supervisor as part of the performance development process

Position complexities

Most challenging duties typically undertaken:

- Assessing different legal options and avenues, and providing legal advice that is fully inclusive of, and addresses all issues, of the 18 Forum Members, taking into account political and strategic challenges facing the Blue Pacific Continent;
- Providing concise and targeted legal advice in a simple and coherence manner easily understood by the layperson; and
- Delivering on a range of legal issues at any given time, and working towards very tight timelines. This includes preparation of briefs, meeting papers, speeches, and different kinds of communication tailored to specific levels and events.

Qualifications and experience required for the role

This section is designed to capture the expertise required for the role at the 100% fully effective level. (This does not necessarily reflect what the current jobholder has.) This may be a combination of knowledge/experience, qualifications or equivalent level of learning through experience or key skills, attributes or job specific competencies:

- A Law degree (preferably postgraduate level or LLM) from a recognised institution;
- Minimum of five (5) years of experience in the field of law;
- Demonstrated experience and knowledge in the legal systems of Forum Members, in particular of the 14 Forum Island Countries;
- Demonstrated experience and knowledge and an awareness of regional and international legal issues relevant to the role of the Forum Secretariat; and
- Excellent written and oral skills.

Other desirable knowledge and experience for the role would be an advantage, specifically:

- Knowledge and understanding of legal issues connected to the work in priority areas under the Legal and KRAs assigned to the ILA;
- Experience in working in a cross-cultural environment;
- Experience in working in a regional organization related to law of the sea issues; and
- Background and experience in international law .

Functional relationships & Relationship skills

The role will need to liaise with many stakeholders, key contacts and typical nature of their relations are:

External:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Forum AG offices and legal experts, concerned Government Ministries and representatives; relevant regional and international organizations and sectoral bodies | } | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting Official circulars, letters, papers, emails, sharing advisory material or information on Secretariat processes |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CROP Agencies | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal advice and briefs, monitoring and analysis, representing PIFS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International bodies such as the UN Office of Legal Affairs and DOALOS | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversations during regional meetings to build understanding and address issues • Advocating of regional and international priorities of importance to the region • One-on-one meetings on topical issues |

Internal:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretary General and other members of Senior Management team | } | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting legal advice and briefings on strategic and directions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other KRA Advisers | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official internal communication seeking management approval/ endorsement of papers, presentations, and resource requests • Regular group meetings to share information • Informal one-on-one conversations |

- Other reporting officers & Admin staff
 - Staff in other reporting lines
- Emails and written briefings and/or seek inputs for work
 - Collaborative Inputs to papers and presentations

Direct Reports

The role has no direct reports.

Level of Delegation

The role cannot authorize any costs nor sign standard letter on Secretariat letterhead.

Additional Information

- PIFS advocates for equal opportunities
- Incumbent is physically fit and able to travel frequently
- Hold a current passport valid at least 6 months

Change of Position description

This position description may be subject to change from time to time in response to the changing nature of our work environment – including technological requirements or statutory changes. Such change may be initiated as required.

This Position Description may also be reviewed as part of the preparation for performance planning for the annual performance cycle.

Summary of Conditions, Benefits & Entitlements

The Forum Secretariat is part of the participating agencies of the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) that have agreed through their governing councils to standardise employment conditions. Outlined in this section are the conditions, benefits & entitlements that accrue to the position of Legal Officer

Contract Term

- *Principle:* To ensure recruitment and retention of the best person for the position.
- *Practice:* The successful candidate will be entitled to a contract term of three years subject to a satisfactory medical examination and performance during a six month probation period. On completion of three years at the Secretariat, a contract may be renewed for up to three (3) years based on performance, funding, and the need for the position, with a maximum employment term of nine (9) years.

Working hours

- *Principle:* To ensure that the minimum legal standard is met.
- *Practice:* Normal working hours are 37 hours per week with the official office hours being:

Monday – Thursday: 8:30am – 5:00pm
Friday: 8:30am – 4:30pm.

Salary

- *Principle:* To ensure relative worth of similar positions across CROP agencies is maintained and consistent with the market, a sample of positions across participating CROP agencies are validated and sized to ensure equivalent salaries are paid for equivalent jobs. Salaries for all Secretariat positions that are advertised internationally, are assessed annually compared to the reference markets which are the median of the Australian and New Zealand Public Service Sectors and the Fiji All Organisations market.
- *Practice:* This position is placed at Officer level, is denominated in Special Drawing Rights (SDR) and paid in Fiji Dollars according to the average SDR/Fiji exchange rate for the preceding month. The starting salary is at **SDR 30,412** per annum. At the 1 June 2021 exchange rate this salary was equivalent to **FJD89,211**. For non-Fijian nationals, this salary may be tax-free.

Superannuation

- *Principle:* To provide the minimum legal requirement of the host country.
- *Practice:* This entitlement amounts to the minimum Employer Contribution rate as provided in the Fiji National Provident Fund Act (currently 10%), which will be paid as a cash supplement to salary or to a nominated superannuation fund. For Fiji citizens this will be paid to the Fiji National Provident Fund.

Housing

- *Principle:* To ensure that staff have access to a reasonable standard of housing appropriate to their position.
- *Practice:* Rental assistance equating to 75% of suitable standard accommodation is paid to incumbents of positions that have been advertised internationally. Maximum rates are reviewed annually. The maximum rental assistance payable is FJD3,000 per month or FJD36,000 per annum in Suva. The assistance for overseas locations will be set following a review of the rental housing market.

Education

- *Principle:* To enable staff to have their dependent children educated to a recognised and acceptable standard.
- *Practice:* 75% of actual costs of fees for tuition, board and sanctioned tutorials are reimbursed up to a maximum of FJD21,855 per child per annum (in Suva) and up to a maximum of FJD65,565 per family per annum.

Recruitment & Repatriation Entitlements

- *Principle:* To meet costs of travel, accommodation and for moving personal effects of staff and dependents to enable a move to the base station on recruitment and back to recognised home on repatriation.
- *Practice:* Airfares, packing and removal costs for staff, spouse and dependent children between point of recruitment and Suva will be facilitated and paid by the Secretariat. Hotel accommodation for 6 working days is provided for staff on arrival and on repatriation. Reasonable removal expenses (packing, insuring, shipping and unpacking) from place of recruitment and on end of contract. A 20-foot container is the family entitlement for this purpose.

Establishment Grant

- *Principle:* To assist with settling in expenses.
- *Practice:* A grant equivalent to SDR 2,500 will be given to staff recruited from outside the greater Suva area.

Health/Life Insurance

- *Principle:* To provide standard health insurance.
- *Practice:* Health insurance covering local medical consultation, pharmaceutical benefits and overseas medical treatment (subject to certain conditions) and term life insurance equivalent to three times the base salary is provided for staff.

Annual Leave

- *Principle:* To provide for recuperation and recreation.
- *Practice:* The entitlement for annual leave is 25 working days per annum.

Sick Leave

- *Principle:* To provide for leave for illness or accident.
- *Practice:* The allocation for sick leave is 21 days per annum.

School Holiday Travel

- *Principle:* To enable parent-child reunion.
- *Practice:* One economy class return airfare per annum for a dependent child to visit their parent at the base station or one economy class return air fare for a staff member or spouse to visit their dependent child studying overseas.

Home Leave Travel

- *Principle:* To enable staff to maintain contact with their home environment.
- *Practice:* After having completed 18 months of service, expatriate staff members are entitled to home leave airfares provided they return for the remaining time of their contracts. The entitlement is for reimbursement of one economy class return flight between Suva and the place of normal residence for the staff member, spouse and dependent children.

Repatriation Grant

- *Principle:* To assist staff from outside the base station settle back in their home location.
- *Practice:* A grant equivalent to SDR 2,500 will be given on repatriation.

Tax Status

- *Practice:* Remuneration is taxable for Fiji nationals and may be tax-free in Fiji for non-Fiji nationals. It is the responsibility of the applicant to check the tax status of Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat salary in their relevant country.
- *Principle:* To meet the minimum legal requirements as agreed through the Establishment Agreement between the organisation and the host government.

Other Benefits

- Other benefits include family leave, maternity leave and special leave at the Secretary General's discretion.

Administrative Information

The closing date for applications is **6 August 2021**. Applications should contain full information on education and career background. Applicants must also provide the names, addresses (postal & e-mail), fax and telephone numbers of three employment referees.

Interested applicants are encouraged to apply through our website: www.forumsec.org where an information package containing the job description and remuneration details is also available.

General Information on the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat is available on the website.