



Environmental Defenders Office

Commonwealth Law Reform & Advocacy Specialist – 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: Commonwealth Law Reform and Advocacy Specialist

Reporting to: Head of Policy and Law Reform

Purpose of the position

Working with the Head of Policy & Law Reform and sitting in the Systemic Change Team, the Commonwealth Law Reform and Advocacy Specialist is a Canberra based position and will be the EDO's key interface with the Commonwealth Government. It is focused on ensuring strong engagement by the EDO with key Commonwealth law reform processes in our areas of strategic focus.

The Commonwealth Law Reform and Advocacy Specialist will:

- Help develop EDO positions on policy and legislative matters.
- Track legislation and policy development initiatives.
- Perform policy and legislative analysis.
- Proactively seek opportunities for EDO to advance reform priorities.

Key responsibilities & duties

The Commonwealth Law Reform and Advocacy Specialist is responsible for providing policy and legal advice in the context of EDO's national environmental law reform priority areas: including biodiversity, safe climate, freshwater and First Nations cultural heritage protection. The Commonwealth Law Reform and Advocacy Specialist will, among other things, be responsible – in consultation with the Head of Policy and Law Reform – for leading EDO's work on reform of the EPBC Act and the establishment of a Commonwealth EPA.

In addition to working internally and with Government, the Commonwealth Law Reform and Advocacy Specialist will work closely to develop EDO's partnerships within the broad range of organisational stakeholders involved with environmental law reform, ensuring – with the Head of Policy and Law Reform – that EDO creates and maintains a leadership position on issues within the Policy and Law Reform Program's remit.

This role involves liaising with Government departments and agencies, Members of Parliament, and a range of stakeholders and experts working on national environmental law reform. A critical part of this role is the ability to build positive relationships with Government, parliament and other stakeholders.

Responsibilities will also include:

- Engaging in the legal detail of law reform processes;
- Preparing briefing papers for Ministers, MPs and advisors;
- Attending in person meetings;
- Preparing drafting instructions for legislative amendments;
- Representing EDO on expert stakeholder groups;
- Scoping out strategic interventions for law reform.

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.
- 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.

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.