



Environmental Defenders Office

Managing Lawyer, Litigation & Casework – Position Description

Job Title:	Managing Lawyer, Litigation & Casework
Reporting to:	Principal Lawyer/Director, Litigation & Casework
Direct Reports:	National Litigation Team
Travel Requirements:	Some travel may be required to fulfil this role

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.

1. Position Overview & Purpose

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, Litigation & Casework (ML) is responsible for EDO's National Litigation team and will be responsible for developing and supervising EDO's National Litigation team, and the conduct and supervision of public interest litigation and complex casework on behalf of EDO clients.

The Managing Lawyer will be expected to lead the development of public interest litigation and complex casework and provide strategic legal advice to EDO client's seeking to deliver systemic change through the law.

Managing Lawyer is a leadership position, sharing responsibility for EDO's Legal Practice.

In this role, you will have the opportunity to work with a high level of autonomy and self-direction. This will include supervision and running of complex litigation and casework, deploying your skills in leading expert evidence and lay evidence, keeping files in good order, and contributing to the EDO's legal practice and the skill development of the next generation of public interest environmental lawyers.

You will hold expertise in the development and running of litigation and complex casework, climate change law, environmental law and administrative law (with a strong knowledge of corporations law, human rights law or related disciplines being desirable), be an expert in relevant legal frameworks, and have a working knowledge of how to develop and run strategic litigation on behalf of clients for the purpose of protecting the climate and environment.

This role supervises the corporate and commercial work of the legal practice, and experience in Australian Corporations Law, the Australian Consumer Law or related fields will be favourable.

You will be responsible for the guidance, mentoring and coaching of the National Litigation team, and developing a thriving team with recognised excellence in litigation practice and procedure, as well as developing novel approaches to achieving legal outcomes on behalf of clients seeking positive outcomes for the environment.

The Managing Lawyer will report to the Principal Lawyer/Director, Litigation & Casework (**Principal Lawyer**) and work collaboratively with the Principal Lawyer and Deputy Principal Lawyer to develop and actively manage the litigation and casework component of EDO's legal practice. This will require a collaborative and active management approach, working across the legal practice and regional Managing Lawyers and building strong relationships with EDO's clients.

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.

At EDO, we believe that culture is shaped collectively and is built together. EDO has developed a set Cultural Narrative which guides our Ways of Working. Our Ways of Working have been developed to bring greater clarity to **how we work together at our best** – the behaviours, expectations and shared commitment that help us deliver impact while sustaining one another.

2. Key Responsibilities & Duties

Litigation practice

- Provide expert legal representation to the public on a wide range of matters relevant to protection of the environment and leadership with respect to public interest environmental litigation in Courts, Tribunals and quasi-judicial forums.
- Supervise and have carriage of litigation (including as Solicitor on the Record) undertaken at the federal level or within state/territory jurisdictions, as appropriate.
- Provide accurate and expert legal advice to EDO clients with respect to litigation and other legal remedies relating to the environment and environmental justice.
- Supervise the corporate and commercial work of EDO's legal practice, including in relation to, corporations law and its application to the protection of the climate and environment (for example, misleading/deceptive conduct, directors' duties and greenwashing).
- 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.
- Utilise litigation experience to manage and supervise any complex or high-risk litigation that may arise within the National Litigation team or other EDO teams undertaking litigation, as required.
- Undertake public education and outreach in relation to public interest litigation, which may include developing online resources and fact sheets, and conducting workshops or seminars.
- Engage in law reform and policy work related to public interest litigation 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 them and other EDO solicitors where relevant.

Leadership

- Work closely with the Principal Lawyer and Deputy Principal Lawyer to implement effective legal practice management in the delivery of litigation services, ensure the litigation and casework practice is operating in alignment with EDO's practice management and litigation strategy settings and drive consistency across EDO's legal practice.
- Provide advice and recommendations to the Principal Lawyer and Deputy Principal Lawyer on appropriate practice management and litigation strategy as part of the continuous improvement of the practice.
- Work closely with the Principal Lawyer and Deputy Principal Lawyer to be a thought leader in the development and implementation of litigation strategies for EDO's clients, and novel approaches to legal problems .
- Work closely with Managing Lawyers in Regional Practice Teams and other National Teams to support the development and running of litigation within those teams, in particular litigation that is classified as complex or high risk.
- In conjunction with the Principal Lawyer and Deputy Principal Lawyer, maintain oversight of the broader litigation practice across the EDO and facilitate the sharing of skills, knowledge and ideas within all EDO teams undertaking litigation.
- Provide supervision and support for corporate and commercial law specialists within the National Litigation team utilising those fields of law for the protection of the environment and Safe Climate.
- 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 and/or for Court attendance.
- 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 other EDO staff.

Risk Management

- Develop an understanding of EDO's risk management principles, litigation strategy and settings, and risk appetite.
- Present proposed litigation and complex casework to the EDO's risk committee and, for any work that is classified as complex or high risk, present, in conjunction with the Deputy Principal Lawyer, to the EDO Board's Complex Litigation and Legal Ethics 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 Principal Lawyer and Deputy Principal Lawyer 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 Principal Lawyer and Deputy Principal Lawyer, build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders, including government, the legal profession, environmental NGOs, traditional owners and other community-based organisations, 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. Selection Criteria

The Managing Lawyer, Litigation & Advice ought to have:

- Extensive knowledge and experience in developing, running (as Solicitor on the Record) and supervising litigation and complex casework.
- Extensive knowledge and experience within the Federal Court, and one or more other State and Territory Court/Tribunal.
- Extensive knowledge of planning and environmental law, climate change law and administrative law within one or more Australian jurisdiction.
- The ability to build and maintain effective relationships with a broad range of stakeholders, including within government, the legal profession, key ENGOs and the community.
- The ability to translate and deliver (with the Principal Lawyer and Deputy Principal Lawyer) the EDO's broader strategic objectives in relation to litigation and complex casework.

- Experience working across teams and jurisdictions to assist Regional Practice Teams to undertake litigation in local State/Territory jurisdictions.
- A strong and detailed understanding of the legal frameworks which operate 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.
- A strong working knowledge 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.
- 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.
- The experience and confidence to manage the provision of legal services by the Litigation & Advice Team – including compliance with professional obligations (for example, solicitor conduct obligations, practice and risk management, the requirements of EDO's professional indemnity insurance, and trust accounting).
- The ability to ensure the accuracy and quality of the legal work delivered by the Litigation & Advice Team (including corporate and commercial law specialists within the team).
- The ability to competently supervise and mentor solicitors within the Litigation & Advice Team (degree dependent on seniority and experience).
- 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. Commitment to EDO's Values and Cultural Pillars:

All employees are expected to contribute to a workplace culture that reflects EDO's values and cultural pillars through their actions, behaviours and decision-making.

Thriving People & Professional Excellence

- Demonstrates professionalism, accountability, and commitment to continuous learning.
- Contributes to a safe, respectful, and supportive workplace where people can thrive.
- Delivers high-quality work and seeks opportunities to develop capability and expertise.

Shared Direction & Courageous Action

- Works collaboratively toward shared organisational goals and purpose.
- Demonstrates initiative, adaptability, and courage in addressing challenges and opportunities.
- Supports innovation and contributes positively to organisational change.

Grounded in Clarity, Strengthened by Trust, Driven by Ownership

- Acts with integrity, transparency, and accountability.
- Builds trust through respectful communication and follow-through on commitments.
- Takes ownership of responsibilities and contributes to effective decision-making.

Inclusive Impact

- Values and respects diverse perspectives, backgrounds and lived experiences.
- Demonstrates cultural competence and contributes to a culturally safe and inclusive workplace.
- Supports EDO's commitment to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, including meaningful engagement with First Nations peoples and communities.

Purposeful Joy

- Contributes to a positive, connected, and respectful workplace culture.
- Supports the wellbeing of colleagues and celebrates achievements and contributions.
- Brings enthusiasm, curiosity and optimism to their work.

Supporting EDO Values

- Commitment – Working together to achieve environmental justice and positive outcomes for communities.
- Diversity – Respecting and valuing difference, inclusion and cultural safety.
- Integrity – Acting ethically, professionally and with accountability.
- Visionary – Embracing innovation, creativity and continuous improvement.