

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position details

Position Title	Senior Advisor – Communications
Group	Communications, Engagement and Data
Location	Wellington
Date	August 2025

Our purpose

We are a kaitiaki of electricity. Our purpose is to enhance New Zealanders' lives, prosperity & environment through electricity.

How we work

The Electricity Authority promotes competition in, reliable supply by, and the efficient operation of, the New Zealand electricity industry for the long-term benefit of consumers.

Our functions describe how we do this. We work to:

- Promote market development: To enable New Zealand's electricity markets to deliver better outcomes for consumers, we maintain a responsive regulatory environment that both reflects industry's current state and supports innovation and change. Key tools for market development include market facilitation measures and amending the Code.
- Monitor, inform and educate: Transparency and understanding are vital to the operation of the electricity markets. Our market monitoring, information and education work focuses on making data, information and tools available, increasing participation and improving awareness of how electricity markets function.
- Operate the electricity system and markets: We are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the electricity system and markets. To achieve this, we contract out some services including the role of system operator, which provides the real-time coordination of sending generated electricity across the national grid to meet demand from consumers.
- Enforce compliance: We ensure the Act, regulations made under the Act and the Code are followed by electricity industry participants. Our compliance function also helps improve the industry more generally, as lessons learned support our education of participants and help us to identify and resolve on-going or systemic issues.
- Protect the interests of consumers: We are responsible for protecting the interests of domestic and small business consumers in relation to the dealings of industry participants supplying their electricity.

More information can be found on our website www.ea.govt.nz.

Our values

The Electricity Authority has the following values:

Our people

We support the development of each other and work together to achieve our goals.

Boldness

We are decisive, forward thinking and not afraid to do the right thing.

Excellence

We are committed to producing the highest-quality work.

Openness

We are transparent in our work and listen to others.

Integrity

We are honest and trustworthy and treat everyone with fairness and respect.

Our group

The Communications, Engagement and Data Group is responsible for the Authority's overall approach to communications, engagement and data products. The group maintains oversight of the Authority's reputation, monitors its external environment and supports effective analysis and decision-making.

We work across the Authority, listen to external audiences and provide data-driven insights to ensure our work is informed by accurate information, diverse voices and sector insights.

The group manages core communications and data systems, assets and channels and ensures they support our work and improve consumers' and industry participants' understanding of and participation in the electricity markets.

We actively manage the relationship with the Ministers' Office to promote timely and 'no surprises' advice to the responsible Minister, and shape stakeholder engagement practice across the organisation.

The group also leads development and enhancement of the Authority's data lakehouse, analytical tools, and automated systems for market monitoring. We are dedicated to delivering innovative solutions that provide insightful information for both the Authority and external stakeholders.

Purpose of this position

The Senior Advisor - Communications provides strategic advice and support to the Electricity Authority to ensure all communication and engagement from the Authority contributes to positioning us as a world-class regulator.

As a senior member of the Communications team, the Senior Advisor will support the rest of the team and the Authority to deliver clear, compelling communications and engagement that helps it meet its strategic objectives.

Working relationships

Reports to	Manager – Communications
Direct reports	Nil
Internal relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Electricity Authority staff
External relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">News media and communications networksEnergy industry contactsContractors and suppliersGovernment agencies

Key accountabilities and deliverables

The key accountabilities listed below are not intended to be a complete or limiting description of the role and certain duties may change from time to time.

Demonstrating technical excellence

The following core competencies reflect global best practice, as set out in the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management's Global Capability Framework. They set the benchmark for how professionals in public relations and communication management perform at their best.

Align communication strategies with organisational purpose and values:

- Develop communication plans aligned with our purpose, values and policies
- Develop SMART objectives and related measures to establish and track performance against agreed outcomes

Identify and address communication problems proactively:

- Create short and long-term narratives to facilitate communication with multiple organisational stakeholders

Conduct research to underpin communication strategies and tactics:

- Use desktop research to listen to and understand situations before, during and after communication activities

Communicate effectively across a full range of platforms and technologies:

- Have an understanding of communication specialties, such as media relations, and consider the optimum channels for specific stakeholders
- Communicate effectively across paid, earned, shared and owned (PESO) channels
- Have strong written skills and an understanding of how to use visuals to help tell stories that engage and connect with diverse audiences
- Ability to comprehend complex concepts and convert them to simple, clear and relevant content

Build and enhance organisational reputation:

- Identify and analyse key issues and risks for the organisation
- Understand and align with key intangible assets (e.g. brand, culture, sustainability)

Provide contextual intelligence:

- See the bigger picture - socially, culturally, politically, technologically and economically
- Be alert to strategic opportunities and threats, issues and trends
- Operate in a connected world, demonstrating broad understanding of local and global diversity in culture, values and beliefs

Be a trusted advisor:

- Offer communications advice to colleagues across the organisation
- Contribute to team decision-making and development
- Operate with empathy and respect for all parties

Work within an ethical framework on behalf of the organisation, in line with professional and society's expectations:

- Consider the communications objectives in the light of society's expectations
- Consider the consequences of a proposed action on others and flag potential issues
- Understand and apply ethical frameworks

Key accountabilities and deliverables

- Recognise and observe the societal obligations of professionals

Develop self and others, including continuing professional learning:

- Take responsibility for your own continuous professional development, through a range of activities including training and education
- Educate others on the role and value of the communications function
- Able to offer professional guidance which involves, motivates and contributes to personal and team development.

Communications

- Provide communications advice and delivery including communications planning, media management, issues and risk management, and content and collateral development
- Working with colleagues to provide advice to manage issues and reputational risks, and to identify proactive communications opportunities
- Contribute to development of the Authority's channels including planning and delivering content, improving the user experience and increasing audience engagement
- Develop and execute media plans, including identifying proactive opportunities, prepping media releases, and managing relationships with key media contacts
- Provide support on social media channels and activities that align with organisation goals, including managing content creation, scheduling and performance analysis across platforms
- Provide advice and content support to staff for speech notes and presentations
- Assist with writing, editing, proofing, and distributing Authority reports and other publications
- Ensure all communications meet the Authority's brand and style guidelines
- Undertake other communications tasks as required.

Project Execution and Risk Management

- Provide leadership in the execution of communication projects, leveraging best-practice methodologies to ensure delivery within scope, quality, and timeline expectations.
- Proactively assess and mitigate project risks, applying a solutions-focused approach and escalating critical issues with informed recommendations.

Workflow and personal leadership

- Provide input into team workflow by setting priorities, offering clear direction, and proactively addressing barriers to execution.
- Foster a high-performing, purpose-driven team culture that aligns with organisational objectives and drives collective impact.

Capability building and cross-organisational engagement

- Drive team capability development through mentoring and coaching, ensuring technical excellence and growth.
- Champion a culture of knowledge-sharing, innovation, and continuous improvement to enhance organisational effectiveness.

Experience and knowledge

To be successful in this role you will have:

- A communications degree or relevant experience
- Minimum of five+ years' experience in a professional communications environment
- A track record in communications and engagement planning and delivery
- Proven ability to work collaboratively and manage relationships effectively
- Familiarity with the energy/electricity sector or similarly technical industries would be beneficial
- Experience and understanding of using social media to advance an organisation's objectives
- Proven ability to work with the media – on a proactive and reactive basis
- Ability to write for a variety of audiences and channels including experience in writing for the web
- Appropriate IT skills
- Familiarity with a regulatory or public sector environment would be beneficial
- Ability to think analytically and critically
- Curiosity, flexibility and openness in integrating ideas, information and differing perspectives
- Courage, decisiveness and a commitment to leading with integrity
- The ability to self-assess and commit to own development
- An attitude that encourages feedback on performance and professional development
- Resilience and demonstrated composure under pressure.

Behaviour specifications

To be successful in this role you will be:

- A self-starter with a commitment to delivering quality service and excellent attention to detail
- Able to identify a good story and use savvy editorial skills to find the best way to plan and deliver proactive communications
- Able to understand complex issues and translate complex and technical information quickly into plain English
- Able to build strong working relationships throughout the organisation and with external stakeholders including news media
- Able to multi-task and understand different priorities and work practices
- Familiar with government processes and sensitive to issues of reputational risk and opportunity in matters of public policy and its implementation
- Alert to nuances and ready to seek advice on sensitive issues.