

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position details

Position title	Senior Legal Counsel
Team	Legal – Privacy
Group	Legal, Monitoring and Compliance
Location	Wellington
Date	September 2026

Our purpose

The Electricity Authority Te Mana Hiko is an independent Crown entity, established under the Electricity Industry Act 2010, responsible for regulating New Zealand's electricity industry for the long-term benefit of consumers. Our vision is reliable electricity at lowest cost for New Zealand consumers. We work towards two outcomes:

- Affordable - electricity is generated and delivered at lowest cost over time for New Zealand consumers; and
- Reliable - our electricity system is secure, resilient and meets consumer demand at an efficient level of reliability.

How we work

The Electricity Authority Te Mana Hiko 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 Electricity Industry Participation 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 market's 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 Electricity Industry Act, its regulations and the Electricity Industry Participation 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 Legal Team sits within the Legal, Monitoring and Compliance Group and provides in-house legal services for the Authority. The Compliance Team is responsible for monitoring, investigating and enforcing compliance with the Code, the Electricity Industry Act and various regulations. The Monitoring team analyses market activity and provides insights and information across the Authority to inform key initiatives.

Sitting within the Legal Team the Privacy team's primary responsibility is to provide legal advice on and monitor the Authority's compliance with the privacy legislation. However it also advises on adjacent matters such as AI governance, consumer law, intellectual property, confidentiality, data sovereignty and commercial contracting for digital and data projects.

The other legal teams support the Authority's development of secondary legislation, managing OIA and ministerial queries, board governance, general contract and procurement, enforcement and litigation. Lawyers work collaboratively and flexibly across teams as required, to enable the organisation to deliver its key initiatives and fulfil its strategic functions.

Purpose of this position

The purpose of this position is to assist with various legal projects and provide high-quality legal advice in a timely manner to the Authority.

Working relationships

Reports to	Privacy Officer
Direct reports	Nil
Internal relationships	• General Manager – Legal, Monitoring and Compliance • Electricity Authority Board Members • Electricity Authority staff
External relationships	• External legal advisors • Industry participants and stakeholders • Office of the Privacy Commissioner • Government Digital Delivery Agency

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:

Legal advice

- Provide advice on the interpretation and application of relevant legislation, particularly the Privacy Act 2020 and related regulations and codes of practice
- Lead and support key privacy projects planned for the 2026/27 financial year.
- Respond to general privacy queries, complete privacy impact assessments and review Privacy Act access requests
- Provide legal advice as required for various digital, AI, data and technology projects.
- Identify improvements in existing processes and opportunities to enhance the legal function.
- Assisting the Privacy Officer with delivery of the 2026/27 legal education programme.
- Provide other legal advice and support as required.

Relationship and stakeholder management

- Leads with purpose, communicating clearly to persuade and inspire others.
- Connects with others by listening and reading people and situations to communicate tactfully.
- Strengthens business performance and leads innovatively to foster continuous improvement at the Authority.
- Participates as an active team member and contributes knowledge and expertise needed to achieve Authority outcomes.
- Develops effective working relationships with Authority staff in order to transfer knowledge and learning to the wider organisation.

Workflow management

- Actively and independently plan and manage own projects and workload, with guidance from Privacy Officer as required
- Provide coaching and mentoring to Legal Counsel positions, as required.

Experience and knowledge

To be successful in this role you will have:

- A tertiary qualification (LLB or equivalent)
- Admitted as a barrister and solicitor in New Zealand
- At least 6 years PQE experience providing legal advice within a public sector agency (in house or private practice) or as an in-house lawyer in the private sector.
- A strong understanding of privacy and commercial law is essential
- An understanding of public sector legal issues and requirements
- An understanding of computer science and technology is preferred but not essential

Personal specifications

To be successful in this role you will have:

- Curiosity, flexibility and openness in integrating ideas, information and differing perspectives
- Excellent communication skills

- Excellent organisational and interpersonal skills
- Well-developed relationship management skills
- An aptitude for quickly understanding technical information
- The ability to prioritise work and manage competing deadlines.