

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position title	General Counsel
Section	Corporate Services
Employment type	Ongoing
Classification	Band 8
Location	Warrnambool (or other Wannon Water office as negotiated)
Date Approved	March 2024
Approving Officer	Branch Manager Corporate Services

POSITION OBJECTIVES

The objective of the General Counsel at Wannon Water is to offer comprehensive legal support and advice, encompassing legal advisory services, land and agreements, contract development, and legislative compliance. This support aims to mitigate legal risks across the organisation while aligning with strategic objectives.

General Counsel will collaborate with the Branch Manager Corporate Services to establish and maintain policies, procedures, systems, and standards that meet governance, legal, and regulatory requirements in relevant accountability areas.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES & DUTIES

General Legal

- Provide relevant general legal advice and assistance to the business, including executive and the Board as required.
- Oversee the use of the Victorian Government Legal Services Panel and any reporting requirements.
- Manage legal advice and provide guidance on a variety of matters including:
 - freedom of information, privacy and whistleblower law and the development of policies and procedures
 - environmental legislation and land use planning.
 - water law including billing related matters.
 - Occupational Health and Safety
 - human resource and employment related matters.
 - insurance related matters and claims.

Land & Agreements

- Ensure effective management of Wannon Water's property portfolio, including freehold and leasehold properties, to optimise financial returns and comply with the Victorian Government Land Transactions Policy.
- Prepare, negotiate, and maintain land leases, licenses, and agreements in accordance with sound legal standards, ensuring compliance with terms and conditions, rent reviews, and ongoing obligations.

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- Facilitate the maintenance of an accurate register of land consistent with sound Asset Management practises and associated documentation in a secure manner to facilitate effective land management and legal compliance.
- Resolve or advise on any land or property matters as they arise.
- Draft, execute, and monitor water re-use, land use and other agreements to ensure compliance and facilitate efficient water management practices.

Contracts

- Provide legal advice and oversight on the development, negotiation and implementation of contracts and other legal agreements designed to achieve an efficient and cost-effective outcome and aligned to Wannon Water's risk exposure profile.
- Provide legal advice and oversight on the development, maintenance and implementation of effective procurement contracts to ensure that they are aligned to Wannon Water's procurement strategy and compliant with legal and regulatory requirements and Government policy.
- Support the development of contract literacy within Wannon Water ensuring standard templates are developed and used where appropriate.
- Provide legal advice in relation to contractual negotiations and disputes.

Legislative compliance

- Lead the legislative compliance framework to ensure that the business is able to effectively and consistently manage the risks associated with non-compliance.
- Maintain compliance system, action plan and reporting to document the results of the compliance management process.

Other

- Assist the Board Secretary, perform duties and carry out corporate governance services and responsibilities where required.

ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Responsible to	Branch Manager Corporate Services
Responsible for	Nil
Internal Liaison	All employees.
External Liaison	Consultants, regional organisations, peak bodies, state government, regulators, community, customers, and others as required to deliver the role.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND EXTENT OF AUTHORITY

- The freedom to act is governed by policies, objectives, and budgets with periodic reviews to ensure achievement of goals and objectives. The impact of decisions made, or advice given may have a substantial impact on public perception of the wider organisation.

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- The General Counsel has a clear understanding and focus on the operational and strategic objectives of Wannon Water.
- The role is an influential leadership role within the business and contributes significantly to the implementation of strategies to meet organisational objectives.
- The role will work with senior managers within the business to achieve outcomes, influence processes and build capability within the organisation.
- The advice and counsel provided by this position is relied upon for guidance and justification for adopting policies the impact of which may be substantial upon the organisation and/or the community.
- This position will be expected to be highly self-sufficient and work autonomously, with limited guidance.

JUDGEMENT AND DECISION MAKING

- Methods, procedures and processes are less well defined and the role will be expected to contribute to their development and adaptation.
- Highly competent and capable of operating independently, able to resolve problems which require analytic reasoning and comprise of complex information, across the specialties of the role and including strategic planning and policy implementation.
- This position requires both problem solving and policy development.
- This position will identify and develop policy options for consideration by senior management and the broader organisation.

SPECIALIST SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE

- The provision of specialist advice in the areas of:
 - corporate and commercial legal works, including the negotiation, drafting and administration of contracts and agreements.
- An understanding of the long-term goals of the wider organisation and of its values and aspirations and of the legal and socio-economic and political context in which it operates
- Sound knowledge of budgeting and relevant account procedures is essential.

MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- Management skills are required to achieve objectives and goals, taking account of organisational and external constraints and opportunities.
- This position is required to influence behaviours and outcomes across multiple areas of the business not just the Branch or department of the position itself.

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- The position may be required to supervise tertiary qualified employees or employees with extensive experience.

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- The position requires the individual to have the ability to influence, persuade, lead, and motivate internal and external stakeholders to ensure legislative compliance pursuit and achievement of specific and set objectives.
- Strong interpersonal skills, capable of developing effective relationships with a wide range of stakeholders to achieve successful outcomes.
- Highly developed written and oral communications skills, with an ability to clearly articulate technical information and advice, to a variety of audiences.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Tertiary degree in Law. Preferably with admission to legal practice in Victoria.
- Preferred relevant in-house general counsel experience, ideally within the public sector.
- Demonstrated experience in leading, motivating and developing other employees and teams.
- A copy of current driver's licence is to be provided.

INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Wannon Water will plan, establish, implement, maintain, comply with, and continually improve an Integrated Management System containing the elements of:

- AS/NZS ISO 9001: Quality Management Systems - Requirements
- ISO 14001: Environmental Management Systems
- ISO 45001: Occupational Health and Safety Management
- HACCP-based Drinking Water Quality Management System.

Every employee has the right and obligation to continually improve the Integrated Management System by:

- initiating action that prevents deficiencies and
- initiating, recommending and providing solutions to Management.

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OTHER INFORMATION

Values

Wannon Water employees will demonstrate the values of the Victorian Public Sector as described in the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees (Responsiveness, Integrity, Impartiality, Accountability, Respect, Leadership, Human Rights) as well as Wannon Water's values:

- People focused
- Respect
- Integrity
- Innovation
- Collaboration

We are committed to a destination where:

- Our people love working at Wannon Water.
- Our customers consider us great value.
- Our community partnerships help this region flourish.
- We are proud of our business excellence.

Inclusion and Diversity

Wannon Water embraces all forms of diversity and promotes family friendly working hours and leave arrangements to ensure our workforce is representative of the community that we serve.

Minimum Employment Period

All successful applicants will be subject to a six month minimum employment period in accordance with the Fair Work Act 2009.

Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees

The Corporation will require all successful applicants to adhere to the values and principles outlined within the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees.

Policies and Procedures

All employees will adhere to systems, policies and procedures in relation to the Corporation's activities.

Employees should also adhere to the following principle:

"The employee shall not use the position for his or her personal gain or advantage, nor disclose any confidential information which may be acquired as a result of his or her employment by the Corporation".

Occupational Health & Safety

Wannon Water has developed OH&S Policies & Procedures that are designed to meet the requirements of the internationally recognised ISO45001. These standards ensure that all employees are provided with a safe and healthy working environment and compliance is mandatory.

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Equal Employment Opportunity

Wannon Water observes the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity, and it is the responsibility of every employee of Wannon Water to ensure the workplace is free from discrimination.

Training & Development

Wannon Water and its employees agree that well planned training is important to the success of the organisation. Wannon Water will work with employees to identify areas where the provision of training is required. An annual performance review of each employee will be undertaken by the employee's manager/coordinator in consultation with the employee to identify, plan and implement relevant training and development for the upcoming twelve months.

Wannon Water commits to providing suitable targeted training to equip employees with the necessary skills and competency to undertake their work.

Employee		Manager	
Name	_____	Name	_____
Signature	_____	Signature	_____
Date	_____	Date	_____