



Position Title:	Legal Practice Manager – Agreements	Position No:	L40
Group:	Land and Law	Service Area	Legal Services
Reports to:	General Counsel (L25)	Direct Reports:	L43, L38, L39, L29, L26, L31, L47 (Senior Lawyers, Lawyers, Paralegal, Project Coordinator)
Classification Level:	Management Section		
Location:	Darwin	Date Approved:	July 2026
Special Measures:	<i>Yes - Priority Consideration Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Positions</i>		

POSITION OVERVIEW

The Legal Practice Manager (Agreements) is responsible, in consultation with and under the direction of the General Counsel, for overseeing and managing the NLC's agreement-making practice, including resources, energy & major projects under both the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (Cth) (**ALRA**) and the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) (**NTA**).

The primary focus of the role is to ensure the agreement-making legal team provides high quality, culturally competent legal services to the NLC and its constituents to secure, protect and advance the rights and interests of Aboriginal Territorians in significant projects over their land, sea and waters. The role works collaboratively with other Legal Practice Managers to ensure effective allocation of work, team development and leadership.

This role will take the lead in native title agreement negotiations and related legal services including agreement implementation, contractual disputes and governance. From time to time, the role will collaborate with the other legal practice managers to support the NLC's native title work generally, and the NLC's legal services under ALRA and related legal regimes as required.

The Legal Practice Manager (Agreements) supervises a team of senior lawyers and lawyers working primarily in native title agreement-making and implementation.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

LEADERSHIP

- Lead the section in alignment with organisational values, conduct standards and strategic priorities.
- Create a respectful, culturally safe and high-performing team environment.
- Provide clear direction and expectations to staff.
- Support staff development, engagement and wellbeing.
- Model safe, ethical and accountable leadership practices.

STRATEGY AND PLANNING

- Translate Service Area priorities into section-level operational plans.
- Contribute to business planning and reporting processes.
- Identify improvement opportunities within the section.
- Monitor performance against agreed objectives and take corrective action where required.
- Contributes to operational strategy development but does not determine organisational strategy.



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Maintain productive relationships with internal and external stakeholders relevant to section operations.
- Engage respectfully with Traditional Owners where relevant to the section's remit.
- Represent the section in operational forums as required.
- Escalate complex, high-risk or politically sensitive matters to the Service Area Manager.

SECTION OPERATIONS

- Develop and implement appropriate systems for managing and monitoring the NLC's agreement-making legal practice.
- Supervise NLC lawyers in the making and implementation of agreements under NTA, and occasionally under the ALRA.
- Collaborate effectively with the other Legal Practice Managers to manage and support the work all NLC lawyers in a dynamic, collegiate and supportive service area.
- Collaborate effectively and work cooperatively with other (non-Legal) teams to prioritise matters, provide legal and strategic advice, coordinate and manage shared resources and budgets, and appropriately manage communications with external stakeholders.
- Oversee the preparation and presentation of agenda papers for the NLC's Executive Council, Full Council, Regional Councils or native title holders' prescribed bodies corporate (**PBCs**).
- Prepare budgets for negotiation projects, and monitor expenditure and project planning to ensure that funds are expended appropriately and efficiently.
- Act as the legal representative of:
 - Aboriginal people and groups claiming to have a traditional claim to land or compensation in respect of an area of land or waters within the area of the NLC;
 - Aboriginal people and groups and, where relevant, Aboriginal Land Trusts, Prescribed Bodies Corporate and other Aboriginal entities in relation to the use, management, occupation or development of their lands and seas;
 - NLC in the negotiation of exploration, mining and production agreements under the ALRA and the NTA;
 - Aboriginal people and groups in relation to the protection of sacred sites; and
 - Aboriginal people and groups in relation to fulfilling their aspirations for self-determination and social, cultural, economic and environmental development.
- Provide legal advice on matters in connection with the general administration and management of the NLC, Aboriginal Land Trusts, Prescribed Bodies Corporate and other Aboriginal entities.
- Work as a member of a multi-disciplinary organisation to ensure the effective delivery of NLC's statutory functions under ALRA, NTA and the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (Cth).
- Maintain awareness of all laws and legislation of the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory which affect the functions of the NLC.
- Develop the NLC's precedents for agreement-making, including templates, continuing improvement of processes for cost recovery, project management, client information, and negotiation tools.

PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

- The role is accountable for section workforce performance but does not determine whole-of-service workforce architecture. It acts within the Management Levels of Authority and is accountable for:
 - Performance management of direct reports, including setting expectations, providing feedback, managing underperformance and recognising achievement.
 - Managing conduct, attendance and capability matters within delegation, including initiating formal processes where required.
 - Workforce planning within the section, including identifying capability gaps and resourcing needs.



- Recruitment and selection processes within approved delegation and establishment.
- Supporting development and succession planning within the section.
- Implementing organisational people initiatives and change processes within the section.
- The role applies judgement in interpreting and applying people policies and procedures and escalates complex, high-risk or sensitive matters to the Service Area Manager or People & Culture where required.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Promote and maintain a safe and healthy work environment within the section.
- Ensure compliance with the organisation's WHS Management System and legislative obligations.
- Monitor and address safety risks and incidents within the section.
- Ensure staff understand and meet their WHS responsibilities.
- Escalate significant or systemic WHS risks.
- Accountable for WHS implementation and compliance within the section.

AUTHORISATION & ACCOUNTABILITIES – INFORMATION SECTION

Financial Delegation - Band 5

- Approves operating expenditure within the section's budget and Financial Authorisation (Band 5).
- Approves procurement and capital expenditure within the approved budget and Financial Authorisation.
- Monitors section budget performance.
- Contributes to the development of the section budget.

Governance Accountability

- Accountable for overall section compliance with legislative and policy requirements.
- Accountable for accurate reporting and effective maintenance of internal controls within the section.
- Escalates enterprise or cross-service risks to the Service Area Manager.

Decision-Making Authority

- Makes operational decisions within established frameworks.
- Applies professional judgement in policy interpretation.
- Allocates section resources within approved budget.
- Escalates matters outside delegation or high-risk issues.

POSITION REQUIREMENTS

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

- Bachelor of Law or equivalent and admission to legal practice in a Supreme Court of a State or Territory of Australia.
- At least five (5) years post-admission experience in at least one of commercial contracting, native title, resources and energy, commercial dispute resolution, , or environment and planning law.
- Proven experience leading and managing a team, including performance and conduct matters.
- Experience managing operational service delivery and achieving agreed performance outcomes.
- Sound understanding of governance, compliance and policy frameworks and their application in operational environments.
- Experience managing budgets and expenditure within delegated financial authority.



- Well-developed written and verbal communication skills, including preparation of reports and business correspondence.
- Cultural capability and ability to work effectively in an Aboriginal-controlled organisation, including respectful engagement with Traditional Owners and a culturally diverse workforce.
- Current NT Driver's Licence.
- Sound time management and organisational skills, including a demonstrated capacity to perform under pressure, effectively manage a busy workload, and consistently meet deadlines.
- Ability to progress complex matters and operate under broad direction with a high level of day-to-day autonomy.
- Current C Class Drivers Licence and the ability and willingness to undertake remote travel in a manual 4WD vehicle or light aircraft.

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS

- Understanding of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (Cth) and other laws affecting the NLC and its constituents.
- Commitment to culturally safe practice and inclusive leadership.