



# Job description

## Haere mai

This job description is your go-to place for all the ins and outs of this role at Internal Affairs

## Head of Strategic Relationships

### Three Waters Programme, National Transition Unit - Local Government Branch

In July 2020, the Government launched the Three Waters Reform Programme – a three-year programme with the ultimate objective of improving the health and wellbeing of New Zealanders.

Currently over 70 different councils own and operate most of the drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services across New Zealand.

Local government is facing urgent challenges in the provision of these services including funding infrastructure deficits, complying with safety standards and environmental expectations, building resilience into three waters networks to deal with natural hazards and climate change, and supporting population growth.

The Government has committed to comprehensive, system-wide reform to achieve lasting benefits for our communities and the environment.

The Three Waters Programme National Transition Unit (NTU) is responsible for the establishment of, and transition to, a new service delivery model. Its role is to ensure that, on 1 July 2024, four new water service entities (WSEs) are ready to assume responsibility for three waters-related infrastructure and service delivery.

The NTU objectives are to:

- advance the Government's reform objectives with the sector in a way that supports successful adoption of the reform with stakeholders,
- ensure reform objectives are supported by a smooth transition and implementation approach that is efficient, effective and minimises disruption to communities and consumers, and
- leverage the transition for strategic transformation opportunities.

Being part of Three Waters Reform in New Zealand is a once in a lifetime opportunity. We are transforming the water sector (drinking water, wastewater and stormwater) to ultimately improve the health and wellbeing of New Zealanders. This is your opportunity to be part of an innovative and successful delivery team.

### Position Outline

The Head of Strategic Relationships is responsible for providing leadership, direction, advice and guidance to the broader Three Waters Reform Programme to ensure the programme is undertaken in a way that enhances the understanding of, and the commitment, contribution and



**Te Tari Taiwhenua**  
**Internal Affairs**

buy-in to, the change by key stakeholders across the water sector, local government, and central government.

The Head of Strategic Relationships leads the development, implementation and evaluation of strategic, tactical and operational stakeholder engagement strategies, plans and initiatives that align with the National Transition Unit's (NTU) strategic direction. They are accountable for the effective management of the Programme's interface with key partners and stakeholders, including Iwi, the water sector, local government, other government agencies and other key entities, and they oversee all engagement activity across the Reform programme.

The role leads a team that is responsible for facilitating effective engagement with local government entities and other key stakeholders in each of the four regions, and with key stakeholders nationally. The unit works in partnership with the Strategic Relations Iwi/Māori function to deliver an integrated and comprehensive partnership and engagement approach that reflects the Crown's commitment to partnering with Māori.

This role is expected to connect and integrate across the wider branch, and the Department, and all positions have a responsibility to support the team in the delivery of the four new water service entities by 1 July 2024.

The position accountabilities may change over time to accommodate programme scope and timeframes.

- **Reporting to:** Executive Director, National Transition Unit, Three Waters Reform Programme
- **Location:** Flexible
- **Salary range:** TBC

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## What we do matters – our purpose

Our purpose is to serve and connect people, communities and government to build a safe, prosperous and respected nation.

In other words, it's all about helping to make New Zealand better for New Zealanders.

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## How we do things around here – our principles



### We make it easy, we make it work

- Customer centred
- Make things even better

### We're stronger together

- Work as a team
- Value each other

### We take pride in what we do

- Make a positive difference
- Strive for excellence

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## Working effectively with Māori

Te Aka Taiwhenua – our Māori Strategic Framework – enables us to work effectively with Māori. Te Aka Taiwhenua is underpinned by our mātāpono – Kotahitanga, Manaakitanga, Whānaungatanga, He Tāngata.

As DIA is an agent of the Crown, Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi is important to everything we say or do. We recognise it as an enduring document central to New Zealand’s past, present and future. Building and maintaining meaningful relationships is important to work effectively with Māori, stakeholders and other agencies. We accept our privileged role and responsibility of holding and protecting the Treaty of Waitangi / Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

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## Spirit of service

Ka mahitahi mātou o te ratonga tūmatanui kia hei painga mō ngā tāngata o Aotearoa i āiane, ā, hei ngā rā ki tua hoki. He kawenga tino whaitake tā mātou hei tautoko i te Karauna i runga i āna hononga ki a ngāi Māori i raro i te Tiriti o Waitangi. Ka tautoko mātou i te kāwanatanga manapori. Ka whakakotahingia mātou e te wairua whakarato ki ō mātou hapori, ā, e arahina ana mātou e ngā mātāpono me ngā tikanga matua o te ratonga tūmatanui i roto i ā mātou mahi.

In the public service we work collectively to make a meaningful difference for New Zealanders now and in the future. We have an important role in supporting the Crown in its relationships with Māori under the Treaty of Waitangi. We support democratic government. We are unified by a spirit of service to our communities and guided by the core principles and values of the public service in our work.

### What you will do to contribute

#### Support to the Executive Director (ED)

- Support the ED to execute their responsibilities in leading the NTU and in their leadership role
- Contribute to the collective leadership of the Three Waters Reform and Leadership Team cadre, providing advice and involving other leaders as appropriate in decision making, including communicating outcomes
- Lead as a member of the NTU SLT and provide strategic, proactive and timely stakeholder relationship and engagement advice to the ED and NTU SLT to support decision making and alignment of strategic direction.
- Encourage connections and ways of working across the Three Waters Programme

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## **Strategic Engagement and Communications**

- In conjunction with the Three Waters Programme Leadership Team, plan and direct the implementation of multiple, complex and integrated stakeholder and sector engagement programmes and initiatives
- Lead and manage the engagement strategy for transition activity across local government, industry and other agencies
- Work to understand agendas and priorities of key stakeholders and systematically monitor current and future needs
- Successfully navigate a complex sector and political environment and play a leadership role in establishing partnerships and collaborations with key agencies, stakeholders and communities to deliver outcomes
- Preserve, develop and maintain effective Māori–Crown relationships. Use the Crown’s Treaty obligations to inform how we move forward strategically.
- Support Council Interface Managers to manage local government relationships and engagement
- Identify new stakeholders and create new partnerships/relationships between DIA and interested parties
- Prepare contingency plans with allocated shared resources to meet the demands of stakeholders/crisis

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## **Ways of Working across the Three Waters Programme**

- Work closely with the broader Three Waters Reform Programme business groups to develop a principles-based prioritisation framework and ways of working across the Three Waters Programme to ensure a cohesive approach, and alignment and consistency in messaging, channels, and timing.
- Work closely and collaborative with the Ministerial Servicing team to ensure effective delivery of advice and support to the Minister
- Work closely with DIA Partnership Directors to leverage existing relationships in these areas
- Facilitate and encourage information-sharing around good practice for engagement and risk management strategies
- Build and maintain the strategic stakeholder engagement capability across the Programme

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## **People and Team Leadership**

- Maintain oversight of the work, performance, and wellbeing of the Strategic Relationships team
  - Strategically connect and direct the team’s work providing support and guidance and be an escalation point for issues
  - Ensure systems are in place to manage information flows and decision-making processes
  - Lead the team in a manner which fosters and encourages a positive culture and environment consistent with the principles and behaviours of DIA and that leads to a highly engaged work force
  - Model a strong public service ethic, especially in times of complexity, including providing robust advice and ensuring value for money in the team’s activities
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### Health and safety (for self)

- Work safely and take responsibility for keeping self and colleagues free from harm
- Report all incidents and hazards promptly
- Know what to do in the event of an emergency
- Cooperate in implementing return to work plans

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### Health and safety (for team)

- Inform, train and equip staff to carry out their work safely
  - Ensure prompt and accurate reporting and investigation of all workplace incidents and injuries
  - Assess all hazards promptly and ensure they are managed
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## Who you will work with to get the job done

Internal	Strategic Relationship Unit Staff
	Three Waters National Transition Unit Leadership Team and Staff
	Three Waters Reform Business Group Leadership Team and Staff
	Three Waters Iwi/Māori Business Group Leadership Team and staff
	Relevant managers and staff across the Local Government Branch and the wider DIA
External	Minister of Local Government and their staff
	Local Establishment Entities
	NTU Transition Board/Local Establishment Entity Boards
	Iwi, hapū, whanau and wider Māori communities
	Iwi leaders and representatives
	Other Government Departments and Agencies
	Local Government, Industry bodies and representatives, suppliers

## Your delegations

Human Resources and financial delegations	D
Direct reports	8

## What you will bring

### Experience:

- A proven history in developing and implementing innovative, organisation-wide stakeholder engagement strategies within a large and complex environment
- Significant experience in engaging and communicating with multiple and diverse stakeholder and client groups
- A demonstrated history of achievement in the development and delivery of high-quality strategic stakeholder engagement and relationship management advice
- Successful experience in leading and managing high performing teams
- Extensive experience working in partnership with key stakeholders to deliver outcomes and achieve results
- Significant experience in engaging and communicating with multiple and diverse stakeholder and client groups
- Proven success in achieving organisational engagement outcomes and delivering effective results
- Proven ability to make a strong contribution in thought leadership and innovative thinking to create positive impact

## What you will bring

- Previous experience working at a senior level in a fast-paced, rapidly changing and evolving environment
- Demonstrated success in building, maintaining and using networked relationships to deliver results
- Proven experience in working across organisational boundaries, and collaborating effectively to deliver shared outcomes

### Knowledge:

- Good sense of potential stakeholder risks (around reputation, culture, delivery)
- Thorough understanding of the Local Government and Water Services sector
- Deep and extensive relationships and contacts within the sector
- An excellent understanding of the machinery of government and/or of local government systems or practices
- Strong knowledge of Te Ao Māori and the relationship between Māori and the Crown

### Skills:

- Strong interpersonal, collaboration and relationship management skills – able to influence and gain the trust and confidence of diverse stakeholders
- Ability to process complex information quickly, form independent judgements and communicate these clearly and influentially
- Experienced crisis and conflict management capability
- Ability to manage or direct processes when required and to quietly facilitate emerging issues
- Strong written and oral communicator
- Ability to take a strategic view and demonstrated agility to identify risks and progress solutions
- Applies excellent judgement in dealing with complex, sensitive, or ambiguous issues - troubleshooting
- Politically astute and objective approach

### Other requirements:

- Tertiary Qualification, or equivalent experience, in a relevant field.
- Will be required to pass satisfactory background checks