

3 September 2012

Jenny Graves (fyi-request-477-3495@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Jenny

Thank you for your email of 5 August 2012 requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 the following:

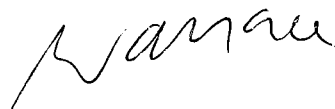
- Information provided to employees that sets out role, operating framework, what they can and cannot do, expectations when working in a Ministers office in the position as a Private Secretary (or like position). This may include – among information a guide, a manual.
- A list of positions located in Ministers Offices occupied by a Ministry employee. Please also provide a list of documents provided to the employee who currently occupy these positions.

In response to your first request it is important to recognise that a Ministers office is a dynamic environment with the Minister establishing his or her expectations of the people working within it as well as the style of how the office operates. Because of this there is no Position description. New staff to the office will spend time with people already within the office to learn how the office operates and the expectations of their role. In support of this there is a Private Secretary Performance Development Plan. This sets out key deliverables and outcomes expected of seconded staff and is attached.

In terms of your second request currently the Ministry of Justice supports the offices of three Ministers who cover a range of portfolios across three Votes- Justice, Courts and Treaty Settlements. They are the Minister of Justice, Minister for Courts (also the Associate Minister of Justice) and the Minister of Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations who is also the Attorney-General. In total six staff are seconded to support these Ministers which is made up of five Private Secretary's and one Advisor. Your request for documents within your second request is covered in the response to your first request above.

I trust that this information is useful.

Yours sincerely



Nerissa Wallace
Director, Office of the Chief Executive
Ref 41108



PRIVATE SECRETARY PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (PDP)

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE

Private Secretary Role Description

The Private Secretary is responsible for providing exemplary administrative support and advisory services to the Minister and facilitating and managing contact and discussion between the Minister and the Ministry over a wide range of portfolio issues and responsibilities. The role requires someone who is able to undertake a significant workload, effectively manage a range of tasks and demonstrate a high degree of professional judgement in recognising degrees of urgency and importance. While the Private Secretaries primary responsibility is to the Minister, the incumbent should also be mindful of the Ministry's needs and issues.

Key Relationships (external and Internal)

The Private Secretary must be able to establish and/or maintain a significant network of effective working relationships with:

- Minister and staff of Ministerial Office
- Other Ministers and their staff
- Chief Executive Officer, General Managers and staff of the Department
- Coalition Partner Spokesperson(s) and staff of their office(s)
- Office of the Clerk
- Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Electorate Office staff
- Government Whips' office
- Members of Parliament
- Ministerial Services staff
- Stakeholders in sectors relating to the Minister's portfolio

Private Secretary Performance Development Plan (PDP)

The style and culture of the Minister's office will be set by the Minister's individual preference; however the fundamental requirements of the role remain constant. In the Private Secretary Performance Development Plan (PDP) you should identify the goals that need to be achieved over the next 12 months in line with the identified accountabilities and competencies for the role. As there is no Position Description associated with the Private Secretary role to provide you with the accountabilities, these have been detailed below along with the key deliverables/outcomes applicable to the Private Secretary role.

For each accountability area a series of **example** goals and **example** performance standards have been developed. This is not an exhaustive list, and is provided as a menu of options to help establish the secondee's goals in their PDP. It is the policy manager's responsibility for agreeing the actual goals with the staff member and monitoring these goals while they are on secondment to the Ministers office. These should be tailored to the current political/organisational environment and should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timebound).

Process

Prior to the staff member beginning in the Private Secretary role (or as soon as practical after the secondment begins), the manager should conduct an interim review of the staff members' existing PDP. Progress on already established goals should be recorded. The established development goals, in the development plan, should be reviewed for relevance and to ensure that these development goals can still realistically be achieved while the secondee is in the Minister's office. These development goals may remain the same if appropriate throughout the secondment, or can be amended to reflect the change in role. The competencies identified in the existing position description will not need to be changed as the secondee will require similar competencies in the Private Secretary role as in their original role.

The policy will need to review the goals identified in the staff member's existing PDP. Those goals that can realistically be achieved while the staff member is on secondment should be retained. Those that cannot should be reviewed, with progress recorded in the PDP. A new PDP, with goals tied to the accountabilities identified for Private Secretaries should now be put in place. This will consist of establishing new goals, performance measures and expectations for the staff member while in the Minister's office. The manager is responsible for monitoring progress against existing goals along with progress against the newly established goals.

A formal review of the staff member's performance in the Private Secretary role should be made at the conclusion of the secondment. In addition, the secondees interim performance review, and annual performance review, should continue to be conducted in line with the Ministry's performance review cycle. This will keep their opportunity for progression in line with the rest of the organisation.

The manager should discuss the incumbent's performance with the Senior Private Secretary, who discusses this with the Minister. Performance can also be monitored through feedback from key stakeholders, including:

- Staff in other Ministers' offices, DP/DC, electorate office, Cabinet Office, Select Committee staff and other contacts in the campus
- Chief Executives, relevant senior managers and policy staff in the Ministry
- Minister's office staff
- External stakeholders

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SECTION 2: ACCOUNTABILITY AREAS AND GOAL SETTING

Accountability Area One - Policy Analysis, Development and Advice

Key Deliverables/Outcomes

The Private Secretary will:

- Demonstrate a high level of professional judgement around policy advice put forward by the Ministry
- Provide high quality, balanced analysis and advice on portfolio issues, Minister's queries, concerns, or general issues of political sensitivity which is sound, impartial and timely.
- Identify, anticipate and monitor the development of emerging issues, manage issues as they arise, and facilitate the resolution of issues as they are brought to the attention of the Minister.
- Ensure the Ministry's written and oral advice is conveyed promptly and appropriately to the Minister.
- Respond to enquiries from within the Ministry, Minister's office, other government agencies and public as required.

Example Goals	Example Performance measurement standards
Clearly understands and manages the policy process on behalf of the Ministry Provides clear guidance to General Manager/ Policy Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issues relating to the quality of Justice reports are raised at the appropriate level (i.e. small errors typos with analysis/manager and content/policy issues with requirements and deadlines - Provides clear guidance to Ministry staff on Cabinet, Ministerial and Parliamentary procedures - Effectively manages issues that are politically sensitive
Develops a sound understanding of relevant issues within the Justice sector portfolio of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrates a good awareness of Ministers' concerns or general issues of political sensitivity - Issues and risks in the Minister's Office are dealt with in an appropriate and effective manner - Communicates potential issues and risks to the Justice portfolio to Justice managers
Demonstrates an understanding of the linkages to and from the Justice sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrates a good awareness of work being undertaken that affects the wider Justice sector - Demonstrates a good awareness of or sensitivity to Wider Government processes and interests - Identifies risk and opportunities in a changing environment and responds appropriately

Accountability Area Two – Administrative and Support Services

Key Deliverables/Outcomes

The Private Secretary will:

- Read, check and quality assess all Ministry reports, policy advice, submissions, briefings, correspondence, and other information provided to the Minister and where appropriate summarise to help facilitate clarity and decision-making.
- Ensure the Minister is well-supported for meetings including arranging for appropriate officials to attend, ensuring the Minister is well-briefed and any follow-up actions are attended to.
- Communicate the Minister's requirements, including preferred style, tone and language, to Ministry of Justice staff.
- Ensure the prompt processing of correspondence received by the Minister to enable the Ministry to prepare Ministerial replies within required timeframes and to agreed standards and specifications.
- Manage the development and submission of portfolio related Cabinet and Cabinet Committee papers and Provide Cabinet/Cabinet Committee decisions and other relevant material received from Cabinet Office to the Ministry in a timely manner.

Example Goals	Example Performance measurement standards
Delivers high quality and timely service to the Minister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is highly responsive to the Minister's requirements - Meets timeframes as set in the SOI and agreed with Ministers - Manages ministerial, PQ and other information on issues relating to the portfolio as necessary - Facilitates and co-ordinates the Minister's business through Cabinet and parliamentary processes - Ensures responses are grammatically, factually and legally correct - Ensures responses are accurate, clear, concise and logical, with any assumptions made explicit and supported by facts
Contributes to the smooth running of the Ministerial process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continually seeks clarification of the Minister's desired outcomes and develops strategies and tactics to meet those requirements - Maintains appropriate systems and processes to support the Minister in his day-to-day activities - Co-ordinates with Justice and other agencies as appropriate preparations for ceremonies and other events, as necessary - Co-ordinates media materials as required, in conjunction with Justice Communications Officer and the Press Officer - Attends relevant meetings with the Minister, records decisions and ensures appropriate documentation and follow through of decisions and actions - Can articulate relevant guidelines on policy process and consultation to key stakeholders

Accountability Area Three - Relationship Management

Key Deliverables/Outcomes

The Private Secretary will:

- Ensure that effective and efficient communication channels are maintained between the Ministry and the Minister, and that the interests of both parties are well-served.
- Ensure the Ministry is aware of current issues in front of the Minister and that the Minister is kept informed of the Ministry's activities.
- Ensure Ministry officials are aware of deadlines, schedules, conflicts and the Minister's priorities where appropriate.
- Ensure the Minister's decisions on information submitted for consideration or action, together with any associated Ministerial feedback, is provided promptly to the Ministry.

Example Goals	Example Performance measurement standards
Maintains effective and efficient communication channels between Justice and Minister's office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proactively manages positive working relationships between the Minister's office and the Ministry - Ensures the Minister's wishes and views are conveyed accurately and effectively to the Ministry - The Minister is informed early of issues that may impact work programme deliverable deadlines (Communicates effectively with the Minister) - The Ministry is informed early of issues that may impact on their business or relations with the Minister - The Ministry is advised promptly of Cabinet and Cabinet Committee decisions
Facilitates the flow of information between Justice and the Minister's office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Works closely with Justice ministerial processing staff to ensure processes are effective and efficient - Electronic copies of media statements are available to Justice as soon as possible for publishing on the website - Other relevant information to Justice, such as press statements and House business is made available
Identifies and cultivates effective relationships across Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintains and develops excellent working relationships with other offices or service units crucial to the on-going success of the office, i.e. Office of the Clerk, Cabinet Office, Whips Office, Travel Office - Works co-operatively, positively and effectively with stakeholders to achieve outcomes - Effectively communicates desired outcomes to others

Accountability Area Four – Personal Responsibility

Key Deliverables/Outcomes

The Private Secretary will:

- Have a good understanding of the issues being considered by the Minister and be able to explain the Minister's thinking and approach to the Ministry and sector interest groups, as and when required.
- Have a sound understanding of the systems and process within the Minister's office.
- Ensure an impeccable level of personal conduct at all times.

Example Goals	Example Performance measurement standards
Manages self with little supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adapts personal style to situations - Plans and prioritises own time using appropriate tools - Actively seeks opportunities to increase knowledge - Solves problems and manages risks - Demonstrates and maintains good information management and security practices
Assumes personal responsibility for own choices and decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Represents the team/Ministry in a credible way - Is open to feedback and constructive criticism - Takes accountability when decisions do not result in a positive outcome - Suggests actions and raises tough issues
Proactively seeks out the cooperation of other people to achieve desired goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knows the subject matter experts and referent people in various departments who can solve and address special problems - Establishes relationships and develops/maintains a network both internally and externally - Is able to express common goals and interests to key stakeholders to facilitate cooperation

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