



Job Description - Whakaahuatanga Mahi

Job Title: Principal Adviser, National Security and Resilience

Business Group: National Security and Resilience

Reports to: Policy Manager

Financial delegations: Nil

Location: Wellington

Date: January 26

Our Purpose - Ā Mātou Kaupapa

Our purpose is to advance an ambitious, resilient and well-governed New Zealand

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) supports the government of the day by leading, advising, stewarding and delivering activities across the public sector, and by providing dedicated advice and support to the Governor-General, Prime Minister and portfolio Ministers.

Our business units include: The Office of the Chief Executive, Policy Advisory Group, Corporate, Cabinet Office, Government House, and National Security and Resilience.

Business Group Summary

National Security and Resilience

The National Security and Resilience group (NSR) leads and strengthens New Zealand's National Resilience System. The National Resilience System comprises the various systems (national security, hazards, strategic crisis management and emergency management) that need to function collectively to improve resilience to our most serious hazards and national security threats, under the strategic leadership and stewardship of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

We bring together four core functions — National Risk and Resilience, National Assessments Bureau, National Security Policy, and Strategic Crisis Management — to provide a unified, forward-looking approach to ensure New Zealand's safety and future prosperity.

By combining deep expertise, strategic insight, and strong system leadership, NSR ensures New Zealand is ready to anticipate, drive action to prepare for, respond to, and recover from national security, national risk, and resilience challenges — protecting what matters most for our people and our future.

Role Purpose - Kaupapa Tūranga

The Principal Advisor provides thought leadership on complex and high-impact policy issues that shape New Zealand's long-term security and that affect New Zealand's resilience across natural, economic, social, and technological domains. The role develops innovative policy solutions, influences decision-making at senior levels, and contributes to setting the strategic direction for system-wide readiness and capability.

The position requires the ability to address complex problems, operate effectively in uncertain environments, and design frameworks that support preparedness for emerging security challenges. The Principal Advisor brings deep policy or subject-matter expertise, works collaboratively across agencies and sectors, innovates within system-level policy spaces, shapes long-term strategy, and influences security and resilience initiatives led by other government agencies, iwi, local government, and communities. The position supports the



development of others through mentoring and coaching. The role influences the policies and strategies that protect and strengthen New Zealand's people, assets, and way of life.

Key Accountabilities - Ngā Kawenga Matua

Key Accountability Areas:	Deliverables:
Policy Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the design, development, and implementation of complex and often sensitive policy initiatives that address high-priority national security and resilience challenges. Ensure policy work is grounded in robust evidence, reflects diverse perspectives, and is aligned with domestic and international obligations. Work closely with intelligence, risk, and assessment teams to ensure that policy development is informed by the best available intelligence and risk analysis. Anticipate emerging risks, opportunities, and trends, and shape innovative policy solutions that strengthen New Zealand's national security posture and enhance system-wide preparedness and adaptive capacity. Integrate scenario planning, horizon scanning, and foresight methodologies into policy work to anticipate and prepare for future challenges and inform long-term resilience strategies and priorities. Prepare exemplar quality, fit-for-purpose Cabinet papers, Ministerial briefings, long-term strategic documents, and discussion papers that withstand public and political scrutiny, are evidence based, forward looking, and integrate multi-domain risk considerations. Translate technical or classified information into advice that is accessible to decision-makers while maintaining necessary security and confidentiality requirements. Coordinate alignment between security and resilience policies and wider government objectives, such as adaptation, infrastructure, and economic wellbeing. Drive innovation and continuous improvement by incorporating lessons learned crises and policy reviews, applying best practice policy design approaches, new research, and international insights to develop future-focused policy.
System Engagement and Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead, coordinate, or contribute to cross-agency working groups, steering committees, and governance forums, representing the department's perspectives and priorities and influencing system-level outcomes governance bodies and senior leaders with strategic direction and independent assurance, ensuring they have the right information, advice, and insights to make well-informed, future-focused decisions. Foster and sustain effective partnerships with government agencies, local authorities, iwi/Māori partners, the private sector, and community organisations to ensure alignment and coherence across national security and resilience systems. Effectively influence through engagement and communication with senior stakeholders to support national security and resilience objectives. Provide thought leadership in national discourse, influencing the direction of policy debates and promoting system coherence.



Key Accountability Areas:	Deliverables:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigate complex political and operational environments, balancing strategic intent with practical constraints and operational realities. • Build and sustain relationships with key domestic and international partners, where appropriate, to share best practice, coordinate strategies, and leverage expertise.
People and Capability Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead initiatives to embed best practice frameworks (e.g., Policy Quality Review Panels, Policy Project tools) into processes and systems to lift policy quality • Provide mentoring, coaching, and guidance to Senior and Policy Advisors, supporting their professional growth and building policy capability across the team. • Review and quality assure policy products to ensure analytical rigour, strategic alignment, and clarity of communication. • Support the Manager to develop and manage the work programme, prioritising initiatives, and allocating resources effectively. • Lead by example in fostering an inclusive, respectful, and high-performance team culture, championing a culture of knowledge-sharing across the directorate • Promote innovation in policy approaches, encouraging experimentation, horizon scanning, and continuous improvement in policy methods and tools.
Strategic Crisis Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the operations of the ODESC system during crisis (If/when needed)
Health and Safety <i>(applies to all DPMC roles)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take care of your own health, safety, and wellbeing, and help keep others safe too. • Follow our health and safety rules, policies, and reporting processes. • Report any accidents, incidents, hazards, or near misses as soon as possible.

Key Relationships - Ngā Hononga Matua

Internal	External
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders and teams within the directorate (National Security Policy and Coordination / National Risk and Resilience) • Leaders and teams across National Security and Resilience group, including the National Assessments Bureau and Strategic Crisis Management • Governance team within Corporate • Office of the Chief Executive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public service agencies engaged in the National Security and Resilience systems, including New Zealand Intelligence Community (NZIC) agencies • National security and intelligence sector • Parliamentary Counsel Office • Prime Minister and other Minister's offices • Sector and community groups

What do I need for the role? - Ngā tohume ngā wheako?

Area	Description
Security Clearance Requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This position requires the ability to obtain and maintain a national security clearance at Top Secret Special level.



Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A tertiary degree in public policy, law, political science, economics, risk and resilience, international relations, security studies or another related field.
Knowledge/ Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive experience leading national-level or system-level policy design or advice across a range of policy processes and products. • Proven record of delivering complex policy projects and shaping cross-system work programmes across multiple agencies. • Recognised thought leadership capability across complex policy challenges. • Strong understanding of machinery of government, national security and resilience frameworks, risk management approaches, and cross-agency governance. • Strong professional networks across key external stakeholders noted above. • Demonstrated success influencing Ministers, governance groups, or senior agency leaders to achieve strategic objectives and integrated outcomes. • Demonstrated experience mentoring or leading other policy professionals. • Familiarity with Te Ao Māori, Tikanga Māori, and Te Tiriti o Waitangi and their application within organisational settings.
Personal Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced strategic and systems-thinking skills, with the ability to navigate complex policy environments and bring clarity to complexity. • Proven ability to synthesise complex data, intelligence, and risk information into clear, actionable strategic advice. • Highly developed influencing and negotiation skills to shape cross-agency outcomes. • Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including drafting for Ministers and senior stakeholders. • Adaptable to changing context and comfortable with uncertainty. • Strong organisational insight and cultural competence, with a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. • Dedication to mentoring, coaching, and inclusive leadership.

What else do I need to know? - He aha atu anō?

Principal Advisors will work in the National Security Policy and Coordination or National Risk and Resilience directorate, reporting to a policy manager. While they work in one of our teams they work flexibly across the group on cross-cutting national security and resilience projects.

This job description outlines the key responsibilities of the role, but we're a small, collaborative organisation so you may be asked to help with other tasks that support our shared goals.

