



Northwest Territories

IDENTIFICATION

<i>Position Number</i>	<i>Position Title</i>	
82-2050	Director, Legal Division	
<i>Department</i>	<i>Division/Region</i>	<i>Location</i>
Justice	Headquarters	Yellowknife

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

Reporting to the Assistant Deputy Minister, Attorney General, the incumbent assists the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Northwest Territories;

- in fulfilling his role as the official legal advisor to the Government;
- in ensuring that legal advice and services are provided to all of the departments and to specified public agencies of the Government;
- in superintending and conducting all litigation for or against the Government; and
- ensuring that the administration of public affairs accords with the law.

SCOPE and ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Scope:

The Legal Division of the Department of Justice plays a vital role in fulfilling the need for legal services and advice by all departments, and certain public agencies, of the Government. The Director is not only

the administrative head of the Division, but is regarded as a senior lawyer within the Government. Under his or her direction and guidance, counsel within the Division provide professional and comprehensive legal advice and services on a wide variety of matters. The Director must render personally legal advice and provide services in matters that are of a sensitive, significant or high profile nature.

To carry out the functions of the position effectively, the incumbent requires expertise in the legal profession, as well as management and administrative skills.

The Northwest Territories is currently engaged in the negotiation of self-government agreements with several Aboriginal groups, and legal counsel from the Division attend all negotiation sessions and provide essential legal advice on the content and drafting of the agreements. Further, the Northwest Territories is currently negotiating an agreement for the devolution to it of responsibility for land and water resources. The advice and legal services provided by the Director and other legal counsel in the Division regarding land claims, self-government agreements, devolution and other constitutional issues have great significance and impact upon the GNWT. Therefore, it is the Director's role to ensure that the legal advice and service provided to the government is of the highest calibre.

The Director is also responsible for the Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP). Under the *Maintenance Enforcement Act*, the MEP is responsible for enforcing and collecting child and spousal support. The MEP is also responsible for some functions under the *Inter Jurisdictional Support Orders Act*.

Organizational Structure:

- **Legal Counsel** (staff of 13 to 15): Legal Counsel provide legal services and advice to departments and specified public agencies. Legal services include providing legal opinions, reviewing and drafting contracts, court pleadings, orders, appearances before various courts and tribunals, negotiating with other lawyers and, from time to time, providing educational seminars in various areas.
- **Office Manager/Legal Secretaries** (staff of 1 office manager, 2 secretaries): These individuals perform administrative, legal secretarial and para-legal and clerical functions on behalf of Legal Counsel in the Division.
- **Articling Students** (currently a staff of 0): Students graduating from law school must perform a period of articles for 12 months in preparation for membership in the Law Society of the Northwest Territories. This person does legal work, but always under the supervision of a more senior lawyer.
- **Maintenance Enforcement Program** (staff of 6, including the Administrator): These individuals are responsible for enforcing and collecting child and spousal support pursuant to the *Maintenance Enforcement Act*. They are also responsible for some functions under the *Inter Jurisdictional Support Orders Act*.

DIMENSIONS (2007-2008 Fiscal Year)

Legal Division O & M:	2,452,000.00
MEP O & M:	530,000.00
Total:	2,982,000.00
Positions	23

RESPONSIBILITIES/ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Provide a complete range of legal services to the Executive Council, all departments and specified public agencies of the Government of the Northwest Territories.
2. Manage the Legal Division and establish definitive standards of professional competence within the Division to ensure the provision of effective and comprehensive legal services.
3. Ensure that high quality legal services are provided to all departments and specified boards and agencies in matters before the Superior and Territorial Courts.
4. Ensure that high quality administrative law services are provided to all departments and specified boards and agencies before various boards, panels, arbitrators and committees, and ensure effective advocacy before such boards, panels, arbitrators and committees.
5. Oversee the MEP and ensure compliance with relevant legislative requirements.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

The incumbent must have the following knowledge, skills and abilities, typically obtained through a degree in common law and membership in a Canadian law society, and 7 or more years of experience practicing law:

- A proven understanding of legal issues and processes relevant to the Government;
- The ability to think strategically, including the ability to recognize those issues that may have political, as well as legal, implications;
- Demonstrated written and verbal communications skills;
- Effective listening skills including the ability to discern non-verbal communication skills;

- Effective advocacy and negotiation skills;
- The ability to meet deadlines consistently and respond to changing priorities;
- The ability to manage a team of individuals;
- The ability to work effectively within larger teams: within in the Division, the Department and the organization as a whole;
- The ability to manage a budget.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

The incumbent works in a typical office setting and there are no unusual physical demands

Environmental Conditions

The incumbent works in a typical office setting and there are no unusual environmental demands

Sensory Demands

The incumbent must be able to read non-verbal cues in dealing with representatives of client departments, boards and agencies or in dealing with co-counsel, opposing counsel or other parties adverse in interest to the GNWT.

Mental Demands

Frequently, the incumbent is called upon to meet demands for a variety of legal services and advice on short notice, and the incumbent must be flexible in accommodating changing priorities.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security (check one)

- No criminal records check required
- Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

CERTIFICATION

Title: Director, Legal Division

Position Number(s): 82-2050