



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
The Legislative Assembly	Senior Research Analyst	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
12-15887	Yellowknife	Research and Committee Advisory Services/HQ

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Senior Research Analyst is responsible for conducting research and participating in research and data-driven activities to inform the work of the Standing Committees of the Legislative Assembly. The Senior Research Analyst's work is utilized to help improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Standing Committees in their review of legislative and other initiatives being reviewed by those Committees.

SCOPE

This position is located in Yellowknife and reports directly to the Director, Research and Committee Advisory Services. This position is responsible for conducting research on bills sponsored by Government that are before the Legislative Assembly, policy issues and initiatives, fiscal initiatives (e.g. departmental business plans, main estimates, supplementary appropriations) and strategic plans. The incumbent may also be asked to research initiatives being pursued by Committees, including designing and conducting surveys of stakeholders.

The incumbent is also responsible for undertaking research projects on behalf of individual Members of the Legislative Assembly; the Speaker and the Clerk's Office are also frequent clients.

Committees and individual Members use research provided by the Analyst in making decisions on legislation, appropriations and other government initiatives, and on whether and how to pursue constituency issues.

The Northwest Territories' consensus system results in Standing Committees and Regular Members having considerably more influence over Government spending and decision-making than their provincial counterparts and a genuine power to hold Government to

account. The Government is always in the minority and requires the support of Regular Members to continue in office and to bring legislation, including appropriation bills, into effect. All business plans, appropriations and legislative and policy initiatives, as well as many program initiatives, strategic plans and agreements are referred to Committees in draft before they are ever made public. Committee recommendations, which may be made public or kept confidential, frequently compel Government to add or delete millions of dollars in program spending, to make significant policy changes, to initiate major mandate, policy, legislative and program reviews, and to revise its priorities. The input of Standing Committees has resulted in significant substantive amendments at the Committee stage to such important statutes as the *Financial Administration Act*, the *Human Rights Act*, the *Health Information Act* and a suite of devolution-related bills.

With their majority, Committee Members are able to directly, and without the consent of Cabinet, delete amounts from Appropriation Bills, defeat or significantly change any Bills before the Assembly, request investigations by the Office of the Auditor General for Canada, and remove Cabinet Members who do not perform to their satisfaction. The research prepared by the incumbent for Standing Committees therefore has the potential to directly affect government business plans and budgets, policy, legislation, priorities and program delivery. The credibility of the Committee with respect to the matter at hand depends, in large part, on the quality of the research undertaken by the Analyst and provided to Committee.

Research and speaking points, prepared by the incumbent for individual Members often form the basis for the Members' questions and statements in the House. Inaccurate or untimely advice could have adverse or negative political effects on the Member and can impact the credibility of the Member in the eyes of the public and other Members.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Designing and conducting research projects of a diverse nature that require analytical, evaluative, and pragmatic skills and competencies that provide accurate, valid, timely and useable information for decision-making purposes.

- Conducts data analysis and assists with data needs for evaluation.
- Designs or assists in the design of, and executes research studies, surveys, methodologies, sampling, interview questions and/or questionnaires.
- Makes recommendations on methods to improve the quality, including validity and precision, of data collected.
- Provides expert advice to staff collecting and inputting data.
- Provides advice on the nature and relevance of current or proposed research being conducted on behalf of Members or Committees.

2. Conducting statistical analysis on data collected from various studies and surveys in order to ensure that the data is valid, reliable and useable.

- Reviews data to ensure it meets data quality standards.
- Performs analysis, verification and auditing of data and methods to assure validity and reliability.

- Identifies and provides recommendations to eliminate and/or mitigates errors and deficiencies in data systems.
 - Analyzes statistical data via advanced statistical programs and provides interpretations and expert advice.
 - Prepares analysis in the form of briefing notes, reports, and visual representations of findings.
- 3. Provides professional advice and expertise in order to ensure that information provided to Members and Committees meets social science research and statistical standards.**
- Makes contributions to Committee Reports and Members Statements on research outcomes, as required.
 - Keeps abreast of social science and statistical advancements.
 - Assists the staff of the Research and Committee Advisory Services unit in evaluating materials currently before a Standing Committee.
 - Develop an effective network of contacts and maintain positive relations with GNWT departmental staff in order to obtain and identify new sources of information.
- 4. Provide research and analysis to individual Members of the Legislative Assembly**
- Work with Members to define and focus large research requests, to ensure Members are getting the information required to address their concerns and suggest alternatives to requests where appropriate.
 - Prepare background papers; briefing notes on research initiatives; points for use in Members' statements; draft Members' Statements; and draft oral and written questions, as requested, ensuring that all such work is in keeping with parliamentary rules and conventions;
 - Coach Members who seek out advice by providing tactful feedback where requested, asking questions to encourage them to work through their ideas themselves, and suggesting options, to the extent incumbent's knowledge and experience allows and without compromising the need for objectivity and non-partisanship.
- 5. Contribute to Legislative Assembly corporate initiatives.**
- Lead or participate on project teams for special corporate initiatives (e.g. development of strategic plans, policies and/or operational procedures; transition/post-election planning)

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

The position works in a typical office setting, and during periods of high activity such as Session and Committee meeting weeks may be required to sit for long periods of time in meetings and writing to deadline at the computer. The incumbent may be expected to travel periodically.

Environmental Conditions

No unusual demands.

Sensory Demands

The incumbent is expected to spend long periods of intense concentration reviewing and analyzing data and must be able to rapidly switch sensory attention from one activity to the next due to the variety of files maintained, competing priorities and unexpected disruptions in concentration.

Mental Demands

The incumbent is expected to think analytically, quickly, laterally and concentrate intensely. The incumbent is subject to pressure from deadlines, competing and shifting priorities, assignments from a variety of sources and regular evaluation of the quality of work, including public scrutiny, which significantly increases the stress level of the position.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Political sensitivity and diplomacy, and active listening skills to be able to provide advice to Members.
- Superior verbal and written communication skills to be able to explain complex concepts and information to clients in plain language, to prepare clear and accurate briefing notes, and other documents related to Committee positions.
- Highly specialized knowledge of specific research methodologies including survey, interview and questionnaire design.
- Superior analytical skills to interpret and critically assess information from disparate sources including Committee direction (which may at times be unclear), financial data, policies, mandates, programs, land claim and self-government agreements, socioeconomic agreements, strategic plans, and reports and recommendations from statutory officers or outside agencies.
- Extensive knowledge about consensus government and the functions and protocols of the Legislative Assembly, including parliamentary procedure and the development of legislation and budgets.
- Must be able to apply this knowledge in a rapidly changing and challenging environment.
- Proficiency in the use of computers and related software applications, such as word-processing, spreadsheets, databases, presentations, Internet and email

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

A Master's degree in a relevant discipline such as Public Administration or Political Science with a minimum of 5 years progressive experience working in data analysis, preferably in situations where analysis was used to inform senior decision-makers. At least 3 years progressive writing experience, preferably in government, which may include research reports, policy and position papers or briefing documents.

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

French language (check one if applicable)

- ☐ French required (must identify required level below)

Level required for this Designated Position is:

ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

READING COMPREHENSION:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

WRITING SKILLS:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

- ☐ French preferred

Indigenous language: Select language

- ☐ Required
- ☐ Preferred