# Disability Support Services and Ministry of Social Development, Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora

# Manager Communications

## Our purpose

**Manaaki tangata, Manaaki whānau**

We help New Zealanders to be safe, strong and independent

## Our commitment to Māori

As a **Te Tiriti o Waitangi** partner we are committed to supporting and enabling Māori, whānau, hapū, Iwi and communities to realise their own potential and aspirations.

## Our strategic direction



## Our Values



## Working in the Public Service

Ka mahitahi mātou o te ratonga tūmatanui kia hei painga mō ngā tāngata o Aotearoa i āianei, 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.

## The outcomes we want to achieve

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| New Zealanders get the support they require | New Zealanders are resilient and live in inclusive and supportive communities | New Zealanders participate positively in society and reach their potential |

## We carry out a broad range of responsibilities and functions including

* Employment, income support and superannuation
* Community partnerships, programmes and campaigns
* Advocacy for seniors, disabled people and youth
* Public Housing assistance and emergency housing
* Resolving claims of abuse and neglect in state care
* Student allowances and loans

## **He whakataukī\***

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| --- | --- |
| Unuhia te rito o te harakeke  Kei hea te kōmako e kō?  Whakatairangitia, rere ki uta, rere ki tai;  Ui mai ki ahau,  He aha te mea nui o te ao?  Māku e kī atu,  He tangata, he tangata, he tangata\* | If you remove the central shoot of the flaxbush  Where will the bellbird find rest?  Will it fly inland, fly out to sea, or fly aimlessly;  If you were to ask me,  What is the most important thing in the world?  I will tell you,  It is people, it is people, it is people |

\* We would like to acknowledge Te Rūnanga Nui o Te Aupōuri Trust for their permission to use this whakataukī

## Position detail

### Overview of position

The Manager Communications leads the Communications team in designing and delivering innovative, effective internal and external communications strategies that support organisational goals and enhance reputation.

The Manager Communications is responsible for building a high-performing team, providing day-to-day guidance, coaching, and professional development. This role works closely with senior leaders to develop communications and stakeholder engagement strategies as required for the business, ensure messaging is consistent, timely, and aligned with organisational values. It also involves engaging with a wide range of stakeholders and ensuring DSS communications risks are well managed. The position requires both strategic advice, planning and hands-on delivery, with a focus on fostering trust, transparency, and engagement across all audiences. Strong understanding of the requirements for effective engagement with Māori and pacific stakeholders is a requirement alongside deep understanding of accessibility needs in communications to disabled people.

The position will work in close collaboration with the DSS leadership team, with a connection to the wider MSD communications team.

### Location

National Office, Wellington

### Reports to

Director Business Support

## Key responsibilities

* Translate organisational strategy into compelling communication narratives that resonate with diverse internal and external audiences.
* Lead the development and execution of communication strategies, plans, ensuring timely, effective responses that protect organisational reputation and support DSS objectives and direction.
* Ensure alignment and consistency of messaging across all channels, including digital and website, print, and face-to-face communications.
* Work as part of the wider business support leadership team, supporting the culture, lifting capability and reinforcing the role and direction of DSS across the group.
* Work in strong collaboration with the wider MSD Communications function which is responsible for media enquiries, social media and events management.
* Drive continuous improvement and innovation in communications by identifying gaps, streamlining workflows, and embedding best practice.
* Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of communication strategies using analytics, feedback, and performance metrics to drive continuous improvement.
* Develop and implement integrated communication campaigns that support organisational priorities, change initiatives, and stakeholder engagement.
* Support the delivery of change and management of sensitive issues, including communications risk identification, mitigation and escalation.
* Provide hands-on support in drafting, editing, and reviewing key communications such as speeches, media releases, and executive updates.
* Develop and delivery of an effective internal communications and engagement strategy to support leaders and communicate with our people.
* Manage day-to-day operations of the communications team, including workflow coordination, quality assurance, and resource planning.
* Build and maintain strong relationships with government and community stakeholders to enhance visibility, trust, and influence.
* Support executive and senior leaders with strategic communication advice, coaching, and preparation for public and internal engagements.
* Contribute to the development of communication frameworks, tools, and standards that lift practice, consistency, and impact across the organisation.

## Embedding te ao Māori

* Embedding and building on Te Ao Māori within their leadership role.
* Create the conditions for Te Ao Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi in all decisions to ensure Te Pae Tata is delivered and embedded in your business group.

## Health, safety and security

* Understand and implement your manager accountabilities as outlined in the HSS Accountability Framework.
* Ensure health, safety, security and wellbeing policies and procedures are understood, followed and implemented by all employees.

## Emergency management and business continuity

* Take responsibility for emergency management and business continuity confirming management of the critical functions that satisfy legislative, regulatory and client obligations are in place during and after a disruptive event.
* Ensure that policies and procedures encompassing emergency management, business continuity and crisis management arrangements are understood, followed and implemented by employees.

## Know-how

* A tertiary Degree level qualification in a relevant field or the equivalent work experience
* Deep understanding of audience and stakeholder segmentation, behavioural insights, and how to develop communications strategies engagement plans, campaigns and narratives that resonate with diverse stakeholder groups across internal and external audiences.
* Strong familiarity with emerging communication technologies, digital platforms, and media consumption trends to inform channel strategy and innovation.
* In-depth knowledge of communication strategy and digital content development, with the ability to lead integrated campaigns across multiple formats and channels.
* Substantial experience managing high-performing communications teams, including coaching, delegation, and performance development, while delivering complex, high-profile projects under pressure.
* Sound knowledge of public sector communication protocols, including ministerial expectations, Cabinet processes, and government engagement, with the ability to navigate political sensitivities.
* An understanding of equity issues and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and the implications of working in partnership for improved outcomes.
* Proficiency in using analytics tools, insights platforms, and evaluation frameworks to measure communication effectiveness, track engagement, and inform continuous improvement.
* Strong understanding of inclusive communication practices, accessibility standards, and risk mitigation strategies to ensure communications are equitable, compliant, and reputation safe.
* Ability to translate complex or technical information into clear, compelling narratives that support strategic objectives and build trust with stakeholders and target audiences.
* Demonstrated skills and experience in stakeholder engagement and relationship management, the provision of strategic communications advice to senior leaders, with the ability to influence, negotiate, and align messaging across varied interests and priorities.
* Capability to lead continuous improvement initiatives, embedding a culture of service excellence, innovation, and accountability across the team.

## Attributes

* Excellent relationship management capability.
* Proven leadership and partnership building skills.
* Highly effective communication skills - oral and written.
* Excellent interpersonal skills – able to adapt to the needs of the audience/situation.
* Strong client focus - able to adapt a thinking/leadership style to meet the needs of other.
* Inspires creative, audience-focused storytelling and bold thinking.
* Balances strategic leadership with hands-on delivery.
* Builds strong, trusted networks across teams and stakeholders.
* Leads and mentors with confidence, clarity, and care.
* Communicates with impact across formats and audiences.
* Creative, adaptable, and detail-focused in fast-paced settings.

## Key relationships

### Internal

* DCE Disability Support Services
* ADCE Disability Support Services
* Senior Managers across DSS
* Head of MSD Communications
* Office of the CE.

### External

* Ministers office
* Counterparts at other government agencies and communities of best practice

## Other

### Delegations

* Financial – Yes level5
* Human Resources - Yes and level 5

### Direct reports - Yes

### Security clearance - No

### Children’s worker - No

Limited adhoc travel may be required

**Position Description Updated:** July 2025