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

# Principal Advisor (Commercial)

## 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 harakekeKei 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 flaxbushWhere 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 Principal Advisor (Commercial) provides authoritative advice and leadership in the development, negotiation, and management of complex commercial arrangements, ensuring the organisation achieves optimal value, robust risk management, and compliance with all legal and policy requirements.

This Principal Advisor acts as the organisation’s lead negotiator on high-value and high-risk contracts, supports the development of procurement strategies, and builds commercial capability across the Commissioning & Funding team.

### Location

Various

### Reports to

Director Procurement & Commercial

## Key responsibilities

* Provide strategic leadership and expert advice on commercial arrangement function across DSS (including contract terms, conditions, and commercial frameworks), supporting the preparation and review of procurement documentation.
* Lead the negotiation of complex, high-value, and high-risk commercial contracts, ensuring outcomes align with organisational objectives and deliver best value.
* Take the Lead of development and implementation of commercial frameworks, negotiation strategies, and contract templates to support consistent, high-quality commercial practice.
* Work closely with procurement, legal, and business teams to ensure commercial strategies are integrated into broader service.
* Oversee the identification, assessment, and mitigation of commercial risks across all major contracts and supplier relationships.
* Support the resolution of commercial disputes and contract variations, acting as the escalation point for complex issues.
* Mentor and build commercial capability across Commissioning, sharing knowledge and best practice.
* Monitor changes in commercial law, market practice, and regulatory requirements, ensuring organisational policies and templates remain current and effective.
* Prepare and present reports, briefings, and recommendations on commercial matters to senior leadership and governance bodies.
* Build and maintain strategic relationships with internal and external stakeholders.

## Embedding te ao Māori

* Embedding Te Ao Māori (te reo Māori, tikanga, kawa, Te Tiriti o Waitangi) into the way we do things at MSD.
* Building more experience, knowledge, skills and capabilities to confidently engage with whānau, hapū and iwi.

## Health, safety and security

* Understand and implement your Health, Safety and Security (HSS) accountabilities as outlined in the HSS Accountability Framework.
* Ensure you understand, follow and implement all Health, Safety and Security and wellbeing policies and procedures.

## Emergency management and business continuity

* Remain familiar with the relevant provisions of the Emergency Management and Business Continuity Plans that impact your business group/team.
* Participate in periodic training, reviews and tests of the established Business Continuity Plans and operating procedures.

## Know-how

* Relevant business or technical qualification at a tertiary level or considerable professional experience.
* Deep knowledge and understanding of commissioning.
* Deep expertise in commercial law, contract negotiation, and the management of complex commercial arrangements, ideally within the NZ public sector or a similarly complex environment.
* Advanced understanding of negotiation strategies, risk allocation, and commercial frameworks.
* Proven ability to interpret and draft complex contract terms and conditions.
* Strong analytical and problem-solving skills, with the ability to assess risks and develop effective mitigation strategies.
* Excellent communication, influencing, and stakeholder management skills, with experience engaging at senior executive and board levels.
* Up-to-date knowledge of relevant legislation, government procurement rules, and industry best practice.
* Experience in mentoring and developing commercial and procurement professionals.
* Strong analytical and strategic thinking skills with the ability to assess commercial risks and opportunities
* Experience working in disability sector or able to build trust and confidence quickly.

## Attributes

* Superior influencing skills.
* Superior relationship and engagement skills.
* Excellent skills in critical thinking and problem solving skills.
* High level of organisational and environmental awareness.
* Strong mathematical and statistical analysis skills with a focus on quality and accuracy
* Strong problem solving and decision-making skills.
* Exercises sound judgement and political sensitivity.
* Excellent research, numerical, planning and organisational skills
* Organisational and environmental awareness
* Ability to think strategically with a view of future requirement
* Highly effective communication skills.
* Flexible, adaptable and pragmatic
* Strong client focus
* Establishes a high-performing culture
* Welcomes and values diversity, and contributes to an inclusive working environment where differences are acknowledged and respected

## Key relationships

### Internal

* DSS Commissioning team
* DSS Commissioning Leads
* DSS Procurement & Commercial Team
* DSS Data and Evidence Team
* Wider DSS business group
* MSD Policy
* MSD Māori, Communities & Partnerships

### External

* Other Government Agencies
* Crown Entities
* Third party commissioned providers
* Disabled communities

## Other

### Delegations

* Financial – No
* Human Resources - No

### Direct reports - No

### Security clearance - No

### Children’s worker - No

Limited adhoc travel may be required

**Position Description Updated:** June 2025