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1 April 2026

TO : OFFICIAL CONTACTS OF MEMBER GOVERNMENTS
[Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu]

FROM : BARON DIVAVESI WAQA, SECRETARY GENERAL

SUBJECT : **VACANCY NOTICE: INTERNATIONAL LEGAL OFFICER**

The Secretariat wishes to draw Members' attention to the vacancy advertisement attached at Annex 1 for the substantive international position of International Legal Officer. The position will report to the Legal Counsel through the Deputy Legal Counsel and will work closely across the various divisions of the Secretariat to provide legal support services as and when required.

2. An information package with additional information on the position is attached at Annex 2 for ease of reference.
3. As per the vacancy advertisement, the application deadline for this position is **27 April 2026, 5pm (Fiji Time)**.
4. Members' assistance in sharing this information with their networks would be greatly appreciated.

Baron Divavesi Waqa
Secretary General

attach:

cc:

Forum Resident Missions, Suva
Annex 1: International Legal Officer advert
Annex 2: International Legal Officer info pack



Opportunity at the Forum Secretariat

The Pacific Islands Forum

The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) is an Employer of Choice in the region, aiming to recruit and employ staff based on merit and organisational needs. The Secretariat's employment selection upholds its values and commitment to Forum membership, gender balance and building a diverse and inclusive organisation. The PIFS is committed to achieving gender balance and being fully representative of our Member countries*. The Secretariat's workforce is currently over 50% female, with representatives from 15 of the 18 Forum member countries.

The Opportunity – International Legal Officer

Applications are invited to fill this vacant international position at the Secretariat in Suva, Fiji.

The International Legal Officer's role is to support the legal functions of the Secretariat, by providing support to the Legal Counsel (LC), through the Deputy Legal Counsel (DLC), in the discharge of the duties and responsibilities associated with the Key Responsibility Areas assigned to the LC. At the same time, the International Legal Officer will also cover other legal related matters, including supporting the DLC as and when required.

The key responsibilities are summarised as:

- Support the work of the Legal Counsel
- Key areas of support: international law & corporate law
- Undertaking other delegated legal duties
- Corporate Accountabilities

Applicants should have an LLB degree from a recognised institution. An advanced degree in international law, international relations, or diplomacy, is desirable but not essential.

A minimum of five years of demonstrated experience and knowledge in the legal systems of Forum Members, and likewise an awareness of regional and international legal issues relevant to the work of the Forum Secretariat, is required.

The Package

The position carries a competitive and attractive remuneration and benefits package including allowances for housing and education; and medical, accident and life insurance coverage. This position is based on Band 10 of the PIFS salary scale. The starting salary for the position is **SDR 32,924** per annum, which is equivalent to **FJD 102,122** based on 1 January 2026 foreign exchange rate.

How to apply

Interested applicants are encouraged to apply through the PIFS website: www.forumsec.org where an information package containing the position description and full remuneration details are available. Candidates must include in either their application or Curriculum Vitae the full contact details of three referees.

To be eligible for the position, applicants must be nationals of Forum member countries. The Forum Secretariat is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The deadline for applications is **27 April, 5pm (Fiji Time)**.

**Member States of the Pacific Islands Forum: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.*



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

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PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

Applicant Information Package

International Legal Officer April 2026

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About The Pacific Islands Forum

Founded in 1971, the Pacific Islands Forum is the region's premier political and economic policy organisation. The purpose of the Pacific Islands Forum is to “strengthen regional cooperation and integration, including through the pooling of regional resources of governance and the alignment of policies, in order to further Forum members' shared goals of economic growth, sustainable development, good governance, and security.”

The Pacific Islands Forum Leader's Vision is for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives.

The member states of the Pacific Islands Forum are Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat was established in 1972. The purpose of the Secretariat is to facilitate, develop and maintain cooperation and consultation between member governments on economic development, trade, transport, tourism, energy, telecommunications, legal, political, security and such other matters as the Forum may direct.

The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent (2050 Strategy) and its Implementation Plan (2050 IP) were endorsed by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders in 2022 and 2023 respectively. The 2050 Strategy is underpinned by the Blue Pacific narrative, endorsed by Forum Leaders in 2017, which calls for inspired leadership and a long-term Forum foreign policy commitment to act as one “Blue Continent” as the means to achieve its development aspirations. The Blue Pacific identity would serve to inspire the region and reinforce the potential of its shared stewardship of the Pacific Ocean, and to reaffirm the connections of Pacific peoples with their natural resources, environment, culture, and livelihoods.

For more information about PIFS visit www.forumsec.org

About the Legal Team

The work of PIFS is divided into three broad divisions: Policy, Governance & Engagement, and Programmes & Initiatives, which depicts the different stages of the regional public policy cycle. The Executive branch and the Operations division support and enable the work of other divisions to achieve the strategic objectives of the PIFS.

The Legal Team provides advice and support across all divisions and sits within the Executive branch. The Legal Team generally fulfils two main functions: international law and corporate law related advice and support.

About the Position

The International Legal Officer's role is to support the legal functions of the Secretariat with a focus on providing legal policy advice, and analysis on regional issues covered by the Secretariat. The role will support the Legal Counsel (LC), through the Deputy Legal Counsel (DLC), in the discharge of the duties and responsibilities associated with the Key Responsibility Areas (KRAs) assigned to the LC. At the same time, the Legal Officer will also cover other legal related matters, including supporting the DLC as and when required.

The position is expected to carry out legal tasks in support of the role of the LC, and other KRAs as may be directed/approved by the Deputy Secretaries General depending on the needs of the organisation at the time; and to carry out any other duties and responsibilities as may be assigned by the LC in the first instance, or the DLC. The position holder will work with the Legal Team to provide legal analysis and advice on regional policy, convene Forum Meetings and represent the Forum’s interests to relevant international bodies, manage the Forum’s treaty depositary role, and provide other in-house legal advice and services as required.

The position holder will have a sound knowledge of the international concerns and interests of Forum members and international law, with demonstrated proficiency in legal writing, and the formulation of legal opinions and advice. This includes conducting research, analysis, and the interpretation of relevant legal sources, including legislation /and scholarly literature. The role requires a professional approach to work, including reliability, integrity, and a commitment to delivering high-quality outcomes.

General Capabilities

The organisational structure of the *Forum Secretariat* aims to achieve greater consistency across the organisation in the way workforce capability is developed, and capability gaps are identified and addressed. As such, the Secretariat has a Capability Framework (CF) that provides a common platform to clarify performance expectations and job behaviours required for roles at various levels. Details of each CF Competency may be different for the position’s Band Level

CORE CAPABILITIES:

Planning & Prioritising	“Developing and committing to personal, team, KRA and organisation wide plans”
Communicating with Purpose and Effect	“Clear communication while knowing your target audience and the outcomes you are seeking”
Leading and Collaborating	“Actively leads self, others and organisation to establish a positive and productive organisation culture”
Applying Critical Thinking	“Gathering, organizing and analysing information for effective decision making”
Developing and Strengthening Relationships	“Working cooperatively and establishing, developing and maintaining business relationships”
Delivering Value	“Deliver Outcomes that meet agreed quality and timeliness measures”

SUPPLEMENTARY CAPABILITIES:

Supplementary Capabilities required include building for the future, promoting effective workplace practices, managing and coordinating projects as well as using systems, tools, and technology.

Position Accountabilities

The position reports to the Legal Counsel, through the Deputy Legal Counsel, and will work closely across the various divisions of the Secretariat to provide legal support services as and when required.

The International Legal Officer will be responsible, but not limited, to the following Key Result Areas:

1. Support the work of the Legal Counsel:

- Assist with the provision of legal advice and opinions on international law issues, including law of the sea and nuclear matters, and corporate law matters.
- Assist in providing legal drafting support to Forum Standing meetings, Sub-Committee, Committee, and Taskforce meetings, as well as the provision of legislative drafting support to Members.
- Assist in contributing to policy development work of the Secretariat, including internal PIFS policies and Forum policies.
- Assist in participating in law reform activities in support of Members.
- Assist in vetting and reviewing legal documents.
- Assist in legal representation at the international level, where Secretariat participates in international law development, court proceedings or similar.
- Assist in discharging the Treaty depositary functions of the Secretary General; and
- Assist in legal research.

2. Key areas of support

- Assist in convening and arranging meetings led by the Legal Team, particularly, the Forum Officials Committee (FOC) Specialist Sub-Committee on Sea-Level Rise in relation to International Law (FSS-SLRIL) and working groups thereunder.
- Assist in convening and arranging meetings of the Rarotonga Treaty States Parties meeting, the Rarotonga Treaty Consultative Committee meetings, and the CROP Taskforce on Nuclear Legacy meetings.
- Assist the DLC in the provision of legal analysis and advice on corporate and regional legal matters including in the negotiation, drafting, and review of contracts and other legal documents.
- Assist the DLC in providing legal analysis and advice on corporate and regional legal matters, including negotiation, drafting, and review of contracts, MOUs, and other legal documents.
- Assist the DLC in audits of policy and compliance with standards with legal implications, including liaison with auditors.
- Assist the DLC in maintaining and updating PIFS' internal policies and procedures that have legal implications.
- Support the implementation and ongoing development of PIFS' compliance management systems.

3. Undertaking other delegated legal duties, including:

- Assist with the provision of legal support to the Senior Management Team and Executive in bilateral meetings, involving dialogue and development partners, as well as international organisations.
- Assist with the provision of in-house legal support to the whole Secretariat, the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) and the Office of the Pacific Oceans Commissioner (OPOC).
- Assist with drafting of FOC, Ministerial, and Leaders' papers.

- Assist with representing the Secretariat at regional and international meetings and negotiations.
- Assist in organising events to commemorate international days, such as the international day against nuclear testing, etc.
- Assist in the management and coordination of the work of the legal interns and attachés from time to time.
- The discharge of any other law-related duties as may be assigned by the DSGs, LC, or DLC

4. Corporate accountabilities

- **Planning:** Develop an annual individual work plan and contribute to divisional work plans.
- **Reporting:** Provide regular progress updates on assigned tasks; work-area reports; and monitoring, and evaluation requirements.
- **Management:** Effectively manage your time and resources to meet the team, division, and organisational strategic priorities in alignment with the Strategic Plan and Annual Corporate Plan.
- **Governance, Risk & Compliance:** Ensure adherence to relevant frameworks, policies, procedures, risk management protocols, and compliance requirements in all work activities. Revise policies and procedures as necessary.
- **Systems & Processes:** Learn and adhere to established systems and processes. Develop, update, and improve policies processes and systems to support the organisation.
- **Operations:** Complete your own performance management form. Participate in annual learning and development activities for your professional growth.
- **Corporate Culture:** Actively engage in the Staff Association and the Social Club to foster a positive and inclusive workplace culture.

Note: The above performance requirements are provided as a guide only. The precise performance measures for this job will need further discussion between the jobholder and supervisor as part of the performance development process

Position complexities

Most challenging duties typically undertaken:

- Assessing different legal options and avenues, and providing legal advice that is fully inclusive of, and addresses all issues, of the 18 Forum Members, taking into account political and strategic challenges facing the Blue Pacific Continent.
- Providing concise and targeted legal advice in a simple and coherent manner easily understood by the layperson.
- Delivering on a range of legal issues at any given time and working towards very tight timelines. This includes preparation of briefs, meeting papers, speeches, and different kinds of communication tailored to specific levels and events.

Qualifications and experience required for the role

This section is designed to capture the expertise required for the role at the 100% fully effective level. (This does not necessarily reflect what the current jobholder has.) This may be a combination of knowledge/experience, qualifications or equivalent level of learning through experience or key skills, attributes or job specific competencies:

- A LLB degree from a recognised institution, an advanced degree in the field of international law, international relations or diplomacy is desirable but not essential.

- Minimum of five (5) years of experience in the field of law.
- Demonstrated experience and knowledge in the legal systems of Forum Members.
- Demonstrated experience and knowledge and an awareness of regional and international legal issues relevant to the role of the Forum Secretariat.
- Excellent written and oral skills.

Other desirable knowledge and experience for the role would be an advantage, specifically:

- Knowledge and understanding of legal issues connected to the work and priority areas of the Secretariat.
- Experience working in a cross-cultural environment.
- Experience working in a regional or international organisation.
- Background and experience in international law.
- General understanding of contract law and commercial related transactions.

Functional relationships & Relationship skills

The role will need to liaise with many stakeholders, key contacts and typical nature of their relations are:

External:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Forum AG offices and legal experts, concerned Government Ministries and representatives; relevant regional and international organisations and sectoral bodies | } | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting Official circulars, letters, papers, emails, sharing advisory material or information on Secretariat processes • Legal advice and briefs, monitoring and analysis, representing PIFS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CROP Agencies • International bodies such as the ICJ, ICL, UN DOALOS etc | } | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversations during regional meetings to build understanding and address issues • Advocating of regional and international priorities of importance to the region • One-on-one meetings on topical issues |

Internal:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretary General and other members of Senior Management team • Other Advisers • Other reporting officers & Admin staff • Staff in other reporting lines | } | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting legal advice and briefings on strategic and directions • Official internal communication seeking management approval/ endorsement of papers, presentations, and resource requests • Regular group meetings to share information • Informal one-on-one conversations |
|---|---|---|

- Emails and written briefings and/or seek inputs for work
- Collaborative Inputs to papers and presentations

Direct Reports

The role has one direct report.

Level of Delegation

The role cannot authorise any costs nor sign standard letter on Secretariat letterhead.

Additional Information

- PIFS advocates for equal opportunities
- Incumbent is physically fit and able to travel frequently
- Hold a current passport valid at least 6 months

Change of Position description

This position description may be subject to change from time to time in response to the changing nature of our work environment – including technological requirements or statutory changes. Such change may be initiated as required.

This Position Description may also be reviewed as part of the preparation for performance planning for the annual performance cycle.

Summary of Conditions, Benefits & Entitlements

The Pacific Islands Forum is part of the participating agencies of the CROP that have agreed through their governing councils to standardise employment conditions. Outlined in this section are the conditions, benefits, and entitlements, that accrue to the position of International Legal Officer

International Staff Remuneration & Benefits		
Type	Amount	Notes
Contract Terms		
Duration of contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three years subject to a satisfactory medical examination and performance • Six-month probation period • The funding provided for this position is only for three years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure recruitment and retention of the best person for the position
Working hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 37 hours per week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hours worked may be flexible to accommodate the needs of the Forum
Salary		
Salary Scales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting from SDR 32,924 at Band 10 of our Salary scale (Equivalent to FJD 102,122 based on 1 January 2026 foreign exchange rate). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currency: Special Drawing Rights (SDR) • Salary may fluctuate based on currency conversion.
Benefits		
Superannuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% paid by employer 	

Housing Allowance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% of housing costs capped at FJD6,250 per month 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed every 3-years
Education Allowance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% of education costs per child per annum (max. 3 children). Benchmarked to International School Suva – Form 7 high school fees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dependents aged 4-22 years old only Reviewed annually
Recruitment Entitlement		
Airfares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flights for you and dependents from your home country to Fiji 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shortest and most economical route
Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Packing, insurance, shipping and delivery of furniture, household and personal effects. Includes vehicles but excludes marine craft. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three quotes are required to be sourced. Additional customs duties will be at own expense.
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hotel accommodation for 6 working days for you and your dependents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On arrival and departure (nil meals & incidentals) Extension of accommodation needs further approval depending on circumstances.
Insurance		
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive medical insurance for you and your dependents under PIFS cover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organised by the Forum Subject to the conditions of the medical provider
Life & Personal Accident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Term life insurance equivalent to three times the base salary is provided for staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organised by the Forum Subject to the conditions of the medical provider
Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will be covered by the Forum's travel insurance while on official travel outside Fiji 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organised by the Forum Subject to the conditions of the medical provider
Family Provision		
School Holiday Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One economy class return airfare per annum for a dependent child to visit their parent at the base station or return air fare for a staff member or spouse to visit their dependent child studying overseas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enable parent-child reunion
Home Leave Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Airfares for return travel after 18 months service, for expatriate staff members The entitlement is for reimbursement of one economy class return flight between Suva and the place of normal residence for the staff member, spouse and dependent children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enable staff to maintain contact with their home environment. Allowance is for Airfares only Staff are required to use annual leave entitlement
Leave		
Annual Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 working days per annum (prorated) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accrual allowed up to a maximum of 35 days To provide for leave for illness or accident
Sick Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 days per calendar year (prorated) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balances reset each year To provide for leave for illness or accident
Relocation Provision		
Establishment Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SDR 2,500 on arrival. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Settling in expenses.
Repatriation Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SDR 2,500 on repatriation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Settle back in their home location
Tax Status		
Tax Exemption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff who are not nationals of the host country Fiji are exempt from income tax in Fiji. You will be responsible for confirming your tax status with your government and meeting any related obligations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remuneration is tax-free in Forum member countries. It is the responsibility of the incumbent to check their tax status

Other Benefits

- Other benefits include family leave (6 days), maternity leave (98 days/ child – three children only) and special leave at the Secretary General’s discretion.

Administrative Information

The closing date for applications is **27 April 2026**. Applications should contain full information on education and career background. Applicants must also provide the names, and contact details of three employment referees.

Interested applicants are encouraged to apply through our website: www.forumsec.org where an information package containing the job description and remuneration details is also available.

General Information on the Pacific Islands Forum is available on the website.