



Seabed Minerals Authority | *Runanga Takere Moana*  
GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS  
PO Box 733 Rarotonga Cook Islands Phone (682) 29193 [www.sbma.gov.ck](http://www.sbma.gov.ck)

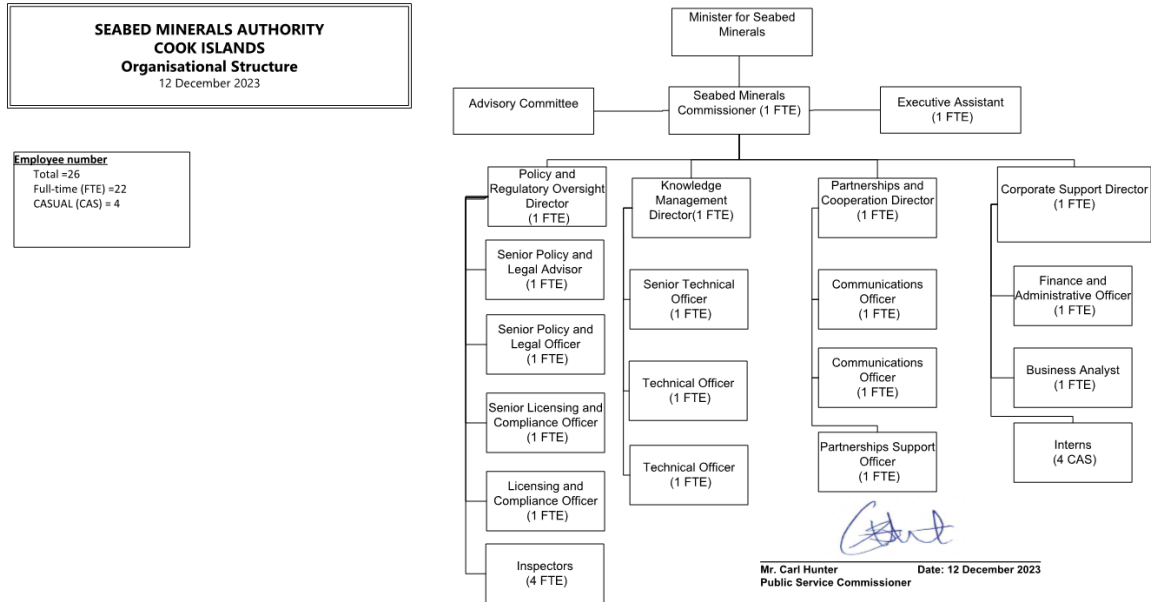
### JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Seabed Minerals Commissioner
Responsible To:	Minister for Seabed Minerals
Responsible For:	Up to 30 employees and technical specialists
Job Purpose:	<p>The Commissioner is responsible for advising the Minister on matters pertaining to the development of the Cook Islands Seabed Minerals (SBM) sector and acting on Ministerial directives to this effect.</p> <p>The Commissioner is responsible for leading the Seabed Minerals Authority (SBMA) and ensuring SBMA operates effectively and efficiently in its implementation of functions identified in the Seabed Minerals Act 2019 (Act), as well as strategic and business plans.</p> <p>The Commissioner oversees the development of the sector policies, standards, and guidelines in line with Government aspirations, and regulating seabed minerals activities in the Cook Islands Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ). This includes supporting the work of the licensing panel during the licensing process, monitoring the performance of License Holders, and addressing non-compliance.</p> <p>The Commissioner oversees the development and building of partnerships and alliances with national, regional, and international stakeholders to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• advance the Cook Islands interests</li><li>• raise awareness and understanding of the sector progress,</li><li>• strengthen the capacity of SBMA and Cook Islanders,</li><li>• promote marine scientific research and</li><li>• ensure the government fulfils its obligations</li></ul> <p>At the national level, the Commissioner must ensure that SBMA works collaboratively with its relevant government agencies and supports the work of the Advisory Committee representing different pillars of Cook Islands society.</p>
Job Classification:	Function: Policy Job band: Jobwise: Leadership
Date updated:	December 2024

## AGENCY VISION

“A sustainable minerals future for Cook Islanders”.

## ORGANISATIONAL STAFFING STRUCTURE



**KEY RESULT AREAS (KRA'S)/OUTPUTS**

KRAs for this position (maximum of 6)	Key Performance Indicators (use SMART principles)
<p><b>KRA 1. Visionary Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide strategic and evidence-based policy advice to the Minister and Cabinet regarding strategies, policies, plans, workforce, and budget to develop the sector</li> <li>• Ensure SBMA's Strategic and Business Plans reflect visionary foresight to achieve the seabed minerals (SBM) sector vision, national aspirations, regional and international commitments</li> <li>• Oversee enhancements to the SBM regulatory framework that regulates, monitors, and ensures the efficient management of the seabed minerals sector</li> <li>• Ensure cultural values, traditional knowledge and scientific research inform evidence-based policies and decisions</li> <li>• Collaborate with the Advisory Committee and other national partners to form alliances, and international partners to advance Cook Islands interests, build knowledge and capacity, and contribute to the development of the global SBM sector as a member state and sponsoring state.</li> <li>• Manage relationships with foreign governments and development partners for shared learning, research, and capacity building</li> <li>• Engage at national, regional, and international levels to advance the Cook Islands interests in SBM development</li> <li>• Nurture collective leadership within SBMA to manage growth and change, and foster an organisational culture that values people, innovation and excellence.</li> <li>• Ensure SBMA is responsive to internal and external threats and shocks.</li> </ul>	<p>Employee is successful when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of advice and support to achieve sector and national goals, through ministerial briefs, meetings, and communications</li> <li>• Lead performance and quality services through strategic and business plans</li> <li>• SBMA operates within a robust regulatory framework</li> <li>• Community and stakeholder feedback inform strategies, plans and actions</li> <li>• Established partnerships to encourage informed decision making based on scientific evidence and cultural values, and to benefit the Cook Islands</li> <li>• Diplomatic relationships established and active engagement to advance Cook Islands interests</li> <li>• Engaged managers leading teams to achieve SBMA's goals and outcomes</li> <li>• SBMA responds effectively to unplanned incidents, events, or crises</li> </ul>
<p><b>KRA 2. Economic Security and Social Prosperity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee the development and implementation of bills, regulations, standards, and guidelines for the sector</li> <li>• Oversee support for the Licensing Panel to effectively assess license applications</li> <li>• Ensure SBM activities comply with the Act through strong monitoring of license holders and maintenance of a Titles Registry</li> <li>• Oversee enforcement of the Act for non-compliance and breaches of licensing conditions and/or environmental permits</li> <li>• Ensure communities and stakeholders are kept well informed of the sector progress and material changes to policy/legislation</li> <li>• Oversee development of the value chain and cost recovery measures in proportion to government's regulatory efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review sector progress, policies, legislation and science to maintain a relevant regulatory framework</li> <li>• Effective support always provided</li> <li>• SBM activities are monitored against legislation, standards, and guidelines</li> <li>• Non-compliance is addressed promptly in accordance with relevant legislation</li> <li>• Stakeholder consultations held for any material changes to policy or legislation</li> <li>• Value chain verified and cost recovery charges incorporate regulatory functions</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the design of a Sovereign Wealth Fund to safeguard future earnings from the SBM sector</li> <li>• Oversee technical projects which determine minerals resources and ore reserves base, and evaluate their value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sovereign Wealth Fund established with Cook Islands values included in design</li> <li>• Mineral resources quantity, types and value identified and calculated</li> </ul>
<p><b>KRA 3. Healthy Marine Environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the development of a SBM research plan with sector priorities</li> <li>• Oversee technical projects that enhance the Cook Islands knowledge base of minerals deposits, geomorphology, and marine scientific research findings</li> <li>• Oversee studies which assess climate change impacts and contributions to the carbon cycle through the value chain</li> <li>• Oversee technical projects that enhance Cook Islands environmental management practices through environmental impact assessments and regional environment management plans</li> <li>• Oversee independent reviews of pre-feasibility studies into SBM operations and industry-led test harvesting results/research</li> <li>• Ensure SBMA’s information management system (IMS) is robust, secure and ensure ease in data retrieval and use</li> <li>• Oversee the development of partnerships with governments, development partners, educational and research institutions and industry to advance Cook Islands research interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research undertaken aligns to the Cook Islands SBM national research plan</li> <li>• Studies grow the Cook Islands knowledge base and foster shared understanding</li> <li>• Studies inform SBM’s carbon footprint, and contribution to mitigating climate change impacts</li> <li>• Studies inform best practice in environment management and reinforce regional solidarity</li> <li>• Reviews inform decision making and further studies required, reinforcing the safe and responsible SBM development</li> <li>• SBMA data and information is secure, and stored for ease in retrieval and use</li> <li>• Partnerships are maintained with relevant stakeholders to support national research aspirations</li> </ul>
<b>PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND ETHICS</b>	
<p><b>Values</b> – Displays the Public Sector Values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees displays consistently the Public Sector Values of Honesty, Impartiality, Service, Transparency, Accountability, Respect, Effectiveness and Efficiency in the workplace.</li> <li>• Act honestly, truthfully and abides by the laws of the Cook Islands at all times</li> <li>• Provides impartial advice and makes decisions based on merit</li> <li>• Serves the people of the Cook Islands faithfully.</li> <li>• Treats people with courtesy and respect.</li> <li>• Takes action and makes decisions in an open and transparent way.</li> <li>• Is able to explain reasons for actions taken and takes responsibility for those actions.</li> <li>• Achieves good results for the government and the people of the Cook Islands in an efficient and effective way.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategic Leadership and Direction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the SBMA Strategic and Business Plans reflect innovative foresight to achieve national aspirations, regional and international commitments.</li> <li>• Ensure the SBMA can adapt and respond to internal and external shocks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic and business plans drive improved SBMA performance and quality service delivery.</li> <li>• Timely preparation of Ministerial briefs or communications, in response to Ministerial queries and requirements.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain collective leadership in managing change within the Ministry.</li> <li>• Foster an organisational culture that achieves SBMA goals and ensures customer value.</li> <li>• Continually monitor and improve systems and services.</li> <li>• Collaborate with other Agencies towards achieving a Public Service of Excellence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SBMA responds effectively to unplanned incidents, events or crisis.</li> <li>• Engaged senior managers leading teams to achieve the SBMA's shared goals and outputs.</li> <li>• Promotion of SBMA and Public Service values.</li> <li>• Regular monitoring and evaluation of policies, procedures and systems for continuous improvement.</li> <li>• Provision of advice and support to other Government Agencies to achieve shared goals.</li> </ul>
<p><b>People Development and Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure workforce plan reflects SBMA strategic plan and purpose.</li> <li>• Ensure workforce development is aligned with workforce plans and improves SBMA performance.</li> <li>• Effectively manage employment relations and disputes.</li> <li>• Foster an organisational culture that embraces workforce diversity, commitment and accountability.</li> <li>• Providing good and safe working conditions for all employees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SBMA workforce plan is developed and implemented successfully.</li> <li>• All Job Descriptions are relevant, evaluated and in alignment with the SBMA functions and organisational structures.</li> <li>• Improved SBMA performance through reporting and survey results.</li> <li>• Regular reviews and feedback on staff performance in line with agreed outputs and performance agreements.</li> <li>• Relevant leadership and career development opportunities for performance improvement or career progression.</li> <li>• Compliance with Government personnel policies and procedures and good employer principles.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Delivery for Cook Islanders</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify customers and plan to exceed customer expectations</li> <li>• Ensure SBMA operations achieve Government priorities and core business functions.</li> <li>• Continually monitor and improve service delivery, customer needs and satisfaction.</li> <li>• Collaborate with partners and service providers to implement strategies and actions.</li> <li>• Ensure innovative service design and delivery to create outstanding customer experiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer groups identified with strategies developed to meet their needs.</li> <li>• Internal operational policies and procedures exist to facilitate achievement of agreed outputs.</li> <li>• Customer satisfaction surveys are conducted with areas for improvement acted upon.</li> <li>• Partnerships developed with relevant stakeholders and service providers to meet customer needs.</li> <li>• Continuous review of services and service delivery to enhance quality and intrinsic benefits for customers.</li> </ul>

**WORK COMPLEXITY – INDICATE CHALLENGING PROBLEMS SOLVING DUTIES TYPICALLY UNDERTAKEN – 3–4 EXAMPLES**

1	Working collaboratively and building alliances with multiple national stakeholders and international stakeholders to advance the Cook Islands interests, and raise awareness and understanding of government's precautionary approach to the development of the Cook Islands SBM sector
2	Leading complex discussions which require respectful, advanced interpersonal and negotiation skills, and developed diplomacy skills to navigate diplomatic relationships, legal and global geopolitical landscapes, to advance Cook Islands interests
3	Negotiating and creating pathways to advance Cook Islands interests with international development partners to support the safe and responsible development of the Cook Islands SBM sector, while appeasing the competing (and conflicting) interests of some
4	Sourcing and securing funding and technical experts to undertake technical studies and assessments on the types and quantity of mineral deposits and reserves, the value chain and environmental impacts and environmental management plans for the SBM sector
5	Securing partnerships and funding to develop a professional and technically skilled workforce to meet the demands and requirements of the different phases and stages of the SBM sector development

6	Promoting marine scientific research to enhance the Cook Islands knowledge base on SBM deposits, their value, and best environmental practices, and effectively communicating data and information to stakeholders to alleviate uncertainty and misinformation relating to the SBM sector development
7	Maintaining professional integrity and accountability during the execution of SBMA functions in adherence with government policies and legislation, budgets and timeframes

## AUTHORITY

<b>Financial</b>	<b>Yes</b> - responsible for effective oversight on the management of finances and ensuring strong internal controls in administering SBMA's annual appropriation including official development assistance received (financial/in-kind), in accordance with the Appropriation, MFEM and PERCA Acts
<b>Staff</b>	<b>Yes</b> - responsible for overseeing and approving all recruitment, suspensions and dismissals of staff employed by SBMA in accordance to Cook Islands Government Human Resources Policies and Guides.
<b>Contractual</b>	<b>Yes</b> – responsible for signing employment, technical assistance, and supplier contracts on behalf of SBMA and government

## FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS – LIST THE EXTERNAL & INTERNAL TYPES OF FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Internal	Nature of Contact
<i>Managers</i>	<b>Lead and direct (Heavy)</b> – strategic planning, resolving major organisational issues, and shaping organisational change through leadership development, better structures, and systems
<i>Employees</i>	<b>Lead and direct (Heavy)</b> – High level leadership influence, communication, and promotion of ongoing professional development
External	Nature of Contact
<i>Minister</i>	<b>Advocate and Negotiate</b> policy direction, approval/endorsement for major policy and funding changes, new partners, organisational changes. <b>Interact</b> to inform, report on progress/challenges as part of no surprises approach
<i>Public Service Commissioner</i>	<b>Promote and represent</b> SBM policy direction with evidence, sound judgement and decision making
<i>NES, MFEM</i>	<b>Negotiate</b> to develop the SBM overarching regulatory regime
<i>MFAI</i>	<b>Promote</b> SBM policy positions to advance Cook Islands interests internationally
<i>OPM (including Marae Moana)</i>	<b>Negotiate</b> SBM contribution to shared goals and national aspirations <b>Promote and represent</b> SBM interests within Marae Moana, through marine spatial planning
<i>Crown Law</i>	<b>Interact</b> on legal issues and legislative development
<i>Other govt. agencies</i>	<b>Promote and represent</b> government's position on SBM sector development
<i>Foreign Governments, International development partners, regional &amp; international organisations</i>	<b>Critical impact</b> to advance Cook Islands interests on strategic SBM sector development at national, regional, and international levels  <b>Advocate and negotiate</b> Cook Islands position in various regional and international fora, to build Cook Islands and sector credibility  <b>Promote and represent</b> government's precautionary and inclusive approach to SBM sector development to gain mutual cooperation
<i>Industry</i>	<b>Promote</b> Cook Islands interests and values through the different phases of the sector
<i>Private sector and civil society organisations</i>	<b>Promote</b> government's precautionary and inclusive approach to SBM sector development to gain mutual cooperation <b>Negotiate</b> terms and conditions of engagement, communications, and knowledge sharing
<i>General Public</i>	<b>Promote</b> the government's position on strategic policy and SBM sector development through communications and stakeholder engagement
<i>Service Providers contractors, technical assistants (TA)</i>	<b>Negotiate</b> terms and conditions of engagement and signing contracts for service provision

## QUALIFICATIONS OR EQUIVALENT LEVEL OF LEARNING

Level of education required to perform the functions of the position. This combines formal and informal levels of training and education.

<b>Essential:</b> (least qualification to be competent)	<b>Desirable:</b> (other qualifications for job)
Undergraduate degree in Science, Law, Management or a related field Postgraduate qualifications in Science, Law, Management, Geology, or a related field	Masters in Science, Law, Management or related field Doctor of Philosophy in Marine Biology, Law, Management, Geology, Environment, or a related field

## EXPERIENCE

The length of practical experience and nature of specialist, operational, business support or managerial familiarity required. This experience is in addition to formal education.

<b>Essential:</b> (least number of years to be competent)	<b>Desirable:</b> (target number of years)
15 years' experience in managing, leading, and directing an organisation to lead the development of a new sector and novel industry to diversify the country's economy	15+ years in a CEO or similar role in an organisation with complex and technical sectoral development needs to diversify a nation's economy

## KEY SKILLS /ATTRIBUTES/JOB SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES

<b>Level of ability required for the job</b>	<b>List Key Skills/Attributes/Specific Competencies</b>
<b>Expert</b> Fully conversant with all applications of skill/knowledge in a range of environments/ would be recognised by others as expert in this skill/knowledge could be expected to train others in this skill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic foresight with sharp intellectual capacity to deal with multiple stakeholders in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environment</li> <li>Proven leadership and management qualities in: strategic and business planning; human resource management; financial management; knowledge and information management; and risk management</li> <li>Leads an inclusive, equitable and Cook Islands centric focus in the development of the SBM sector, understanding the impact of Cook Islands values and traditional knowledge on the SBM sector development</li> <li>Leading a culture of integrity, honesty, transparency, and accountability</li> <li>Works collaboratively with relevant stakeholders in the development of the sector, national policies, regional and international commitments</li> <li>Addresses controversial issues/concerns and competing interests with multiple stakeholders and defends government positions taken</li> <li>Ability to negotiate on a strategic level with international governments, industry, and community stakeholders</li> <li>Proven expertise in the management of minerals resources and the mineral resources value chain</li> </ul>
<b>Advanced</b> Thorough understanding of skill/knowledge and is able to pass on skills in this area/recognised by colleagues as having proven skill/ knowledge in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive understanding of global trends, drivers and challenges that impact the global, regional and national SBM sector development</li> <li>Strong understanding of the Seabed Minerals legislation and other relevant legislation and national policies such as the National Sustainable Development Agenda, Economic Development Strategy and Economic Recovery Roadmap and others</li> <li>Compliance with relevant public sector legislation, including Cook Islands Constitution 1964, Public Service Act 2009, Employment Relations Act 2012, Ministry of Finance and Economic Management Act 1995/96, Public Expenditure Review Committee and Audit Act 1995/96, Official Information Act 2008, National Environment Service Act 2003 and others</li> <li>Demonstrates a strong understanding of the importance of legislation for economic and social development, fiscal management, health and well-being, in order to achieve SBM sector development aspirations</li> <li>Strong understanding and appreciation of the Cook Islands context - language, culture, values, history, and traditional knowledge</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates leadership, energy, drive and courage in striving for better performance with due concern for people, stakeholders and due process</li> <li>• Demonstrates knowledge in evidence-based policy development or advice</li> <li>• Demonstrates sound judgement in managing critical, knowledgeable, and demanding stakeholders who expect high standards of ethical conduct, public policy discussion platforms, and responsive engagement</li> <li>• Excellent communication, diplomacy, negotiation, interpersonal skills, and developed technical expertise</li> </ul>
<p><b>Working</b> Sufficient skill to apply in day to day operations in a fluctuating environment/ does not require supervision for routine tasks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound understanding of the country's political landscape and stakeholders</li> <li>• Sound understanding of the government planning, budgetary and performance frameworks, processes, and key stakeholders</li> <li>• Ability to communicate in conversational Cook Islands Māori and understand cultural nuances to engage respectfully with Cook Islanders</li> <li>• Strong communication, negotiation and interpersonal skills with an appreciation of the technical expertise required to develop the SBM sector</li> <li>• Maintains professional engagement when advising Ministers, Public Service Commissioner and government agencies on SBM development</li> <li>• Recruits and leads high performing managers and teams who inspire each other to innovate, learn and exceed performance expectations</li> <li>• Results driven with innovative systems, processes, and technology</li> </ul>
<p><b>Awareness</b> Limited understanding of skill and knowledge area. Sufficient in order to perform basic tasks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound understanding of government SBM priorities, structures, and systems</li> <li>• Sound understanding of regional and international SBM stakeholder interests and development partner priorities for the country and sector</li> </ul>

### CHANGE TO JOB DESCRIPTION

Changes to the Job description may be made from time to time in response to the changing nature of the Agency work environment - including technological or statutory changes.

**Approved:**

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Seabed Minerals Commissioner

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Date

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Minister for Seabed Minerals

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date