

Work level standards

On this page

[NSW Senior Executive Work Level Standards Band 1](#)

[NSW Senior Executive Work Level Standards Band 2](#)

[NSW Senior Executive Work Level Standards Band 3](#)

NSW Senior Executive Work Level Standards Band 1

Band 1 Senior Executives are the ‘Deliverers of agency services and outcomes’. They are responsible for a subset of an agency’s core functions. With responsibility for several linked activities that need to be coordinated with those managed by other executives, Band 1 executives typically have a high level of expertise in a particular discipline to provide professional advice and/or deliver service outcomes. Band 1 roles work towards broadly defined outcomes and within a framework of the Government sector core values, policies, professional standards and resource parameters. Roles in this band are usually involved in direct people management as well as actively involved in influencing others in the pursuit of specific and set objectives and representing the agency and government authoritatively. However, this band also includes professional and technical specialists and senior executives that manage large contracts or who have a state-wide ‘outward’ focus, but who may not have any or minimal direct staff management responsibilities.

Expertise

Roles within this band require:

- a high level of expertise in a particular discipline, or equivalent expertise across a number of disciplines, to provide professional or technical advice and/or deliver service outcomes, and
- significant expertise in planning for the strategic use of human resources and/or aligning systems and processes to improve workforce diversity, performance and outcomes.

They also require:

- a good understanding of financial reporting, compliance, procurement and contract management requirements, and
- a high level understanding of government objectives and policies and their impact on organisational goals, including identifying risks to key projects/activities and implementing mitigation strategies.

Service delivery/operational roles typically involve managing multifaceted work groups and initiating and developing business unit goals to achieve organisational objectives.

Accountability

Roles are generally accountable for:

- effective leadership and management of a clearly defined area of organisational activity
- achieving specific organisational targets and objectives within established budget and policy parameters and professional/service standards, and
- the programs, functions, projects and resources in their charge.

Within these parameters, the role generally has considerable autonomy in determining how to achieve business outcomes including deciding on methods and approaches, business and project planning and allocation of resources. They ensure a focused approach to achieving organisational outcomes and may also make commitments on behalf of the organisation.

Dimensions

Roles may have leadership or managerial responsibilities for a large and/or multi-disciplinary unit.

Roles usually embrace several related activities that need to be coordinated with other activities within a related function, or other functions not under the control of the role. They actively identify opportunities to work collaboratively with other work areas/agencies to resolve issues and improve service outcomes.

Service delivery/operational roles are fully accountable for a portfolio of integrated services/programs. At this level, incumbents have direct responsibility for delivering entire programs or substantial parts of a large program.

Policies/programs/services managed at this level have direct linkages to agency objectives.

Key Relationships

Roles within this band:

- are actively involved in influencing and convincing others using a fair and considered approach to achieve business outcomes
- have considerable autonomy in negotiating matters related to their area of responsibility, and
- represent the agency and government authoritatively.

These roles also:

- actively build sustainable relationships with internal and external stakeholders
- have routine interaction with the Minister's office and occasionally with the Minister directly

- may lead and motivate multidisciplinary teams of managers and employees, with team outcomes leading to implementation of government policies, and
- regularly engage with stakeholders, including central agencies on sensitive issues, to share or seek information, and/or to advocate a particular position.

The range of stakeholders may be very broad, including staff in the Minister's office, the Minister, customers, commercial providers, business partners, other public sector jurisdictions, community groups, business, professional and employee associations, the media, industrial and legal representatives.

The nature of the engagement varies with the individual role and stakeholder group. Roles typically require:

- detailed appreciation of the subject matter
- sensitivity and understanding in resolving conflicts, and
- the ability to negotiate from an informed position.

Role Context and Environment

Roles embrace a range of activities and operate in a complex, specialised environment, being required to:

- understand the external factors affecting the agency, including emerging social, environmental and stakeholder issues at state, national and international levels
- identify matters of corporate, community or professional concern
- regularly assess and respond to the impact of changes in the operating environment, ensuring a high level of integration with the broader context, including the agency's direction and role within government.

They focus on creating a work environment that can respond to changing needs and circumstances and adjust future plans accordingly.

Work is characterised by the regular requirement to:

- identify and share business process improvements, and
- improve or revise systems or policies, and/or
- to relate precedent to new situations.

Roles may plan and manage specialised projects and large or complex programs consistent with organisational objectives.

The solutions they develop usually have enduring effects which extend outside the immediate work environment.

Judgement and Independence

Roles usually work towards broadly defined outcomes and within a framework of policies, professional standards and resource parameters. However, within this framework they have considerable independence in determining how to achieve their objectives, including deciding methods and deploying resources.

In a work context that is usually complex and dynamic, with many influences, the role is required to:

- give detailed consideration to alternative courses of action
- address problems in the work environment, and
- devise action plans and advocate new approaches.

Roles are required to ensure that their decision-making is based on sound evidence, but when necessary they are expected to make effective judgements under pressure, or without complete information or a source of expert advice being available.

They need to operate with a risk management focus, anticipating and managing risk, which includes being willing to take calculated risks to improve policy or customer delivery outcomes.

Delivery roles are governed by clear objectives and/or budgets. Compliance with legislative and regulatory frameworks is a key feature. Within this context, the role independently manages day to day operations to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery and implements creative and effective solutions.

At this level, most problem resolution is shaped by the framework of established management systems, professional standards, budget parameters or known equipment capacity. However, the dynamic and complex nature of the public sector environment may raise new issues that require new approaches and break new ground for the agency.

NSW Senior Executive Work Level Standards Band 2

Band 2 Senior Executives are 'Deliverers of system outcomes', largely focused on strategic activities which align with government objectives and anticipate future requirements.

They are Executive Directors and heads of smaller operational and service delivery agencies tasked with the executive management of a total function or professional discipline at a whole-of-agency level or for a particular geographical area of NSW. With responsibility for overseeing the implementation of multiple, integrated change initiatives and with delivering outcomes that significantly impact communities, stakeholders and services, these roles require substantial professional/administrative management experience. They also include technical and professional specialists, senior executives that manage significant contracts or those with a state-wide, 'outward' focus impact. Executives in this band take the lead in developing and managing key relationships, often at peak council level. They influence and advocate significant positions and strategies taking into account the Government sector core values, achieving sustainable solutions to complex issues through effective interaction and system collaboration. They are the principal, authoritative source of advice related to a specific area of knowledge or practice upon which the agency and Minister depend.

Expertise

Roles require:

- a high level of expertise in a professional/technical/operational discipline or equivalent expertise across a number of disciplines, and the ability to provide leadership at a professional level, and
- significant experience in resolving complex challenges to drive organisation wide outcomes.

Operational/service delivery roles are expected to have significant experience in managing large and complex resources to achieve key organisational objectives.

They are regarded as the authoritative source of advice in their discipline.

They translate key government objectives into organisational goals and ensure that high quality corporate and business planning incorporating sound risk management principles and strategies are in place to support achievement of these goals.

Roles optimise business outcomes by planning for strategic use of human resources and aligning systems and processes to improve workforce diversity, performance and outcomes.

They implement and promote sound financial management practices and model the highest standards of financial probity.

They monitor procurement and contract management risks and implement effective governance arrangements.

Accountability

Roles are generally accountable for:

- effective leadership and direction of a range of programs, initiatives and/or functions to achieve organisational/government goals and objectives
- strategically distributing organisational resources to optimise the efficiency and effectiveness of activities and functions under their control, and
- programs, functions, projects and resources in their charge and overseeing quality assurance practices.

They usually have a number of direct reports who are senior executives and/or managers responsible for single programs, initiatives or sub-functions, and integrate these inputs into a broader area of organisational responsibility.

Roles are:

- largely focused on strategic activities which align with government objectives and anticipate future requirements, and
- may also have some contributory accountability for the success of broader strategies and operations of the agency.

They may also head up an agency involving delivery of a significant suite of integrated programs and services in most or all regions.

Some may focus on a single program, policy or service delivery area, but if so it is typically significant in terms of organisational, sector or community impact.

Specialist/technical/professional roles are usually responsible for an entire function or discipline or major sub-discipline.

They make significant commitments on behalf of the organisation.

Dimensions

Roles manage a total function or professional or technical discipline at a whole-of-agency/cluster level. They may also head up an agency responsible for delivery of largely related or interrelated programs and services across the State or a large regional area.

At this level, roles are accountable for the integration of a number of functions and make significant contributions to achieving organisational objectives.

A key requirement of service delivery operational roles at this level is responsibility for aligning service lines/operational priorities to government objectives.

Roles are likely to oversee the implementation of multiple, integrated change initiatives with outcomes that significantly impact communities, stakeholders and services.

Key Relationships

Roles effectively lead and oversee stakeholder engagement. They influence outcomes by leading and motivating others to cooperate over priorities, the use of resources, management decisions, policy frameworks and technical concepts and processes.

They may act as a principal representative of the organisation and government and an advocate of key positions and strategies, at peak council level.

Roles proactively develop productive working relationships across the organisation and cross-government. They actively engage and collaborate significantly with a diverse range of stakeholders to develop sustainable solutions to complex issues.

Stakeholders may include the Minister, Commonwealth agencies, customers, commercial providers, business partners, other public sector jurisdictions, community groups, business, professional and employee associations, the media, industrial and legal representatives.

As agency and functional heads, they:

- promote a sense of purpose and enable employees to understand the links between government policy and organisational goals, and

- build a shared sense of direction and a culture of service and performance.

An important feature of the role is the requirement to take the initiative in managing key relationships. This includes:

- anticipating and responding to customer needs
- identifying key stakeholders in matters under negotiation and gaining their support in advance, and
- identifying and facilitating opportunities to work collaboratively, within the public sector and externally, to resolve sector-wide issues and achieve improved outcomes.

While content appreciation is important, the focus of stakeholder engagement is largely on achieving mutually beneficial outcomes through effective interactions.

Role Context and Environment

Roles negotiate and provide persuasive advice in a complex environment of time pressure, divergent views and agendas and conflicting priorities.

To achieve organisational objectives in this dynamic environment, roles are required to:

- anticipate and assess the impact of changes (such as in economic conditions, government policy or technology)
- consider emerging trends and identify long term opportunities, and
- formulate and re-formulate strategies, plans and priorities, underpinned by high quality research and analysis.

The issues these roles are required to manage are complex and may be characterised by any one or combination of the following:

- problems and issues arising frequently
- new methods are regularly required
- resolution of issues breaks new grounds of knowledge, or
- there is no available source of advice or guidance.

Roles are required to consider alternative options to resolve complex problems and develop innovative and effective solutions. They:

- assess environmental factors
- consider the impact of a wide range of complex and interrelating issues, and
- develop contingency plans to mitigate risks to the achievement of government priorities.

Judgement and Independence

Roles work within a broad framework of policies, priorities, and goals, but have a large degree of independence in determining how to achieve results.

These roles:

- create opportunities to enhance the achievement of organisational objectives
- directly influence the development of policies, and
- initiate new developments in policy, program delivery, or professional practice, which establish precedent for the agency.

Roles are accountable for all aspects of program development and planning, including resource negotiation, implementation, effectiveness review and application of professional standards and quality assurance practices.

Roles are often responsible for significant change initiatives and facilitating opportunities to engage and collaborate with external stakeholders that have agency and/or cross-agency impacts.

Band 2 roles are required to undertake strategic planning and strategic decision-making. Delivery roles substantially influence the allocation of resources in the short term, or make medium to long-term commitments where there are defined precedents.

Problem resolution focuses on complex matters which have substantial, strategic impact for government. Identifying the most effective solution requires:

- objective critical analysis, and
- interpretation of data and the conceptualisation and weighing up of alternative approaches.

New issues may demand new approaches and solutions that break new ground for the agency.

NSW Senior Executive Work Level Standards Band 3

Band 3 Senior Executives, Deputy Secretaries of Departments or chief executives of major operational and service delivery agencies, are the 'System Linkers'. With high level cross-agency, cross-sector, national and occasionally international responsibilities, these roles require extensive professional/executive management experience. This Band also includes senior executives tasked with leading the delivery of major services for a particular geographical area of NSW.

Their focus is on strategic, longer term outcomes or particularly sensitive, contentious matters with whole-of-government impacts. These roles negotiate and resolve conflict with stakeholder leadership and manage the parliamentary, political and Public Service/Government sector environments. They plan and oversee public administration for their area of responsibility consistent with the Government sector core values, forge linkages across government and non-government systems and are accountable for impacts beyond agency outcomes.

Expertise

Roles require comprehensive understanding across a range of disciplines at an executive management level to ensure cluster outcomes are aligned to government objectives.

They generally have extensive experience in large service delivery/operational/advisory roles with sector-wide impacts or extensive knowledge of design, review and implementation of programs/policies/regulatory frameworks.

Role incumbents require:

- highly developed understanding of national/global best practice management approaches and implications for their cluster/agency
- high level awareness of funding strategies and financial governance conventions
- capacity to integrate whole-of-government approaches to procurement and contract management into organisational policies.

They have highly developed strategic human resource management and leadership capabilities, engage in strategic workforce planning, align workforce resources and talent with organisational priorities and promote a culture of accountability and support workforce diversity.

Accountability

Roles are generally accountable for:

- a number of integrated functions or operations and managing comprehensive integration and coordination of major line functions in a large and complex organisation or Government Sector wide activity.
- developing effective systems to establish and measure accountabilities across the cluster/agency.

They may also head up an agency responsible for the delivery of a significant range of services across the State.

They have the authority to plan and strategically allocate organisational resources and in some cases may have overall responsibility, under the Secretary for most or all aspects of agency management. They make major commitments on behalf of the organisation.

Roles make a significant contribution to achieving state government objectives and influencing national agendas to the benefit of the state.

Their recommendations and advice are considered to be of critical importance, and their decisions may impact on the operation of other agencies or the whole sector.

They drive strategic executive capability development across the organisation/cluster and establish and promote a culture which encourages innovation.

Roles are usually fully accountable for the programs, functions, projects and resources in their charge and may also share accountability for the overall success of the agency in meeting its objectives.

Dimensions

Roles are responsible for:

- overall leadership of major frontline/staff functions in a large agency or at cluster level
- creating and integrating functions across a diverse range of locations/service lines and clients to align with priorities of the government of the day
- strategic longer term outcomes or particularly sensitive/contentious matters with whole-of-government impacts.

Roles typically lead significant programs that have cross-cluster implications and direct linkage to government priorities.

Role occupants are seen as key contributors to governance and leadership in the cluster and the sector, ensuring regulatory and legislative frameworks are applied consistently and effectively.

Key Relationships

Roles are principal government representatives, with authority to represent the organisation in critical negotiations and pre-empt and resolve conflict with stakeholder leadership groups.

Direct liaison and advice to Ministers is expected, often spanning multiple agency outcomes. Roles also typically deal with functional and operational heads from across the government service and a very broad range of external stakeholders including peak bodies and principal representatives of commercial, industrial, professional and community interests.

They model and communicate the organisation's position with authority and credibility with key stakeholders while engaging employees with the broader mission of the agency/cluster.

Roles require sensitivity and advanced skills to understand the positions of all parties, gain expert input and advice and effectively advocate and steer parties towards a preferred course of action.

A key aspect of roles at this level is a requirement to identify and overcome barriers to collaboration with internal and external stakeholders.

Negotiation often occurs in an environment of conflicting positions, technical, policy and legal complexity and divergent views amongst government's most critical stakeholders.

Role Context and Environment

Roles embrace a range of activities and operate in a complex, specialised environment with state-wide or national or international implications.

Roles are required to understand a range of external factors affecting the agency, and regularly monitor and respond to a changing operating environment ensuring that there is a high level of integration with the current and potential future role of the agency within government.

Work at this level focuses on:

- creating an organisational environment that can respond to changing needs and circumstances, and
- establishing and promoting a culture of continuous improvement to enhance techniques, methods, systems or policies, or to relate precedent to new situations.

Roles adapt or develop new policy, systems, methods and processes or plan and manage specialised projects and large or complex programs. The solutions they develop usually have enduring effects which extend to the whole of the agency or beyond.

Judgement and Independence

Roles at this level may be fully accountable for the agency or may exercise substantial independence in the leadership and management of a significant professional office or division, which may operate separately from other divisions in the agency and which accounts for a substantial proportion of agency operations.

Their major activity is strategic planning and decision-making which involves:

- evaluating the environment
- identifying fundamental issues to be resolved
- issues and risk management, and
- aligning organisational requirements with whole-of-government outcomes.

Roles assure the quality of advice provided to government and services provided to the public by establishing and articulating appropriate frameworks for others.

Role objectives are broadly established through agency or government policy. Although policy guidelines or strategies may include overarching themes, considerable flexibility is available in setting organisational direction and interpretation and adaptation of policies.

Influencing factors are diverse and roles are often required to exercise judgement in the absence of precedent and clarity of direction within an ambiguous context.

While required to work within broad policy, professional, operational and budget constraints, roles also need to:

- rethink paradigms of service
- exercise versatility and innovation to define/redefine strategy, and
- to develop new standards, methodologies and techniques.

Policy experts give guidance on, and make judgements about proposed new standards and new areas of policy or expertise put forward by subject and technical experts. This includes applying lateral thinking approaches and making judgements about the value of alternative sources of advice.

Specialised professional roles are required to challenge, establish or alter standard concepts, theories, objectives or previously formulated requirements.

Problem resolution focuses on complex matters which have substantial, strategic impact for government. This requires a synthesis of facts, critical analysis and interpretation of data and the conceptualisation and evaluation of alternative approaches to the problem.

Existing guidelines or policies may be inadequate in dealing with complex or unusual problems and it is likely that the lack of precedent is a significant feature in the majority of activities pursued.