



5 January 2026

## Notification of Vacancy

### Post Title: Legal Adviser

The Commonwealth Secretariat invites member governments to draw the attention of their citizens to this vacancy and to encourage suitable applications.

All applications will be subject to the Secretariat's competitive recruitment process.

An application pack including a job description and person specification, together with the summary terms and conditions of service applicable to the post, are attached. These documents are also available on the Commonwealth Secretariat's website, <http://thecommonwealth.org/jobs>

In line with the Commonwealth's commitment to gender equality, the Commonwealth Secretariat encourages applications from appropriately qualified women for this post. In making appointments, particularly to senior positions, the Secretary-General also takes into account the representational balance of staff from across the regions of the Commonwealth.

All applications, including those supported by member governments, will be acknowledged. The Commonwealth Secretariat receives an extremely high volume of applications for each role and values each one. You can expect to be notified of the outcome of your application in due course, before the recruitment process concludes.

All applications for the post should include a curriculum vitae and three referees, accompanied by a short covering letter setting out their relevant experience and skills in relation to the competencies and other requirements for the post. All applications should be addressed to Human Resources, Commonwealth Secretariat. The closing date is 4 February 2026 at 17:00 GMT.

Mary Goretti Sendyona  
For: Director Human Resources & Facilities Management Division

Encl.



## APPLICATION GUIDELINES - COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT HEADQUARTERS

The job description and person specification detail information on the directorate, and the educational qualifications, experience and competencies required for the post. A summary of the terms and conditions for this post is also made available to you.

- You must be a national of a Commonwealth Country. You will be required to provide evidence of this if you are shortlisted for the post.
- It is the Commonwealth Secretariat's policy not to employ close relatives of current members of staff.
- All appointments are subject to satisfactory references. You will be required to provide details of three referees, one of whom should be your current or most recent employer and one for your employer prior to that, ensuring that you account for the last two years of your employment history in your application. Referees should not be related to you and should be able to give an assessment of your professional abilities as well as your character. The secretariat reserves the right to take up all references including the current employers during the selection process.
- You will be required to produce evidence of any educational and professional qualifications to support your application on the day of your interview.
- Salary on appointment is £80,672 per annum. This is subject to the deduction of internal income tax (currently aligned with UK income tax rates) and UK National Insurance contributions (from which overseas-recruited Diplomatic staff members are exempt).
- The Commonwealth Secretariat's retirement age is 65. You are expected to be able to serve a minimum 3-year term before your retirement age.

If you wish to be considered for this post, please ensure that you submit your curriculum vitae together with a covering letter setting out your experience and skills in relation to the person specification, competencies and other requirements for the post. Your application should be received no later than 22 January 2026 at 17:00 GMT.

Applications should be made via our online application system at <http://thecommonwealth.org/jobs>.

Thank you for your interest in working at the Commonwealth Secretariat.

The Recruitment Team  
The Commonwealth Secretariat  
E-mail: [HQ-Recruitment@commonwealth.int](mailto:HQ-Recruitment@commonwealth.int)



## JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

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**Job Title:** Legal Adviser - Energy and Natural Resources (ENR)

**Directorate:** Climate Change and Ocean Directorate

**Grade:** F

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**Reports to:** Head, Energy & Natural Resources Section (ENR)

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### General Information

The Commonwealth Secretariat is the principal intergovernmental body of the Commonwealth, responsible for advancing and achieving the shared goals of the association's 56 member governments in promoting democracy, development and respect for diversity. The Climate Change and Ocean (CCO) Directorate is one of three Directorates of the Commonwealth Secretariat. The Directorate brings together work on climate change, oceans and energy and natural resources.

### Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) Section

The Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) Section within the CCO Directorate is responsible for delivering Commonwealth strategic mandates related to sustainable natural resource management and a just and inclusive energy transition, including renewable energy revolution. ENR's focus is to strengthen the Commonwealth's resilience, especially vulnerable member countries such as small states and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) through:

- **Technical assistance** for the sustainable development and effective governance of natural resources (minerals, oil, gas, renewables), energy sector reforms and frameworks, decarbonisation, institutional strengthening and managing the energy transition. Technical assistance projects include strategic advice, policy formulation, sector reforms (fiscal, legal, contractual, regulatory), revenue management and sovereign funds (e.g. sovereign wealth funds and renewable energy funds), energy transition investment and financing training & capacity building.
- **Pan-Commonwealth collaborations** with partners and stakeholders to share knowledge and expertise, work on joint projects and initiatives, and provide capacity building and technical support. Examples include the Commonwealth Sustainable Energy Transition Agenda (CSET) member-led action groups (e.g. energy literacy, youth, geothermal, methane and rural electrification) and the Commonwealth Critical Minerals Alliance (CCMA).
- **Knowledge products** that increase awareness of Commonwealth perspectives (issues, challenges and solutions) and facilitate implementation of scalable energy and natural resource solutions.
- **Development of inclusive, equitable, energy and natural resources international frameworks**



### Job Summary

The Commonwealth Secretariat is a trusted adviser to governments in the complex energy and natural resources sectors. 2026 will mark 60 years of providing technical assistance that has delivered transformative impacts to countries. The Energy and Natural Resources Section (ENR) is seeking a legal adviser with exceptional legal, analytical, interpersonal, communication and project management skills to join our team of international experts.

Reporting to the Head of ENR, the legal adviser will provide advisory and technical services to support Commonwealth countries advance resilient economic development, improve energy security, reduce energy poverty, strengthen social and environmental protections, limit climate change and accelerate Commonwealth renewables revolution to secure an inclusive, just energy transition.

The job involves frequent overseas travel.

The legal adviser will work individually and in multi-disciplinary teams on a portfolio of projects and programmes. The post-holder responsibilities will comprise and include:

#### Technical Assistance

- Provide legal advice to assist member countries safeguard national interests, maximise benefits and effectively manage risks in the energy (*petroleum, renewables*) and mining sectors (*including deep-sea mining and critical minerals*). Activities include:
  - Legal research
  - Review and analysis of sector frameworks and instruments (*institutional, policy, legislative, contractual, regulatory*)
  - Consulting with government officials and stakeholders
  - Legislative drafting (*e.g. statutes, contracts*)
  - Preparing advice and recommendations, in writing and orally
  - Proffer of strategic advice and transactional support (*e.g. supporting negotiations involving complex inter-related policy, legal and commercial issues*)
  - Instructing and supervising external consultants and legislative draftspersons
  - Designing and delivering bespoke/tailored training and other capacity building initiatives.
- Provide strategic advice and legal support to develop resilient low-emission energy systems, accelerate decarbonisation and renewable energy deployment and unlock financing and investment for an inclusive, equitable energy transition in member countries.



### **Partnerships and Resource Mobilisation**

- Manage and build relationships with senior government officials in bilateral technical assistance projects and pan-Commonwealth initiatives
- Collaborate internally and externally to support delivery to member states, including Commonwealth events and initiatives (e.g. *Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM)*, *Ministerial meetings*)
- Strengthen and establish strategic partnerships and initiatives to deliver activities under the Strategic Plan for the benefit of member countries
- Draft funding proposals and support resource mobilisation efforts

### **Thought leadership and Advocacy**

- Conduct expert research, analysis and provide thought leadership on topical issues to support member countries and advance programme deliverables
- Develop knowledge products and facilitate knowledge exchanges (*webinars, case studies, peer to peer learning etc.*)
- Contribute to the development of inclusive equitable international energy and natural resources rules, frameworks etc.
- Contribute to international seminars, conferences and expert group meetings.

### **Project Management and Leadership**

- Contribute to and/or lead engagement strategy, integrated planning, budgeting, and performance management processes
- Contribute and/or lead portfolio of projects including:
  - Defining project parameters in response to government requests for assistance and obtaining project approvals
  - Defining, mobilising and supervising specialist economic, technical and other inputs including from external consultants, as required
  - Coordinating mission preparation, budget planning
  - Providing leadership and effective project management
  - Communicating and managing relationships with stakeholders
  - Monitoring, reporting and evaluating performance

### **Other**

- Adhere to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy.
- Perform any other duties as may be required from time to time.



### Person Specification

**Education:** A first degree and relevant post-graduate degree in law, with a specialisation in the extractive and energy sectors.

**Experience:** Required:

A minimum of ten years of experience at a senior level in the practice of law and in advising governments on the implementation of projects related to the governance of energy and extractives, in particular, the mining industry and/or low carbon systems and developments.

Candidates should be qualified to practice law in a Commonwealth jurisdiction.

*Demonstrated skills in:* policy design, legislative drafting, contract formulation and negotiations in extractives and energy, and engagement with and advising high-level government officials.

*Prior experience in:* an international context, gained in an international or intergovernmental organisation, a government ministry or the private sector.

Desirable:

*Experience in:* renewable energy, power purchase, low carbon energy sources/technologies, energy transition, critical minerals, deep sea mining, environmental policy and regulation.

*Experience in:* public private partnerships, working with Commonwealth governments and working in a developing country setting, particularly in small states and/or African countries.

*Experience in:* finance mobilisation, implementing donor-funded projects supporting national governments.



## Competencies

<b>Respect for Diversity</b>
Works effectively with people from all backgrounds
Treats all people with dignity and respect. Treats men and women equally
Shows respect and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates understanding in daily work and decision making
Examine own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses and does not discriminate against any individual or group
Challenges others to rectify biases in behaviour, systems & process
<b>Communication</b>
Speaks and writes diplomatically and presents in public fora with charisma
Demonstrates professional demeanour and executive presence when meeting stakeholders
Respects confidentiality and works to strengthen the trusted advisor status of the Commonwealth Secretariat
<b>Planning &amp; Analysis</b>
Effectively assesses and advises on major programmes/activities at a divisional level
Balances focus in order to deliver both Commonwealth Secretariat and member states' goals
Ability to interpret incomplete and/or ambiguous information
Effectively analyses and assesses new or uncertain critical situations
<b>Adapting &amp; Innovating</b>
Identifies innovations and opportunities to improve divisional operations/advice and effectively gains buy-in
Evaluates impact of innovations and improvement initiatives
Remains receptive to and encourages innovative ideas from colleagues
Initiates change that will enable programme/team to fulfil objectives in light of changing circumstances
<b>Adhering to Principles &amp; Values</b>
Sets example and embodies Commonwealth Secretariat principles and values
Demonstrably protects the reputation of the Commonwealth Secretariat
Interprets and implements Commonwealth Secretariat principles and values
Ensures that division/programmes operate in a manner aligned to the values and principles of the organisation
<b>Leadership &amp; Development</b>
Takes responsibility for participating in personal professional development opportunities that the Secretariat provides
Directs the energy of the organisation towards a common goal
Provides an example to others by demonstrating moral courage in the face of challenging circumstances



## SUMMARY OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR PAY POINT F

This is a summary of the principal terms and conditions for Pay Point F at the Commonwealth Secretariat. These terms and conditions are non-negotiable. The full terms and conditions are set out in the Commonwealth Secretariat Staff Rules and Regulations which form part of the contract of all staff members.

### A. GENERAL

<b>Contract Term</b>	Appointments are on limited term contracts of usually three years. Contracts may be renewed by mutual agreement subject to fully satisfactory performance, the organisations requirements at that time and availability of funds. The Secretary-General will retain the flexibility to approve or decline extensions as circumstances warrant.
<b>Medical</b>	Appointments are subject to passing a medical examination.
<b>Security Clearance</b>	Appointments are either subject to clearance to the extent that the candidate's own government raises no objection to their suitability for employment or through the provision of a satisfactory Police Check from the candidate's own national police authority.
<b>Probation</b>	All appointments are subject to a six-month probationary period. This may be extended at the Secretary-General's discretion for up to another six months.
<b>Period of Notice</b>	During probationary service, the appointment may be terminated by the Secretariat giving five weeks' notice. Thereafter employment may be terminated by the Secretariat giving six months, or by the staff member giving three months, written notice.
<b>Annual Leave</b>	30 working days per year. Leave without pay will not qualify for the earning of annual leave entitlements.
<b>Pension/Gratuity</b>	The Secretariat contributes 15 per cent of gross salary to either the Commonwealth Secretariat Workplace Pension Scheme or the Commonwealth Secretariat Gratuity Scheme.  On commencement, Staff members are automatically enrolled into the Workplace Pension Scheme. Thereafter, the staff member can select one of the following three options:  Option 1: The equivalent of 15 percent of an individual's gross salary allocated as employer contribution to the Workplace Pension

Scheme.

Option 2: An amount equivalent to 10 percent of the individual's gross salary allocated as employer contribution to the Workplace Pension Scheme and 5 percent allocated to the gratuity scheme.

Option 3: Opt out of the Workplace Pension Scheme and have 15 percent of an individual's gross salary paid into the Gratuity Scheme. This must be done within 30 days following enrolment.

In respect of the Gratuity Scheme each month the Secretariat will pay the equivalent of 15 percent or 5 percent of an individual's gross salary into an interest bearing account. At the end of the contract, the staff member will receive an ex-gratia payment of the cumulative amount including interest. This payment is subject to the Secretary-General's discretion.

Personal contributions to the Workplace Pension Scheme are subject to limits set by HRMC.

Further information on the above schemes can be obtained from Human Resources and Facilities Management Division (HRFM).

<b>Retirement Age</b>	The Commonwealth Secretariat retirement age is 65 years.
<b>Private Healthcare and Dental Cover</b>	The Secretariat provides non-contributory private healthcare and dental cover for all London-based employees, their spouses/officially recognised partners and children. The cover is subject to underwriting conditions
<b>Insurance</b>	Subject to funding, the Secretariat may put in place various insurance schemes for its employees. Where such policies are in place, they shall be subject to the conditions of the underwriters and may change from time to time. Among the insurance policies the Commonwealth Secretariat provides is the Personal Accident/Travel policy. With regard to bodily injury, the underwriters conditions for that policy provide for the following, in respect of pre existing conditions;  Any contributory degenerative condition or disablement (as determined by a Qualified Medical Practitioner) known by the Insured Person to be in existence at the time of sustaining Bodily Injury will be taken into account by Insurers in assessing the level of benefit payable.

Further information on the existing policies would be made available to staff by the Corporate Services Division on request. Staff shall be notified of any changes in the policies as they

become necessary from time to time.

**Internal tax**

In accordance with the Commonwealth Secretariat Act 1966, Staff of the Commonwealth Secretariat are exempt from United Kingdom income tax on their salaries and emoluments on condition that the Secretariat levies its own internal income tax for the benefit of the Secretariat.

Internal tax rates are aligned to UK rates and allowances for the relevant tax year. The rates and allowances are applied proportionately for all staff who join or leave the Secretariat part way through the UK tax year (6<sup>th</sup> April - 5<sup>th</sup> April).

Joining the Secretariat part way through the tax year will result in you being placed on emergency tax code. This includes an amount equivalent to the UK annual tax free allowance divided into equal monthly amounts. By applying this rate, you will effectively receive a pro-rated tax free allowance for the portion of the tax year worked at the Secretariat.

Staff who were liable to pay UK tax prior to recruitment may be entitled to a refund of tax from the Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) if they have previous taxed earnings in the tax year of joining the Secretariat. The employee would need to apply to HMRC to determine this. Staff liable to pay tax in other jurisdictions/countries would need to apply to the relevant tax jurisdiction to establish whether they would be entitled to a refund of tax.

Further information on the above schemes can be obtained from the Secretariat Payroll team via Human Resources.

**B. APPOINTMENT OF BRITISH CITIZENS AND UK RESIDENTS**

**Salary**

£80,672 per annum gross, subject to deductions of National Insurance contributions and Commonwealth Secretariat internal income tax aligned with UK income tax rates. This salary is fully inclusive. (Please refer to section A for further information about internal tax).

**C. APPOINTMENT OF OVERSEAS RECRUITED STAFF (NON UK NATIONALS)**

“Overseas Recruited Staff Member” means an officer of the Secretariat whose stay in the UK is contingent upon their employment with the Secretariat. Should such a staff member acquire or have, while employed in the Secretariat, been entitled to British nationality or residential status in the UK the staff member will cease, from the date of acquisition or entitlement, to be an overseas recruited staff member.

<b>Salary</b>	£80,672 per annum Gross. Please note Salaries for overseas staff will be subject to deductions of National Insurance contributions and Commonwealth Secretariat internal income tax aligned with UK income tax rates. (Please refer to section A for further information about internal tax).
<b>Installation and Termination Grant</b>	Will be provided on commencement and termination of appointment at 7% of net salary.
<b>Expatriation Allowance</b>	Payable on a monthly basis at a rate of 1/12 <sup>th</sup> of 14% of your gross annual salary.
<b>Travel</b>	<p>Upon commencement and termination of service, the staff member, and accompanying dependent family members, as defined in the Human Resource Handbook, will have their air travel costs met by the Secretariat in accordance with the Travel and Expense Policy and procedures.</p> <p>For all journeys, the most direct means of air travel available will be provided. In respect of the accompanying family members the relevant journey must be made within 6 months of the eligible staff member's own journey.</p> <p>If travel is not at the same time as the member of staff, family members will only be entitled to economy class travel, irrespective of length of journey.</p>
<b>Home Leave</b>	The staff member is entitled to home leave once in every three years of qualifying service.
<b>Education Allowance</b>	<p>An education allowance will be payable, provided the dependent* child is in continuing full-time education (school and undergraduate level) at the time of the staff member's appointment. The staff member may be entitled to 75% or £18,706 of admissible costs per child per scholastic year.</p> <p>The admissible cost is subject to a maximum amount of £24,941 per child per scholastic year. Full details of the education assistance policy is available on request.</p>
<b>Transporting Effects on commencement and termination</b>	The Secretariat will pay the cost of transporting by sea a staff member's effects up to 500 cubic feet in the case of a single staff member, and up to 700 cubic feet in the case of a married staff member plus an allowance of 100 cubic feet per dependent child* residing with the head of the family. In addition, up to 15 kilograms of excess accompanied luggage by air will be allowed on joining and termination for the staff member, spouse and each dependent child*. Not more than one automobile may be allowed to be transported. The Secretariat will meet the reasonable cost

of insurance of personal effects. The Secretariat will meet the reasonable cost of insurance of personal effects. For a 20ft container (internal volume of 1,050 cubic ft) the value of goods insured is up to £35,000.

**Expatriation Benefits**

Should the staff member acquire resident status in the UK, the entitlement to expatriate salary and other benefits will cease immediately. Staff claiming these benefits will be required to sign an annual 'residential status certificate'. An improper claim will lead to disciplinary action.

**Subsistence Allowance on commencement and termination**

When taking up an appointment and provided a staff member stays in approved accommodation, subsistence allowance at the appropriate United Nations rate will be paid in respect of the staff member, accompanying spouse (75 per cent) and dependent children\* (50 per cent) for a period of up to two weeks from the date of the staff member's arrival. Thereafter, an additional period of three weeks will be granted. The total stay in approved accommodation is for a maximum of five weeks. Two weeks' subsistence allowance will be paid on termination.

**Diplomatic Immunities & Privileges**

There are no diplomatic immunities and privileges attached to the holder of this post. Staff members are expected to observe the laws of the UK and other countries in which they may work. Any involvement with the police or other law enforcement authorities must be reported.

\* A *Dependant Child* is an unmarried natural child or a legally adopted child, who normally resides with the employee and is under the age of 18 or member of an employee's family under 25 and in full-time education. The Secretary-General has discretion to declare a child who is not the natural or legally adopted child to be a dependent child and to waive the age limits and education requirements where the child is differently abled. "Unless otherwise specified, no more than three children (as designated by the staff member) will be considered as "dependent" for the purpose of these rules.