

Role Description



Role title:	Classification:
Strategy and Communications Manager	SM1
Division/Business unit:	Reports to:
Disability and Specialised Services	Executive Director, Disability and Specialised Services

Role purpose:

The Strategy and Communications Manager is a senior leadership role within Disability and Specialised Services and is accountable to the Executive Director, Disability and Specialised Services for:

- Providing strategic leadership and authoritative communications and change management expertise to Disability and Specialised Services (DASS).
- Leading the development and implementation of complex communications strategies supporting DASS policy initiatives, service reforms and stakeholder engagement activities.
- Delivering enterprise-level strategic communications, culture transformation and change leadership across DASS.
- Providing authoritative, trusted advice to Executives, and leads the design and delivery of complex, high-risk communications and engagement strategies that support major reforms, service transformation and whole-of-division priorities.
- Shaping DASS culture, driving strategic alignment and ensuring communications and engagement approaches enable successful delivery of major programs, policy initiatives and priorities.

Key outcomes and accountabilities:

1. Lead and shape division-wide and whole-of-department strategy aligned to government priorities and reform agendas, act as a senior advisor to Executives, providing authoritative guidance on high-risk, sensitive and complex issues and influence decision-making at Executive level by integrating communications, stakeholder insights and reputational considerations.
2. Lead communications and engagement, major projects, transformation programs and strategic initiatives, ensuring alignment with government objectives and delivery milestones, and partner with senior leaders to embed strategy, communications and engagement into program design, implementation and evaluation and to provide strategic oversight and assurance across multiple concurrent high-profile initiatives with significant public, political and sector impact.

Lead and drive culture and engagement strategies that strengthen organisational capability, performance and alignment to DHS values alongside designing and implementing initiatives that support culture transformation, workforce engagement and change readiness across DASS and providing leadership on change management frameworks, ensuring sustainable behavioural and organisational change outcomes.
3. Lead responses to complex, sensitive and high-risk issues, including those with reputational, political or community impact and provide strategic direction on media, stakeholder and crisis communications, ensuring coordinated and effective responses, anticipating emerging risks and proactively positioning the department through strategic messaging and engagement.
4. Build and maintain high-level strategic relationships across government, the disability sector and community stakeholders to lead engagement approaches that influence, inform and build trust with diverse

Key outcomes and accountabilities:

stakeholders, including peak bodies and national partners, and represent the department in cross-government and sector forums where required.

5. Lead, develop and mentor a high-performing team, fostering innovation, accountability and continuous improvement to build organisational capability and culture leadership across the DASS and drive a culture of collaboration, inclusion and high performance.
6. Establish and oversee frameworks to measure the effectiveness of project, policy, communications, engagement and culture initiatives alongside ensuring alignment with government policy, regulatory requirements and best practice standards, driving continuous improvement through data, insights and evaluation.

Note: Any other responsibilities in line with the classification level of the role as assigned by Line Manager and/or the Department. The responsibilities as specified above may be altered in accordance with the changing requirements of the role.

Special conditions:

- Prior to being employed, the successful applicant will be required to obtain a National Police Check if new to the Department and a satisfactory Employment-related Screening Check where this is required for the role.
- Must hold a current Australian issued Driver's Licence (equivalent to minimum class 'C' – South Australian), which must be maintained. Incumbent must be willing and able to drive all government vehicles within their licence classification during the course of their duties.
- After hours' work is required.
- Intrastate and interstate travel may be required.

Key Relationships/Interactions:

- Executive Director, Disability and Specialised Services (line manager)
- Director, Communications and Engagement (operational management relating to Communications and Engagement)
- Disability and Specialised Services executives and management
- Communications and Engagement leadership and staff
- Other DHS senior executives and management
- NDIA/NDIS Communications Leads

Budget/Delegations:

Human Resource Delegations Level 4 / Financial Authorisations Level 4

DHS expectations and values: (Organisational contribution)

- Understand and follow workplace safety initiatives, identify hazards and contribute to a safe working environment, as well as follow procedures to manage and minimise risks within DHS.
- Follow the principles of a sustainable working environment by following departmental greening initiatives.
- Model ethical behaviour and practices consistent with the SA Government Code of Ethics for Public Sector Employees, Values and DHS Working with Children and Young People Code of Conduct.
- Understand and follow the principles and practices of the Information Sharing Guidelines for Promoting Safety and Wellbeing (ISG) and the DHS Appendix to the ISG to facilitate appropriate information sharing practice within the context of this department.
- Treat all individuals with fairness and respect, regardless of their race, culture, language, gender (including gender diversity), religion, sexuality, ability or age.
- Promote and maintain inclusive workplaces that embrace diversity and actively support difference.
- Demonstrate zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, or disrespectful behaviour towards or by clients, colleagues, contractors or stakeholders.

Role specific capabilities: (Skills, experience, knowledge, attributes)

- **Strategic Leadership and Influence** – Shape direction at Executive level and influence organisational outcomes.
- **Transformation and Change Leadership** – Lead complex change and culture uplift initiatives.
- **Program and Project Integration** – Embed communications into major reform programs.
- **Political and Environmental Awareness** – Navigate complex government and stakeholder environments.
- **High-Level Judgement and Decision Making** – Operate effectively in ambiguity and high-risk contexts.
- **People Leadership** – Build capability and drive high performance.

Qualifications:

Desirable: Bachelor's degree in public policy, communications, journalism, public relations or other relevant field.

Key leadership competencies and expected behaviours at this classification:**Promotes strategic thinking and change**

- ☒ Creates a shared vision and mission for the BU.
- ☒ Inspires and influences others to assume ownership BU goals.
- ☒ Leads teams in aligning their priorities within a broader organisational and political context.
- ☒ Champions sustainability and long-term improvement.
- ☒ Communicates effectively and leads others in times of change.
- ☒ Identifies and analyses difficult and complex problems that have organisation-wide impact.

Achieves objectives

- ☒ Delivers results and improvements to meet BU objectives by translating ideas into concrete plans.
- ☒ Anticipates future organisational needs, risks and uncertainties, and aligns systems and resources to meet these needs.
- ☒ Makes well-informed and timely decisions that affect the BU, even when information is incomplete and ambiguous.
- ☒ Interprets and abides by the laws, regulations and policies determining BU activities.
- ☒ Takes accountability for team/BU success and manages others to achieve outcomes.
- ☒ Monitors the performance of the team/BU, considers feedback information and seeks continuous improvement.
- ☒ Integrates technical expertise into the BU to achieve its objectives.

Leads business excellence

- ☒ Sets clear standards, manages risks, setbacks, and implements continuous improvement initiatives.
- ☒ Sets challenging but achievable goals/targets with relevant metrics based on market trends, developments and legislative changes to ensure business needs are continually met.
- ☒ Provides clear and timely recognition, promptly addresses under performance and lifts performance through coaching.
- ☒ Inspires innovation and ongoing learning, and plans strategically to meet BU goals.
- ☒ Drives outstanding customer service by enabling team members to anticipate client needs.
- ☒ Empowers others to use resources effectively.

Builds genuine partnerships

- ☒ Considers the impact of decisions and priorities on other business areas, adapting approach to meet organisational goals.
- ☒ Approaches negotiations with an understanding of key issues and is able to clearly communicate reasoning and justification to facilitate mutually beneficial solutions.
- ☒ Facilitates constructive discussions to mediate conflict and disagreements. Encourages diversity of thinking and differences of opinion.
- ☒ Identifies and develops key strategic relationships and networks to achieve goals, increase departmental knowledge and create communication channels.
- ☒ Proactively develops effective strategic relationships, networks and partnerships with internal and external stakeholders.
- ☒ Models inclusive behaviour and tailors communication style to meet the audience's needs.

Models personal drive and professionalism

- ☒ Maintains the highest level of integrity to embed ethical practice and organisation's values into the culture.
- ☒ Raises and challenges important issues constructively, and backs own judgement and actions confidently when challenged.
- ☒ Demonstrates resilience in responding to changing directions. Modifies approach, processes and procedures to fit situational changes within the BU.
- ☒ Demonstrates a high level of self-awareness and acts as a role model by openly communicating strengths and development needs.
- ☒ Champions a workplace that values respect, diversity and individual differences to build a culture of inclusivity.
- ☒ Establishes expectations and models best practice wellbeing and safety behaviours.

Approval:		
Assessed by: Lazaras Panayiotou, Human Resources Business Partner		Date: 20/04/2026
Approved by: Kirsty Delguste, Executive Director, Disability and Specialised Services		Date: 20/04/2026