

In-house legal: A force to be reckoned with

2019 In-House Legal Counsel Survey

July 2019

“In-House legal: The hidden jewel of the organisation”

General Counsel, Private Sector

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Welcome

In February 2019 we invited members of the New Zealand Law Society for in-house lawyers (**ILANZ**) to participate in an in-depth survey examining practices and priorities for in-house legal teams.

Introductory comments from ILANZ

The purpose of the survey was to:

- Increase our understanding of the current profile of the in-house legal profession;
- Provide an insight into the current and aspirational priorities for in-house legal counsel; and
- Provide information to assist in-house teams with benchmarking.

It is our pleasure to now present this report which delivers on each of these goals.

A characteristic of this survey was the combination of an online survey distributed to all ILANZ members and a series of face to face interviews to follow up and further explore issues that were identified.

Our thanks to ILANZ members who completed the survey and particularly those who gave up further time to participate in the interviews. This report is richer and more nuanced as a result of your participation.

Our partnership with Deloitte has added a further dimension to the survey both in terms of the mechanisms and processes used for the survey but also in the identification of trends and emerging themes. We appreciate their collegiality and generous support.

For us, success will be when we hear and see references to this survey report from our members and know that it is delivering new insights for in-house legal teams. We look forward to engaging with you further on the findings from the report and to building further insights in the future.

**Sian Wingate, President
ILANZ**

Introductory comments from Deloitte

We were delighted to assist ILANZ with this survey.

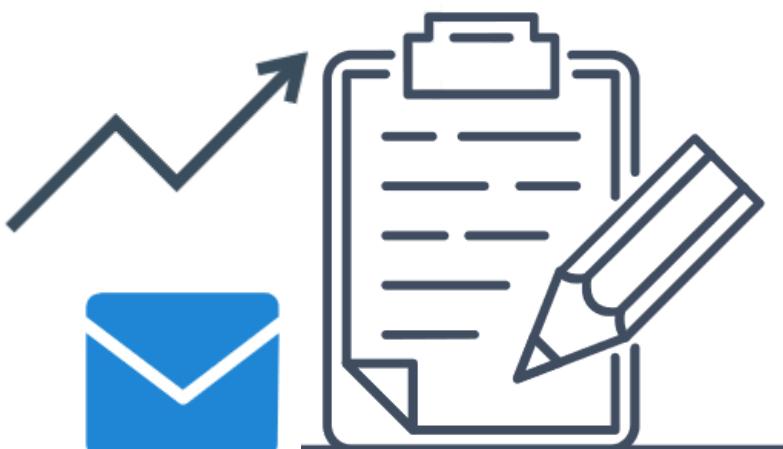
The level of change occurring in many professions, organisations and communities as a result of the digital revolution is immense. These changes, along with society's increasing expectations of organisations, both public and private sector, present a fantastic opportunity for in-house legal to help shape the future of New Zealand.

Hopefully this report (and future versions) will serve as an excellent reference point for in-house lawyers to assist discussions about the structure, challenges and future of in-house legal.

Thank you to the ILANZ committee for involving us in the survey and the in-house legal professionals that completed the survey and met with us to discuss the survey results.

Deloitte values the great relationship we enjoy with the legal community.

**Jason Weir, Forensic Partner
Deloitte**



Executive summary

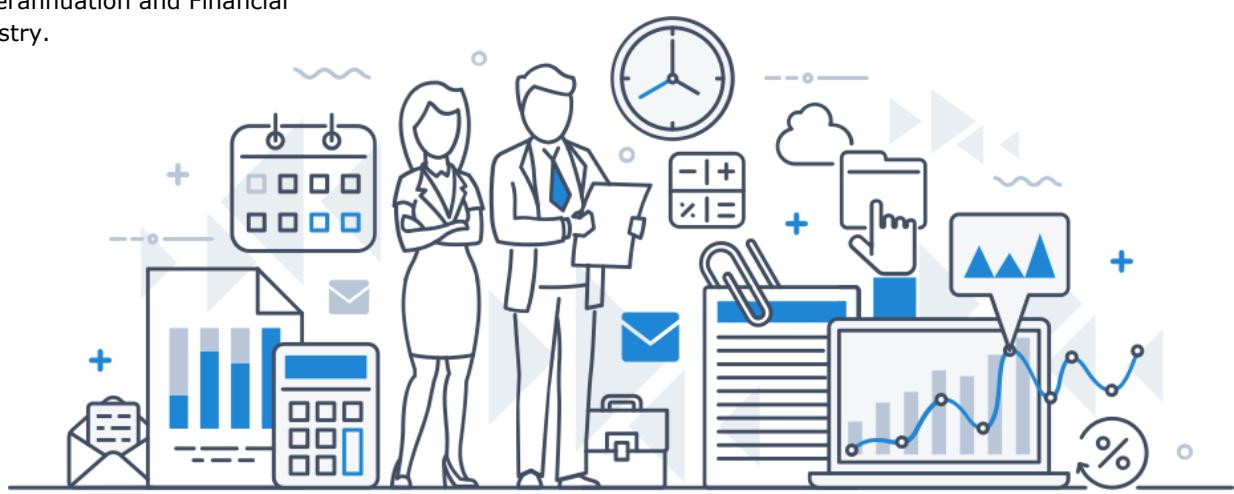
The number of in-house lawyers continues to grow. In the five years since 2014, there has been a 30% increase in in-house lawyers compared to a 15% increase of all lawyers practicing in New Zealand. Wellington has the highest concentration of in-house lawyers with 49.3% of practicing lawyers being in-house lawyers. Auckland has the highest number of in-house lawyers.¹

In-house legal is the growth engine of the legal profession in New Zealand and is now very much a force to be reckoned with. There are many factors for this, perhaps some of the most important factors are that we live in an increasingly complex world and the power of regulators and consumers has noticeably increased. Senior managers, their directors and the entities they serve face heavier penalties, whether it be via enforcement action, regulation, civil litigation and/or brands and results negatively affected by reporting in traditional and/or social media, so the demand for skilled lawyers to help navigate through these and other matters has increased. These forces were highlighted by Australia's Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry.

The objective of the survey was to understand some of the key drivers in the in-house legal profession. What do in-house lawyers spend their time on, what issues do they see on the horizon, how prepared are they for disruption and what skills, both legal and non-legal, will be required in the future.

The results reflect the views of 544 in-house lawyers of all levels (set out in Part One) including 122 Chief Legal Officers (**CLOs**) (or equivalents). The CLOs also provided answers at a team level (set out in Part Two). The key themes in the survey were then explored in greater detail with 22 in-person interviews with ILANZ members.

In-house legal is the growth engine of the legal profession in New Zealand and is now very much a force to be reckoned with



The key themes highlighted in this survey are:

Findings from all in-house lawyers

Approximately half the people surveyed work in in-house legal teams of 10 people or less. In-house legal team are overwhelmingly centralised. There is an expectation that in-house lawyers will become more strategic over the next two years.

Interestingly, despite this expectation that in-house lawyers will become more strategic, the people surveyed ranked financial and business acumen as the lowest non-legal skill. Many of the people interviewed were surprised by this with one CLO reporting "*If lawyers were hybrid accountants, they would be the most valuable in the [entity]*".

Structure of in-house legal teams

There was a noticeable increase in the numbers of CLOs reporting to CEOs and/or the Board compared to two years ago. The survey findings indicate that the growth in the in-house legal community will continue, with approximately 30% of CLOs reporting that they expect to increase the number of full-time equivalent staff.

Concerns and priorities of CLOs

Regulation and compliance was identified as the area the CLOs surveyed were most concerned about (by far). The other main areas of concern were workload / resourcing, risk and data privacy.

The top priority for the next 12 months is ensuring senior

management and/or the Board are informed of significant legal issues and their implications.

Compliance and ethical issues including data privacy and security were identified by CLOs as the second highest priority.

Some of the people interviewed expressed a view that their organisations did not place much value on compliance and regulatory matters.

Deloitte's experience across many organisations is the cost and impact of downstream regulatory action and remediation means that regulation and compliance is now top of mind for many directors and senior management. Further, more sophisticated organisations are focussed on turning compliance into strategic advantage.

Management of internal legal teams

The CLOs surveyed reported the top two management practices for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the legal team were outsourcing specialised work to law firms and insourcing work previously completed by law firms.

42% of the CLOs surveyed reported they had not used any alternative staffing arrangements in the last 12 months. 47% did report using contract lawyers or secondments. There was very little use of other arrangements.

External legal support

The most common reason for outsourcing legal work was expertise. For example, in areas such as employment and labour,

many in-house teams choose not to retain employment law specialists but to access specialist expertise as required. Comments from interviewees reflected that in-house legal roles often, though not always, require a breadth of knowledge and understanding rather than the depth of specialisation.

CLOs reported a high level of satisfaction with external legal providers.

Disruption

Approximately half of the respondents felt prepared for disruption. However many of the people interviewed thought that disruption was yet to really affect the in-house legal profession and many of the senior leaders we spoke to were taking a "wait and see approach".

One area Deloitte is already seeing strong growth in is the use of machine learning in document reviews, including investigations, discovery and regulatory notices, particularly following the endorsement of the use of machine learning in various Commonwealth courts (referred to as Technology Assisted Review or TAR). The growth in document/data volumes means the traditional approaches, including the use of keyword searches, are increasingly insufficient, so lawyers require more efficient approaches.

Deloitte's expectation is that in-house legal teams will increasingly look to leverage digital platforms in order to drive improvements in efficiency, consistency and 'client' experience.

Setting the scene

The survey obtained insights from over 500 ILANZ members via Deloitte's DTermine™ survey service along with 22 in-person interviews.

This survey is the first of its kind in New Zealand, focusing solely on the in-house legal profession in New Zealand. The survey asked 3,000 ILANZ members to provide insights into the profession. 544 ILANZ members responded to the survey (approximately 18%) in February 2019. These respondents provided a good representation of ILANZ members geographically, by level (from those with limited post qualifying experience through to Chief Legal Officer) and by industry.

The survey results were supplemented with 22 in-person interviews from across the country in April and May 2019 and a panel discussion at the annual ILANZ conference in May 2019, to further explore some of the themes arising from the survey.

In this report we have set out the results from all members in the first section (Part One).

We have then grouped the questions and results from the CLOs as follows (Part Two):

- Structure of in-house legal teams
- Concerns and priorities of in-house legal teams
- Management of internal legal teams
- External legal support
- Technology and disruption

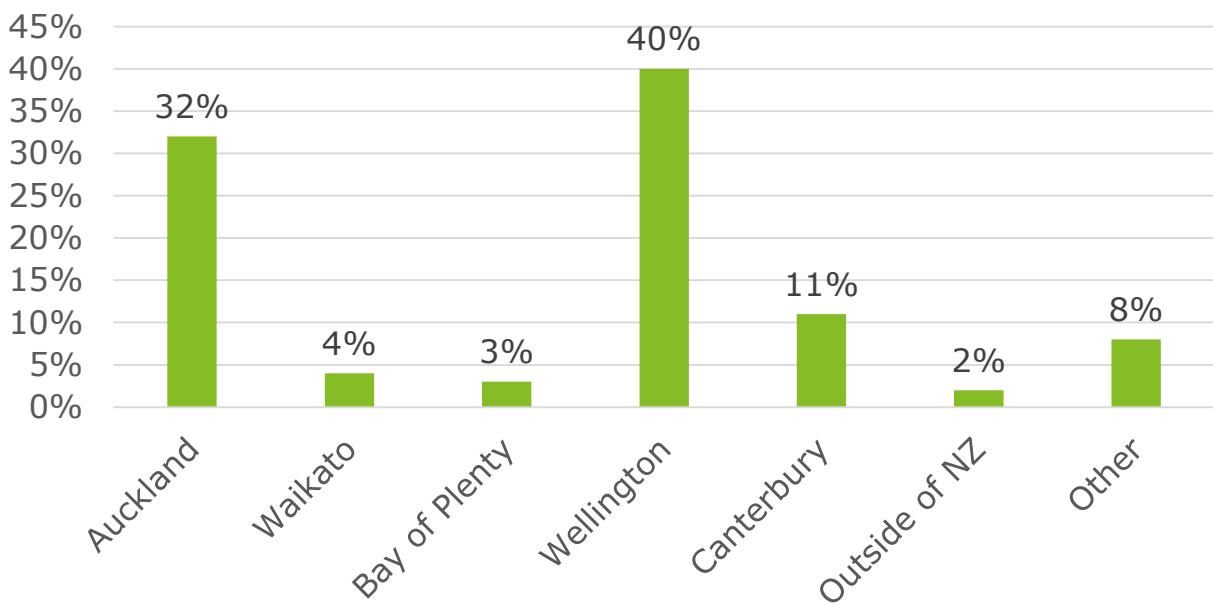
Note: for the purposes of this survey, the most senior person in the legal team is referred to as CLO (when singular) or CLOs (plural) regardless of the actual job title.



Demographics of ILANZ members surveyed

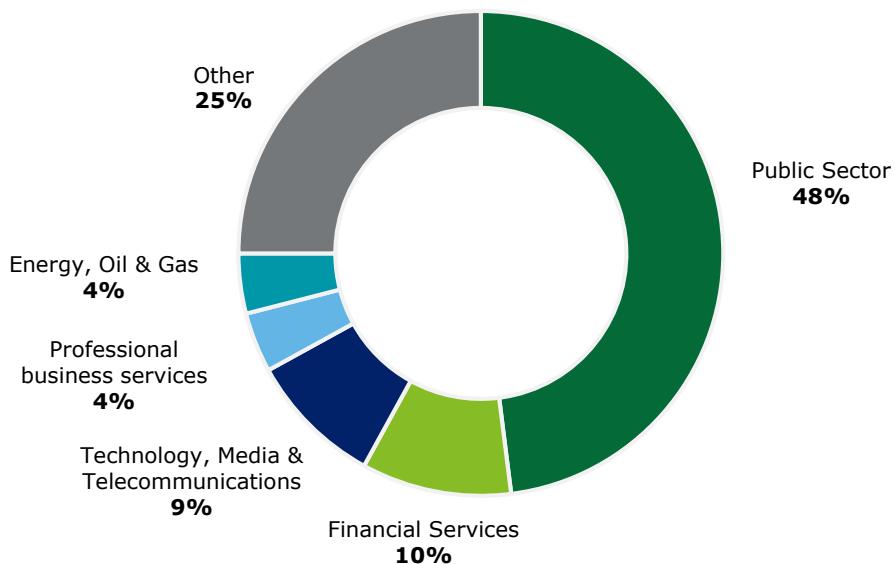


Where are you primarily located?



Q

What is the primary industry that your organisation operates in?

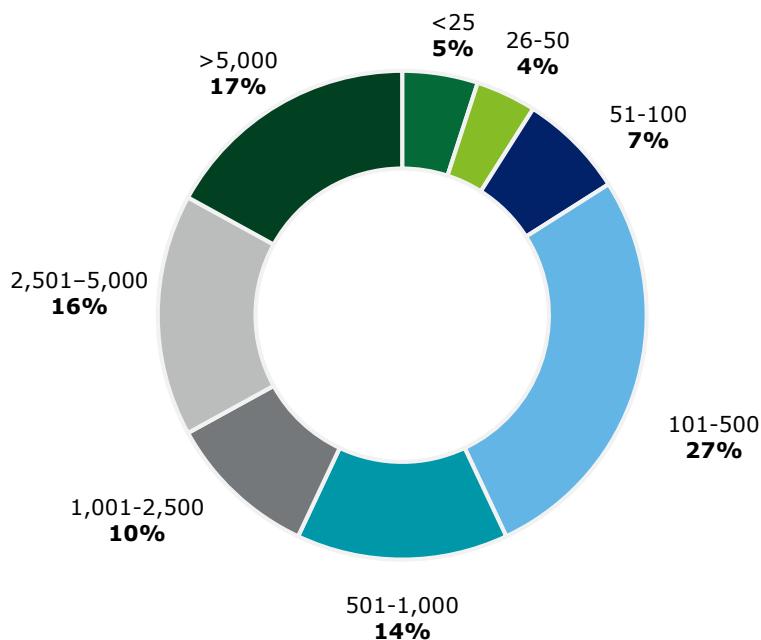


48%

of the people surveyed work in the Public Sector.

Q

Approximately how many employees are there in your organisation?

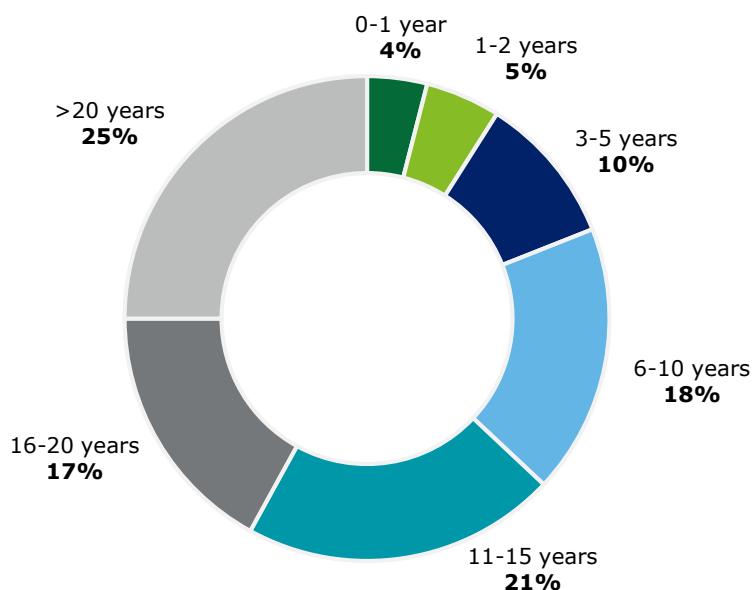


43%

of the people surveyed have 1000 or more employees in their organisation.

Q

How many years post qualifying experience (as a lawyer) do you have?

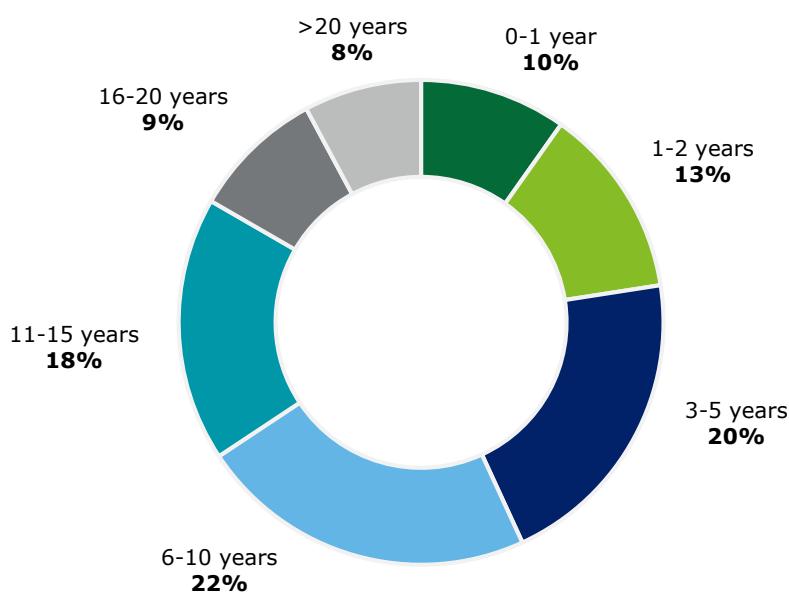


63%

of the people surveyed have more than 10 years post qualifying experience.

Q

How many years have you worked as an in-house lawyer?



35%

of the people surveyed have worked as an in-house lawyer for more than 10 years.

Part One:

Insights from all people surveyed

Perspectives from all survey respondents regarding the provision of in-house legal services

This section sets out the answers provided to questions posed to all in-house legal professionals. The later sections set out the answers to the questions posed only to CLOs.

The majority of the people surveyed work in centralised in-house legal teams of 1 to 10 people.

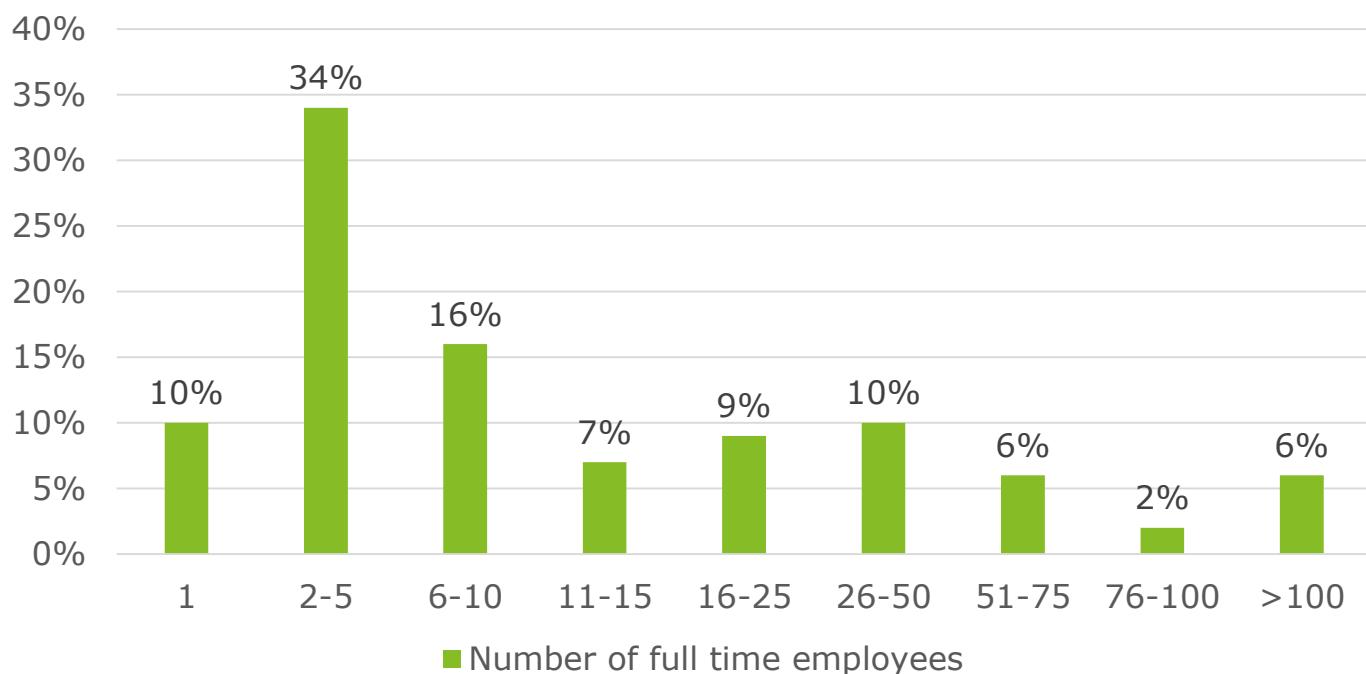
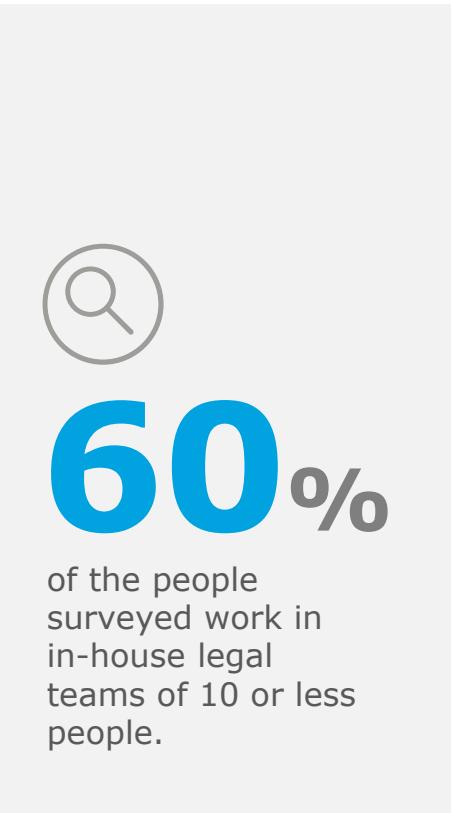
The people surveyed expect to move from "support / functional" to becoming more "strategic" over the next two years. Many of the people we interviewed identified that they are keen to move to being more strategic, but are "too busy" responding to day to day issues to do so.

Interestingly, despite the desire to become more strategic, in-house lawyers ranked "financial and business acumen" as the lowest ranked non-legal skill needed.

Size and structure of the in-house legal team



How many full time equivalent employees are employed in the legal team at your employer (including you)?





“I want a team that is fully aware of the strategic issues of the business ... so they are giving advice in that setting”

General Counsel, Manufacturing

“If lawyers were hybrid accountants, they would be the most valuable in the [entity]”

General Counsel, Public Sector

“... love to spend more time in strategic space – getting ahead of risk”

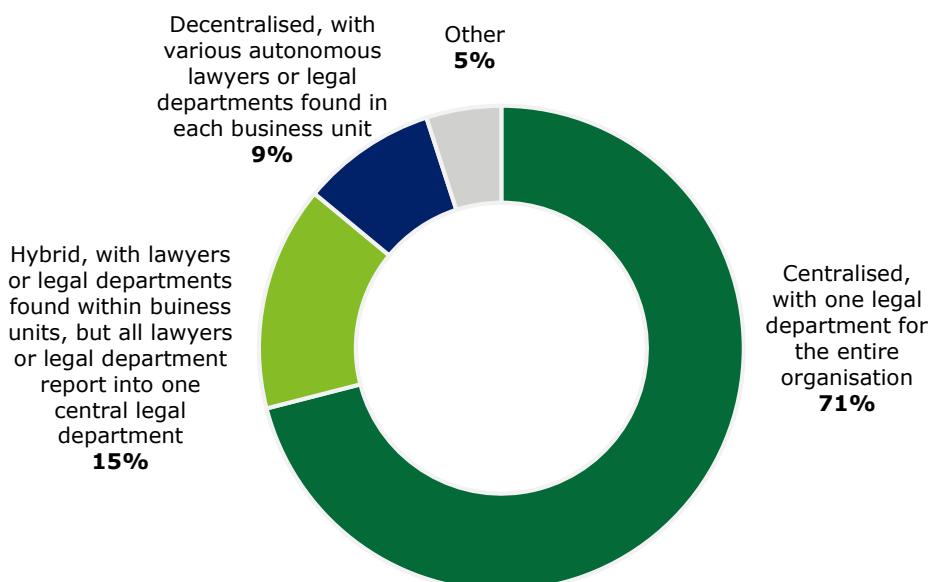
“... embedded in key projects, assigned and involved in project team meetings gathering intelligence, identifying risk”

CLO, Public Sector



Q

How would you describe the structure of the legal team at your employer?

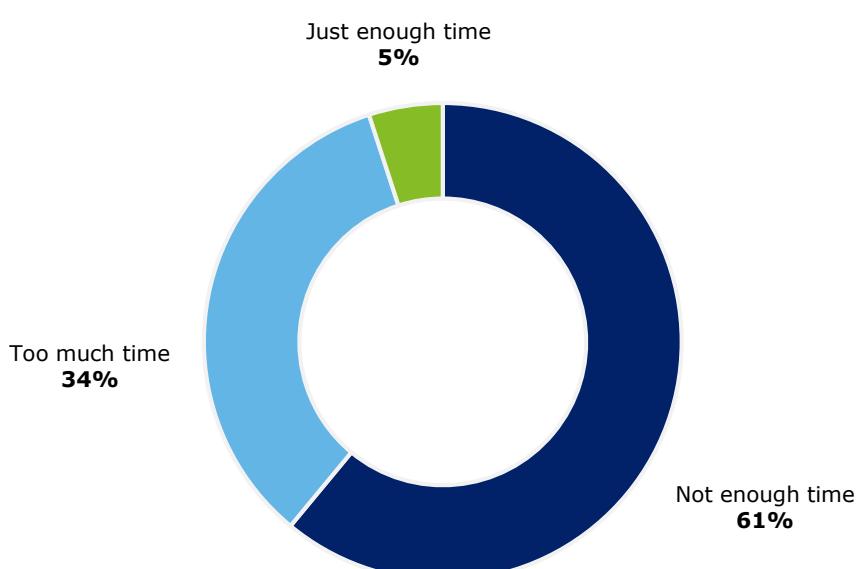


71 %

of the people surveyed work in centralised in-house legal teams.

Q

When thinking about the time that members of your legal department spend with the business units or in the front line of the business, would you describe this as?



61 %

of the people surveyed think the legal department do not spend enough time with the business units or front line of the business.

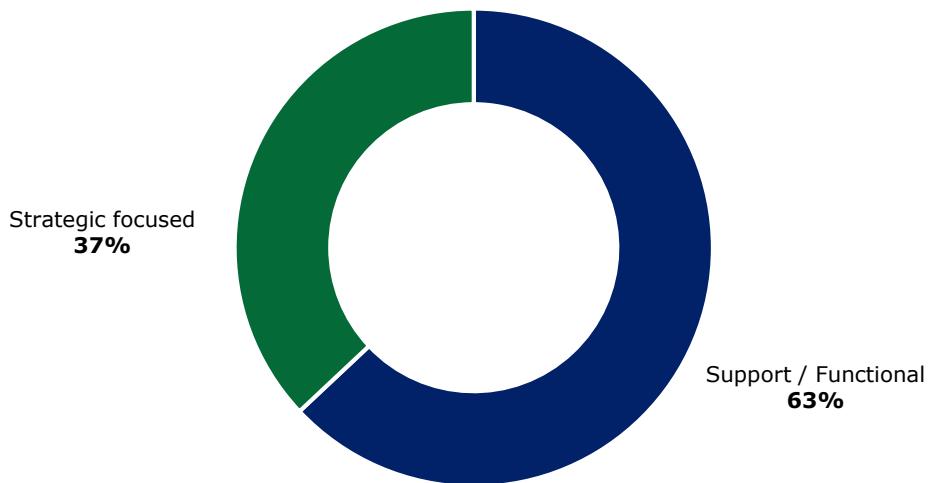
Focus of the in-house legal team



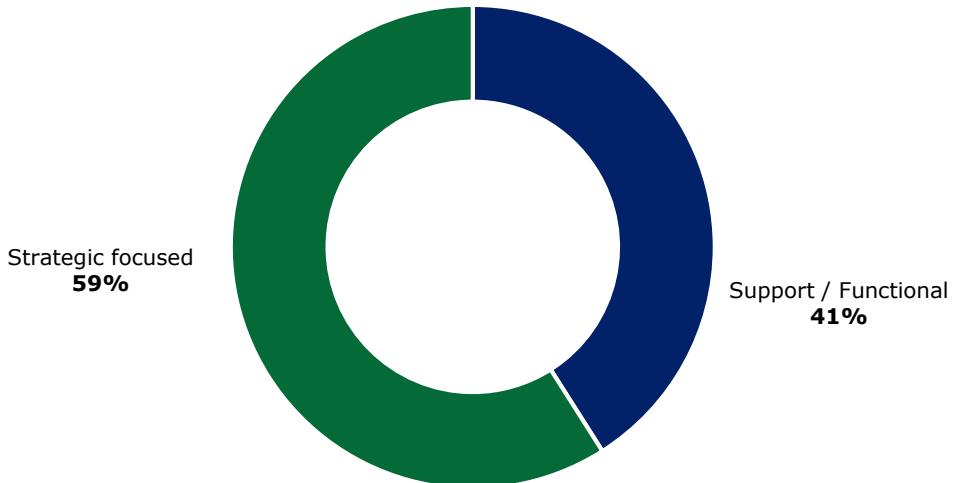
To what extent is your legal team "strategic focused" or "support / functional"?

In-house legal expect they will move from primarily "support / functional" (where the legal team is consulted on routine items to obtain legal advice and/or approval) to becoming more "strategic focused" (where the legal team is considered to be part of management and provides input into business strategy).

Past 2 years



Next 1 - 2 years

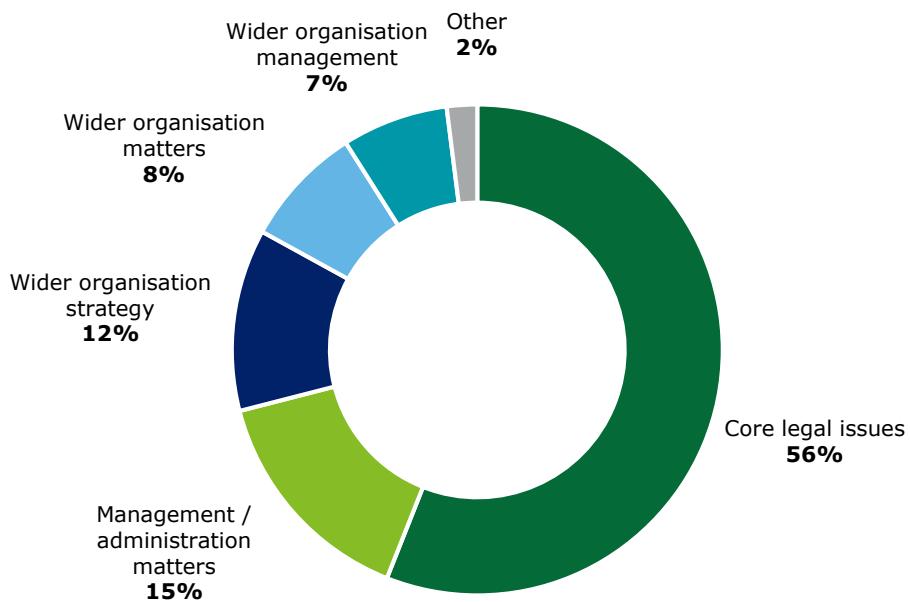


59%

of the people surveyed foresee the role of the legal department in the organisation to be strategic focused in the next 1-2 years compared to 37% in the past 2 years.

Q

Where do you spend your time during a typical month?



56%

of in-house lawyers' time is spent on core legal issues.



Skills of the in-house legal professional

Q

What legal skills do you consider will be most important for you to be able to perform your role in the next 2 years?

The top 5 legal skills selected were:

1 Issue identification

2 Issue Triage

3 Legal instruction

4 Drafting

5 Other



1st

People surveyed identified “issue identification” as the most important legal skill.

Q

What non-legal skills do you consider will be most important for you to be able to perform your role in the next 2 years?

The top 5 non-legal skills selected were:

1 Communication skills

2 Analytical skills

3 Leadership and talent management

4 Business planning and management skills

5 Financial and business acumen



1st

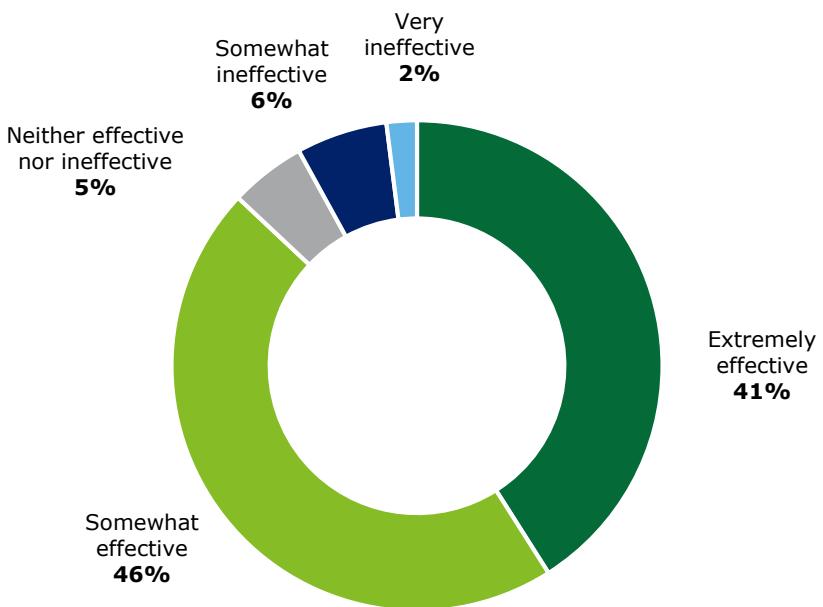
People surveyed identified communication skills as the most important non-legal skill.

Effectiveness of the in-house legal team

Q

How do you think your organisation would rate the effectiveness of your legal department?

Many of the people interviewed explain that they obtained this belief through a combination of informal feedback (anecdotal and immediate task or project feedback) and formal mechanisms e.g. 360 input to performance reviews and internal surveys. (See page 22 for further details).



41%

of people surveyed believe their organisation would rate the legal department as extremely effective.

Part Two:

Insights from CLOs

Structure of in-house legal teams

There has been significant growth in in-house legal over the last ten years in New Zealand and the CLOs surveyed indicate that this growth is set to continue, with a third of CLOs reporting that they expect their team to increase in size over the next 12 months.

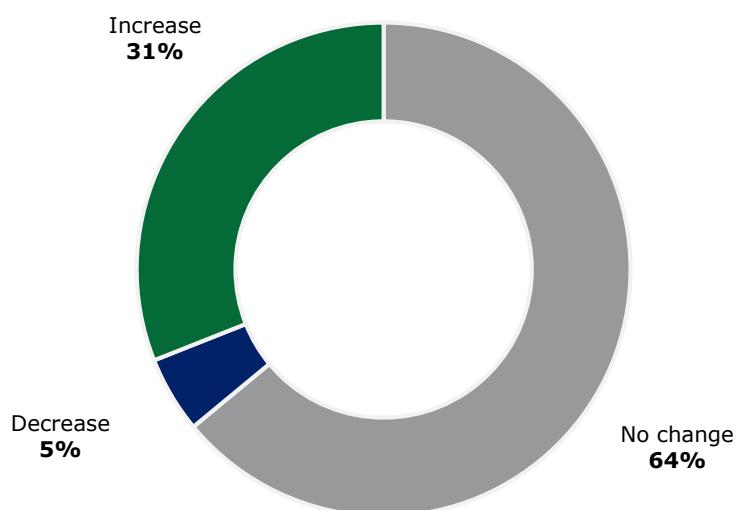
Perhaps underlining the importance and growing maturity of the in-house legal profession, 53% of the CLOs surveyed said that they report to the CEO or Board compared to 44% two years ago.

While most of the CLOs surveyed reported they sought feedback on the performance of their legal teams, there was a sizeable minority (17%) that reported they did not seek feedback. Legal teams that are not seeking feedback may be missing an important source of information to improve the performance of the in-house legal team.

Growth in in-house legal teams



Over the past 12 months, has the number of full time equivalent employees in your legal department changed?



95%

of CLOs surveyed reported that their in-house legal teams has remained the same size or grown over the last 12 months.



“Attitude not size impacts on effectiveness”

General Counsel, Private Sector

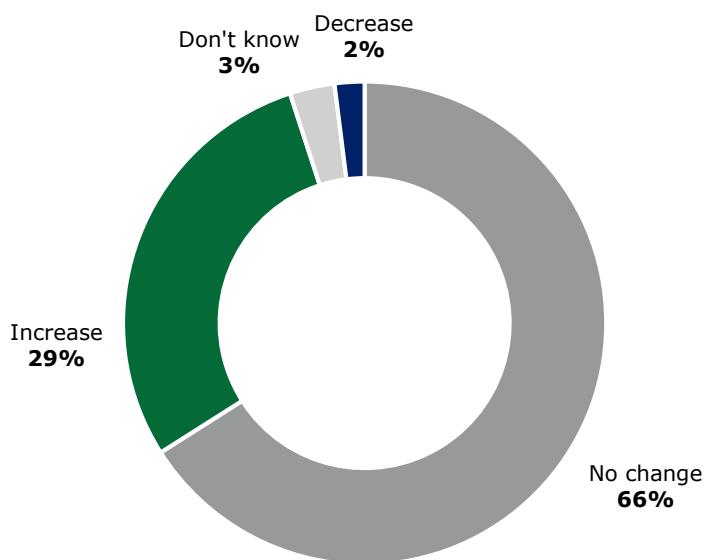
“The significant growth of the role of the in-house legal function has led to a more established and recognised role for in-house lawyers within their organisations. It is no longer unusual to find a member of the legal team as an integral part of a project team or as an influential voice at the executive team or board level. The shift from a support/functional role to a strategic focus is largely being driven by the in-house profession”

Caroline Sigley, ILANZ committee member



Q

Over the next 12 months, what changes are forecast with respect to the number of full time equivalent employees in your legal department?



95%

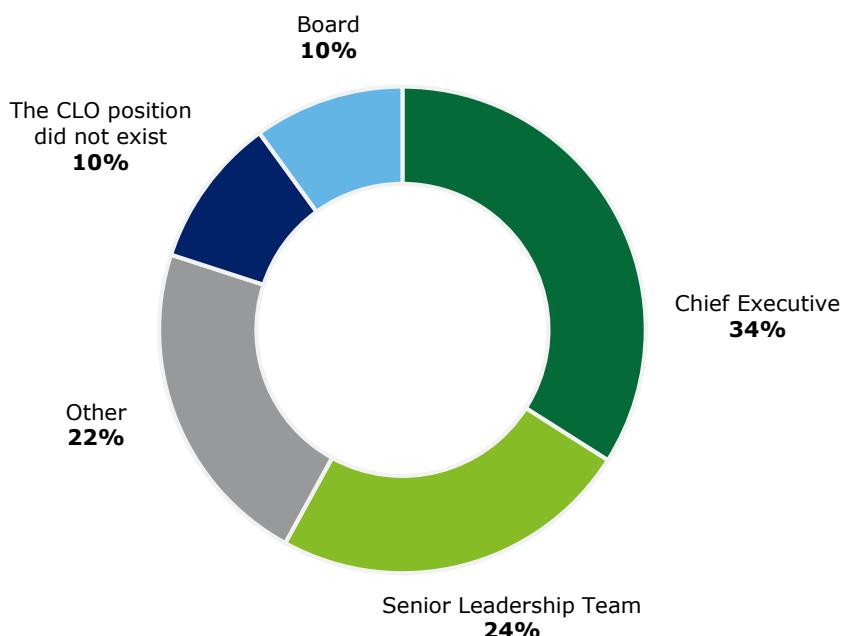
of CLOs surveyed expect their in-house legal teams to be the same size or grow in the next 12 months.



Reporting lines of CLOs

Q

To whom did the CLO report to 2 years ago?

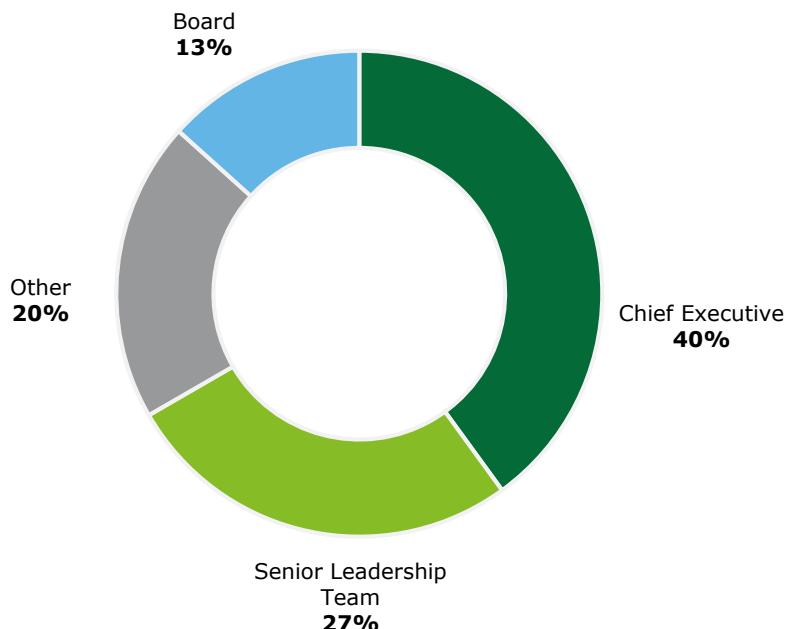


44%

of CLOs surveyed reported to the Board or Chief Executive 2 years ago.

Q

To whom does the CLO currently report to?



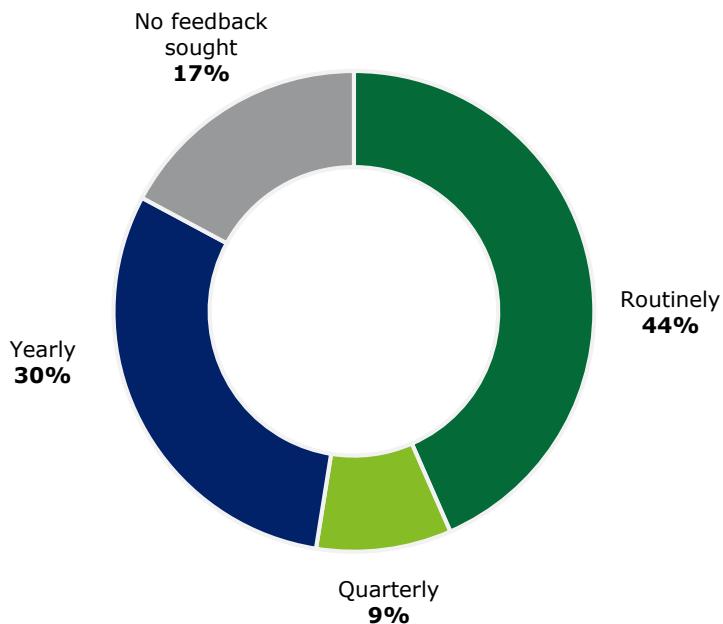
53%

of CLOs surveyed currently report to the Board or Chief Executive.

Feedback on legal team performance

Q

How often do you seek feedback on your team's performance?

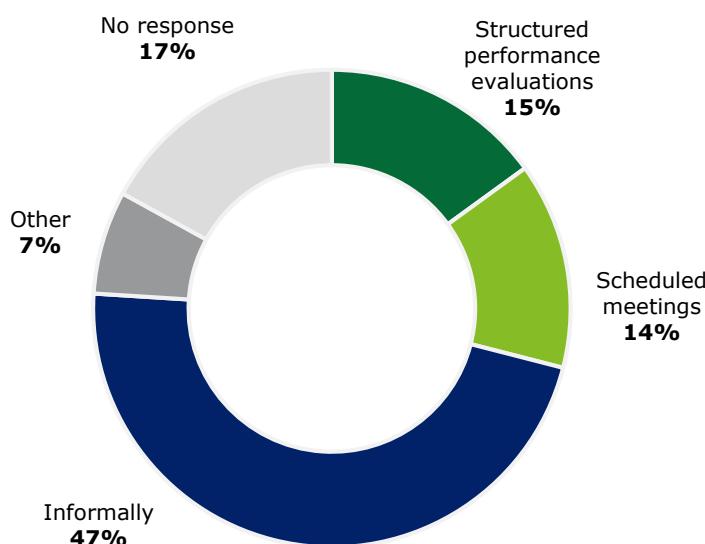


44%

of CLOs surveyed reported that they routinely seek feedback on their team's performance.

Q

How is feedback obtained?



47%

of CLOs surveyed reported that feedback is obtained informally.



"The rising use of data and evidence by organisations is also having an impact on the approach taken by in-house legal teams. An evidence based approach is increasingly important not just in reporting the value of the work performed by in-house teams but also in informing internal team organisation and strategy"

Jeremy Valentine, ILANZ Committee member



Concerns and priorities of CLOs

The CLOs were asked what issues they were concerned about (free text responses). Regulation and compliance was by far the most dominant issue that the CLOs surveyed were concerned about. Some of the people we interviewed explained that while they were concerned about compliance, the time legal teams were spending on these matters was low. Some of the people interviewed explained that this reflected the low level of priority the organisations placed on compliance issues. Others explained that while it was a significant concern, compliance issues, if well managed, don't require much time.

Other common concerns were risk, data and privacy and the workload/resourcing (presumably of the in-house legal team).

The CLOs were also asked to rank their priorities for the next 12 months. Ensuring senior management and/or the Board are informed of significant legal issues was identified as the highest priority. Compliance and ethical issues including data privacy and security were identified by CLOs as the second highest priority.

Concerns

Q

What issues are you and your legal colleagues most concerned about?

CLOs were able to provide free text responses to this question. Four dominant themes emerged:

1 Regulation and compliance

2 Workload and resourcing

3 Managing risk

4 Data and privacy



1 st

Regulation and compliance was by far the most dominant issue CLOs and their legal colleagues are concerned about.



“Compliance is always going to come down to the last piece at the end of the day – it is unsexy and underfunded”

General Counsel, Financial Services

“Priorities show what we think (we) should be doing (compared with) what (we are) actually doing”

CLO, Public Sector



Priorities

Q

Please rank the priorities of your legal department over the next 12 months

The top priorities selected were:

- 1** Informing senior management and/or Board of significant legal issues and implications
- 2** Compliance and ethical issues including data privacy and security
- 3** Maintaining awareness of activities that could have legal implications for the organisation
- 4** Staying well-informed of legal developments
- 5** Input into strategy



1st

Informing senior management and/or the Board of significant legal issues and their implications was ranked the top priority over the next 12 months.



“The cost and impact of downstream regulatory action and remediation means that regulation and compliance is now top of mind for many directors and senior management. More sophisticated organisations turn compliance into strategic advantage”

Catherine Law, Risk Advisory Partner, Deloitte

“Controlling risks around data and privacy is becoming increasingly complex given the explosion in data volumes, types of data and locations (e.g. mobile, cloud, BYOD and digital platforms) and increasing levels of regulation and risk in holding data. The first step to managing this risk is mapping what data the organisation holds, the risks and regulatory requirements involved in holding the data and then developing a strategy”

Faris Azimullah, Cyber Partner, Deloitte



Management of internal legal teams

The CLOs surveyed reported that contract management, being a trusted adviser and managing external lawyers together account for over half of the time spent by the lawyers in their legal teams.

Well over half the CLOs surveyed reported that the costs of the in-house legal team are not charged to the business units. A further 27% reported that the costs of the in-house legal team were included in an overhead charge to the business units. Only 11% of CLOs reported that the costs of their in-house legal teams are charged directly to the business unit.

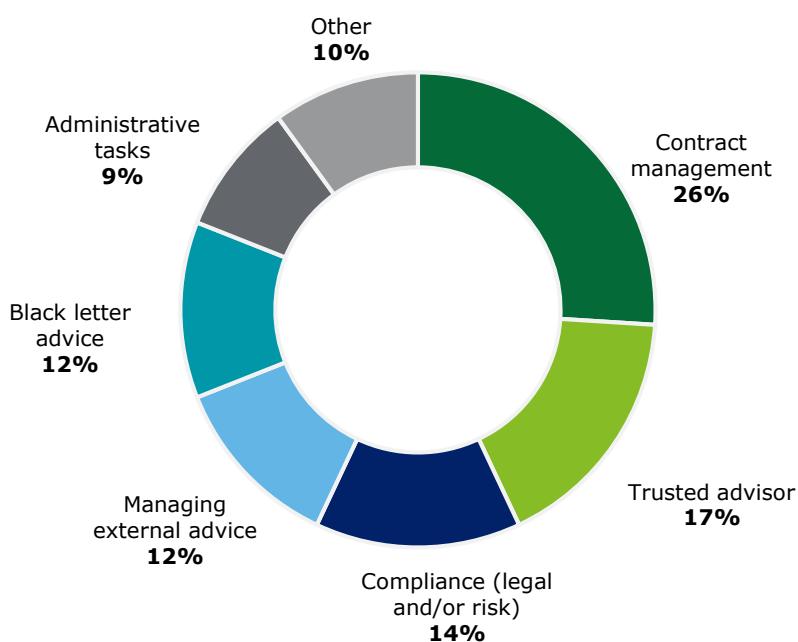
The CLOs surveyed reported the top two management practices for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the legal team were outsourcing specialised work to law firms and insourcing work previously completed by law firms. We discuss the reasons why CLOs outsource legal work to law firms in the next section.

42% of the CLOs surveyed reported they had not used any alternative staffing arrangements in the last 12 months. 47% reported using contract lawyers or secondments. There was very little use of other arrangements.

Use of in-house lawyers' time



Over the past 12 months, how much of your legal department's (lawyer only) time was dedicated to each of the following areas?



26%

of a legal department's time was dedicated to contract management.



“The method of accounting for the costs of in-house legal raises an interesting issue – on the one hand having a direct cost for using in-house legal may provide a useful tool in controlling demand, however the flip side, is it may risk creating a barrier to in-house legal being consulted.

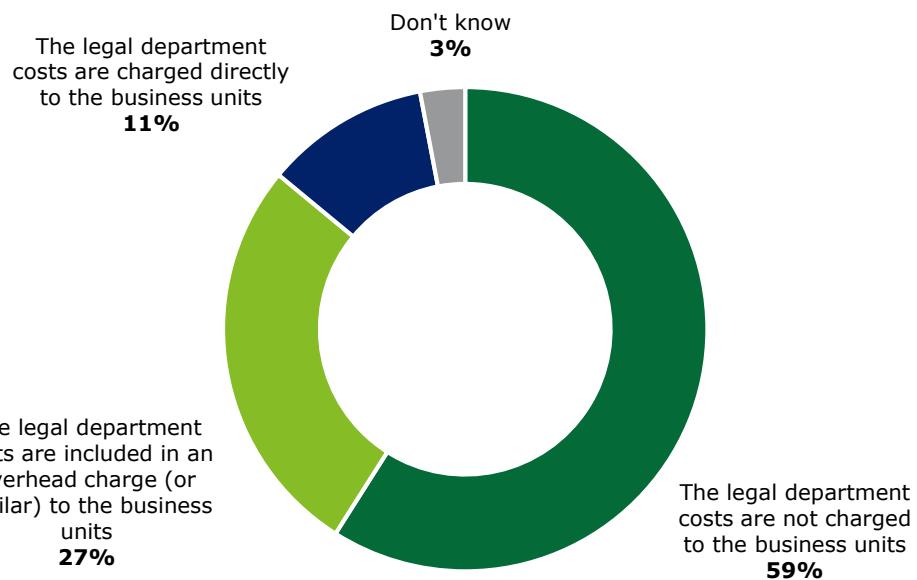
Many of the lawyers we interviewed who had addressed demand management (i.e. controlling the level of work coming into the legal team) had done so by having tight policies about what issues needed legal input (e.g. contracts over \$X amount, etc). We are keen to explore this issue of demand management further in the next survey”

Lorinda Kelly, Forensic Partner, Deloitte



Q

How is the cost of your legal department allocated for internal (cost) accounting purposes?



59%

of CLOs surveyed reported that legal department costs are not charged to the business units.



Q

What management practices are you employing to improve efficiency / effectiveness in your legal department?

Interestingly, the most common management practice employed to improve efficiency / effectiveness in the legal department was outsourcing specialised work to law firms, whereas the second most common management practice employed was in-sourcing work formerly performed by law firms or other service providers.

1 Outsourcing specialised work to law firms

2 In-sourcing work formerly performed by law firms or other service providers

3 Shifting work to non-legal resources

4 Shifting work from large traditional law firms to mid-size and/or mid-market law firms (less expensive)

5 Requiring early case assessments for matters handled internally

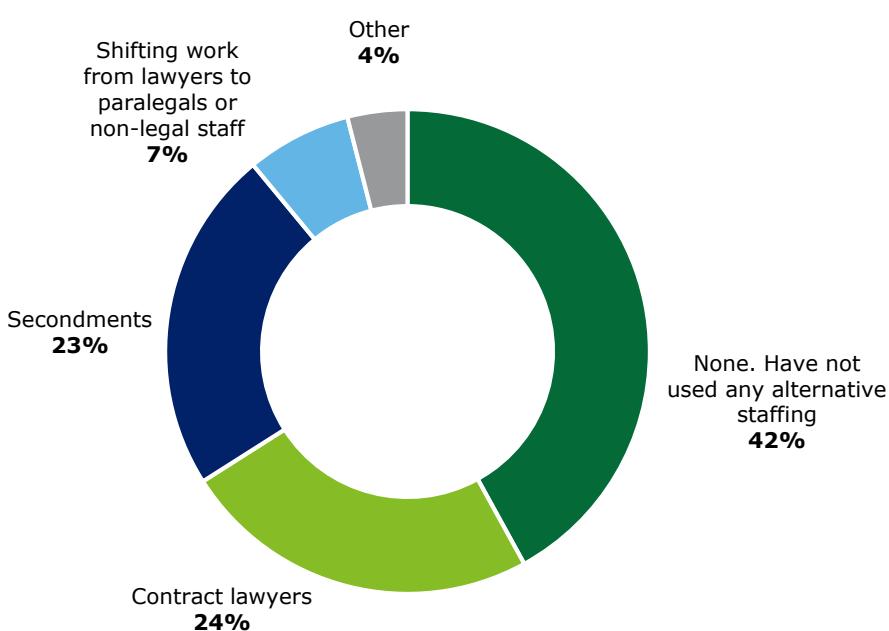


1 st

the top management practice employed to improve efficiency / effectiveness in the legal department was outsourcing specialised work to law firms.

Q

What alternative staffing arrangements have you used in the last 12 months?



42%

did not use any alternative staffing arrangements in the last 12 months.

External legal support

Despite the significant growth in in-house legal over the last ten years in New Zealand, in-house legal still outsource a considerable level of legal work to external law firms, with 30% of the CLOs surveyed reporting external legal spend in excess of \$1 million over the last two years.

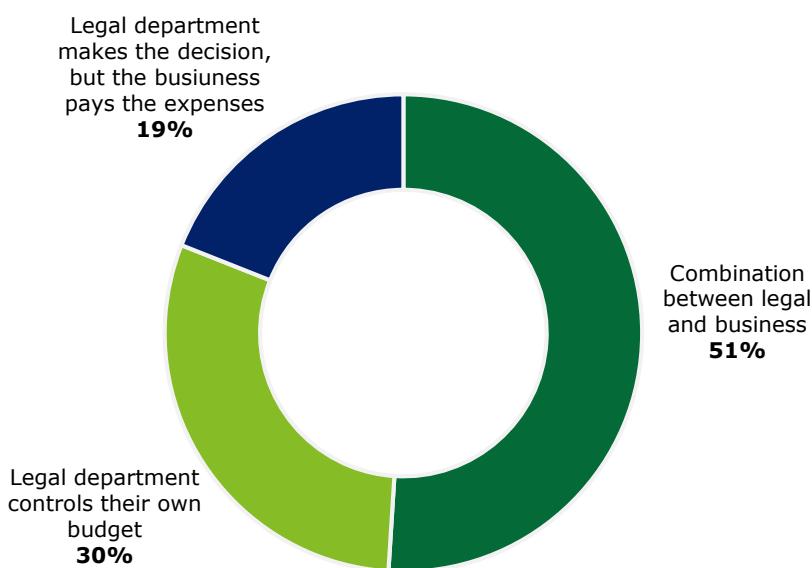
The key reason identified by the CLOs surveyed for outsourcing legal work to external law firms was expertise. Several of the people we interviewed likened themselves to a "general practitioner", dealing with a wide and significant range of issues and understanding when it was best to engage a "specialist". This does not mean that in-house lawyers are only undertaking routine work, rather that they are constantly triaging and prioritising what is best dealt with internally and where external input provides value.

The CLOs surveyed reported a high level of satisfaction with their external legal providers. However, some of the people interviewed expressed some frustration about external legal providers, particularly around the commerciality of the approach taken by the law firms they worked with. Many of the people interviewed stressed the need to truly partner with legal providers to get the best value from the relationships.

External legal budget

Q

Who controls the external legal budget in your organisation?



51%

of CLOs surveyed reported that a combination between legal and business control the external legal budget.



“It’s like a doctor, you have a broad range but you aren’t going to do a surgery, but you know when someone needs something looked at”

We will send work to a law firm where
“... there is a crunchy executive-level issue where there needs some scrutiny”

General Counsel, Private Sector

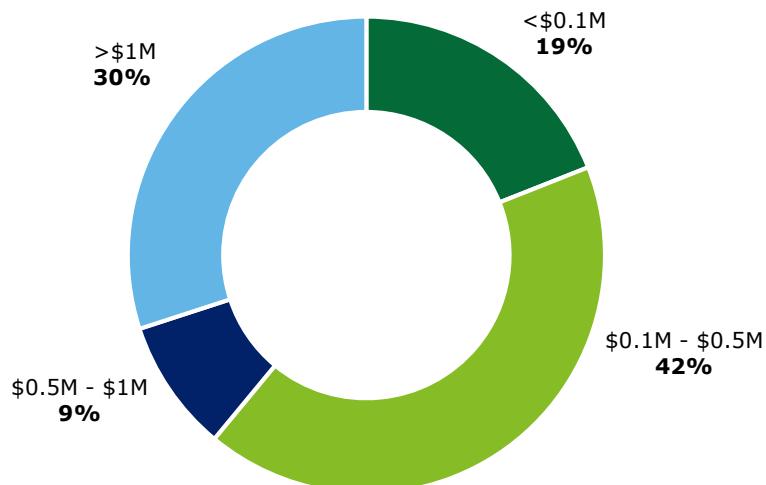
“... want to be doing the good work – outsourcing by exception”

CLO, Public Sector



Q

What was your organisation's approximate aggregate level of spend on external legal professional service providers over the last 2 years?

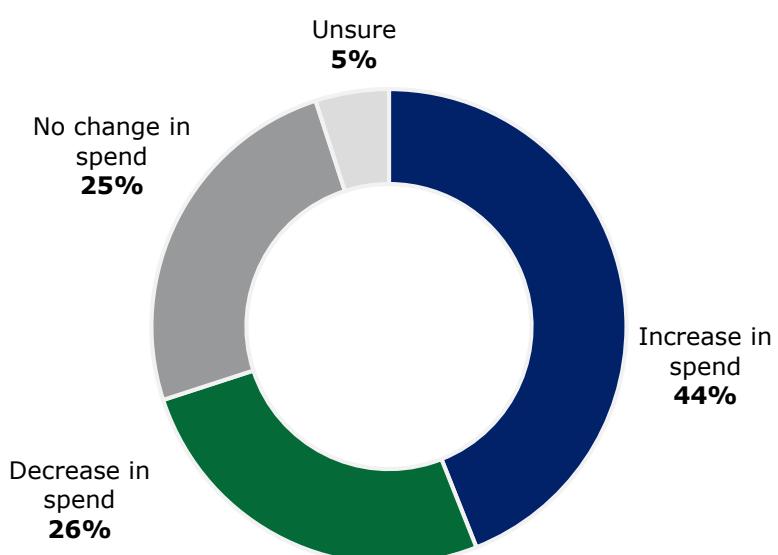


30%

of CLOs surveyed reported spending more than \$1 million on external legal providers in the last two years.

Q

Over the past 2 years, how has your legal department's external legal spend changed?



44%

of CLOs surveyed reported that there had been an increase in external legal spend over the past two years.

Reasons for obtaining external legal support

Q

Rank the reasons for hiring external counsel

- 1 Expertise
- 2 Capacity
- 3 Risk management
- 4 Geographic coverage
- 5 Other



1st

Expertise was ranked the key reason in-house legal hire external counsel.

Areas of spend for external legal support

Q

Please rank the following areas of spend for external legal support over the last 2 years, from highest (#1) being largest spend, to lowest

The top 5 areas of external legal support spending were:

- 1 Corporate/Commercial
- 2 Litigation
- 3 Employment and labour
- 4 Regulatory
- 5 Risk/Compliance



1st

Corporate / commercial was ranked the top area of external legal support spending over the past two years.

Control of external legal spend

Q

What management practices are you employing to control external legal costs?

The top 5 management practices to control external legal costs were:

- 1** Sending all/most work to preferred provider panels
- 1** Regularly reviewing overall law firm performance and providing feedback
- 3** Requiring detailed quotes from providers
- 4** Assigning a senior member of the legal department to take responsibility for outside counsel management (set guidelines, negotiate fees, conduct RFPs, conduct reviews, etc.)
- 5** Requiring early case assessment



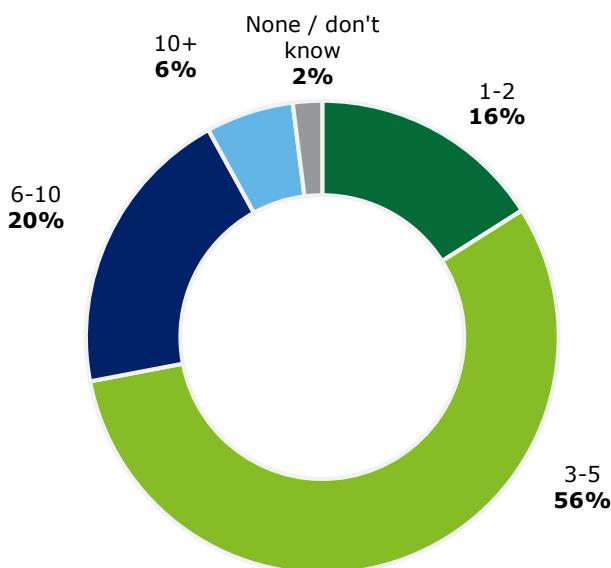
1 st

The top management practices to control external legal cost were sending all/most work to preferred provider panels and regularly reviewing overall law firm performance and providing feedback.

Number of external legal providers and level of satisfaction

Q

How many external law firms service your organisation's needs?

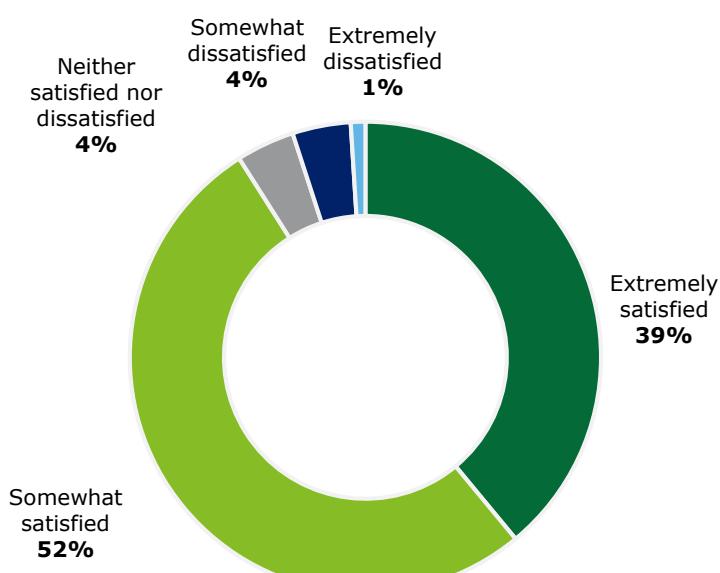


72%

of CLOs surveyed reported using 5 external providers or less.

Q

How would you rate your level of satisfaction with your current external legal providers?



91%

of CLOs surveyed are somewhat satisfied or extremely satisfied with their external legal providers.

Technology and disruption

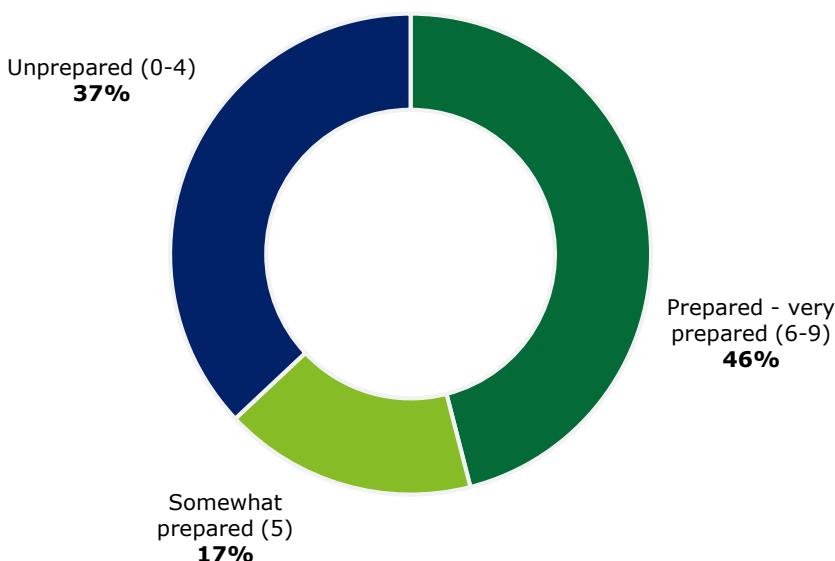
Roughly half the CLOs felt they were prepared for disruption. However, many of the in-house lawyers we interviewed reported that they are still waiting to see the reality of full-scale disruption of legal work before making investments and/or changes. Many of the people interviewed could not see technology replacing a lawyer's role in the near future, as lawyers will still be required to be the interface with the organisation to ask the right questions. Some were hopeful that technology would free up time from routine work. Others commented that disruption is merely a given in the world we live in and gradual changes will continue, resulting in significant changes when viewed over the course of a few years.

Despite the limited use of technology currently in legal teams (the CLOs surveyed identified the main technology being used were in areas such as document management, electronic signatures and collaboration) and the key role technology plays in driving the improvements in client experience, efficiency and accuracy, only 50% of the CLOs surveyed reported that they expected to increase the investment in technology over the next 12 months. Many of those we interviewed in the private sector explained that investment in legal technology was seen as a low priority by the organisation because it did not directly contribute to revenue.

Disruption preparedness

Q

How prepared (out of 10) is your legal department for disruption?



63%

of CLOs surveyed reported their legal teams are somewhat prepared to very prepared for disruption.



“The profession needs to accept that change is inevitable and that the key to success is to embrace this and understand how to benefit from it”

General Counsel, Private Sector

“... vaguely excited that robots take over the mundane tasks”

General Counsel, Private Sector

To date “... impact is how we work rather than what (we are) actually doing”

CLO, Public Sector



Current technology systems

Q

What technology systems do you have in place to support efficient / effective legal operations?

The top 5 technology systems in place were:

- 1** Document Management
- 2** Electronic Signatures
- 3** Collaboration
- 4** Knowledge management
- 5** Matter management



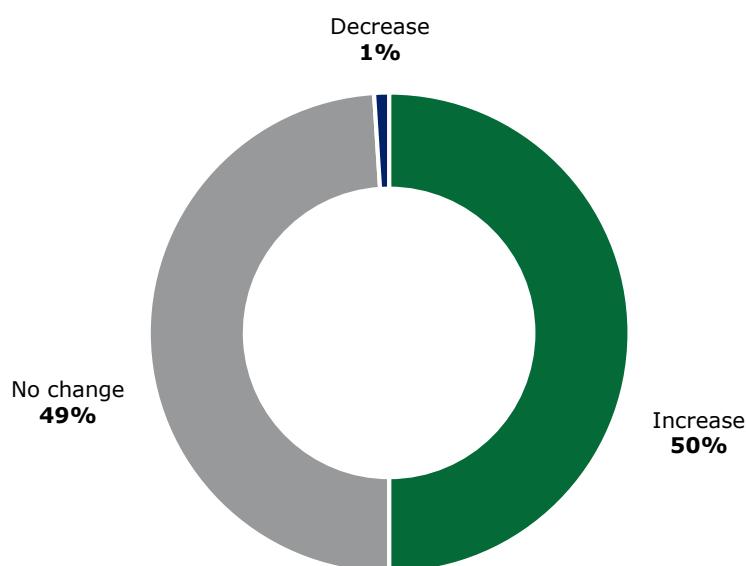
1st

Document management was the most commonly used technology system.

Future investment in technology

Q

How do you expect investment in technology for the legal department to change over the next 12 months?



50%

of CLOs surveyed expect investment in technology to increase over the next 12 months.



“Digital platforms provide a significant opportunity for in-house legal to drive improved efficiency, consistency and ‘client’ experience”

Matt Dalton, Digital Partner, Deloitte

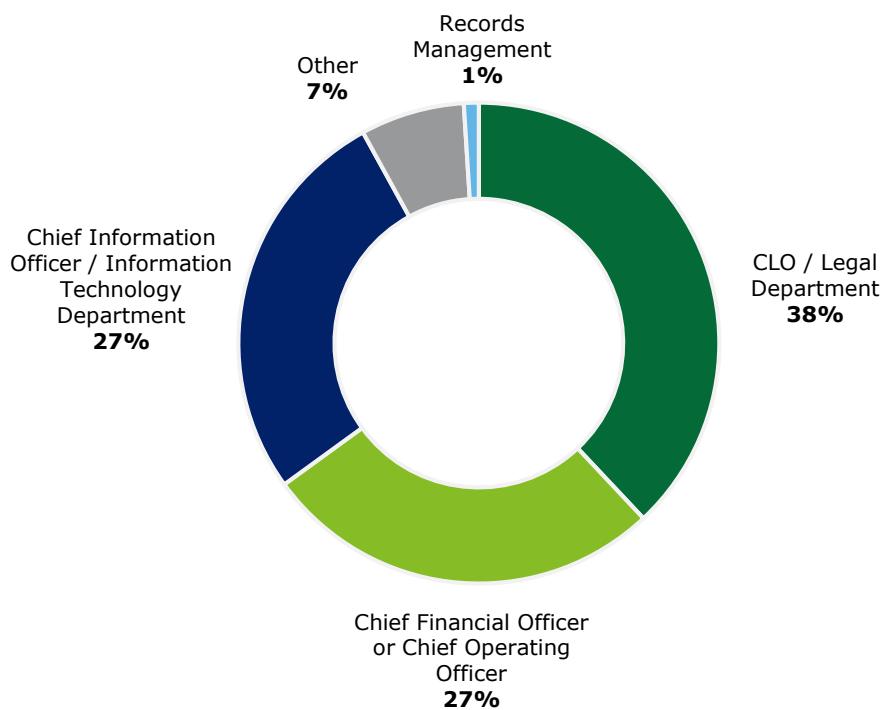
“Machine learning is now being increasingly used in New Zealand and globally in large document reviews such as discovery, regulatory notices and investigations. The improvements in efficiency are impressive and welcome given the cost and risk of dealing with the vast volumes of documents in many cases”

Jason Weir, Forensic Partner, Deloitte



Q

Who are the decision-makers in your organisation when it comes to the technology investment in the legal department?



38%

reported that the CLO / Legal Department are the decision-makers when it comes to technology investment in the legal department.



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