

Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action

Position Description

Position details

Position title:	Seasonal Forest and Fire Operations Officer - Rappel
Position number:	Various
Classification:	Field Staff Band 2
Salary range:	\$57,822 - \$65,221 p.a. + superannuation, subject to skills & experience
Employment type:	Fixed Term, Full time: 26 or 34 weeks per year
Group:	Bushfire and Forest Services
Division & Branch:	Forest and Fire Operations Division/ Hume or Gippsland
Work location:	Ovens or Heyfield Hybrid work arrangement available: ☐ Yes ☒ No
Reports to:	Workcentre Operations Coordinator/Field Operations Supervisor
Direct reports:	☐ Yes ☒ No If yes, how many?
Further information:	DEECA Customer Service Centre – 136 186

Position purpose

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) employ Seasonal Forest and Fire Operations Officers (formerly Project Firefighters) annually to assist in fire management activities in Victoria's national parks, State forests and Protected Public Land. Seasonal Forest and Fire Operations Officers (SFFOs) may also be called upon to support other emergencies such as flood and storm response.

Rappel crew are required to perform specialist roles deploying from helicopters in remote locations to undertake bushfire suppression and require a minimum one season prior experience as a Project Firefighter.

Participation in bushfire preparedness, suppression and planned burning operations is the major focus of the job. Most of the work is based outdoors and also includes road and culvert maintenance, tree felling and clearing, brush cutting, raking, slashing, fuel monitoring and evaluation. Operating equipment required for the construction and maintenance of roads, fire trails and firebreaks such as chainsaws, whipper snippers, pumps etc. is also part of the role. Work is often carried out in remote bush locations.

Successful applicants may be deployed for periods of time across the state on a 7-day shift arrangement for both emergency response and planned burning activities. Successful applicants will have a high fitness level as the role often requires working in steep terrain, remote from vehicles and moving and carrying equipment and heavy tools for potentially long shifts.

Context

The Group

Bushfire & Forest Services (BFS) is the public land manager for 3.2 million hectares of State forests, including delivery and maintenance of recreation assets, tourism services and forest health activities, and leads DEECA's



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works across the state in preparing for and responding to fire and other emergencies on public land to reduce impacts on people, property and the environment.

BFS employs over 1,500 people in every corner of Victoria, with an additional seasonal workforce that contributes to Victoria's bushfire response capability. We create local jobs, employing people from the communities we serve.

BFS provides high quality advice to government on forest, and fire and emergency management. As one of DEECA's primary connections to local communities across the state, the group also provides valuable intelligence on how policy and programs can be designed and delivered to better meet the needs of Victorians.

BFS operates under two public brands – Forest Fire Management Victoria for its land and fire management activities and the Conservation Regulator for its regulatory activities.

The Division

The Forest and Fire Operations Division delivers integrated forest and fire management activities across state forests. We deliver forest health programs, promote and manage recreation and tourism sites, and maintain the majority of the public land road network.

Under the Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) banner, we work with Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water to undertake bushfire management activities across all public land in Victoria. We undertake fuel management and other prevention activities as well as deliver bushfire response. We undertake our bushfire management activities as a part of our broader land management responsibilities.

We are the lead emergency management agency for bushfire and a support agency for a range of Class 2 emergencies.

District Operations

This District Operations team is responsible for the delivery of on ground forest and fire management works. The team utilises a range of technical skills, specialised plant and equipment to ensure safe and efficient delivery of works. The District Operations team works closely with the District Tactical Planning team to provide field expertise and place-based knowledge to ensure plans can be effectively operationalised. This team plays a key role in representing DEECA and FFMVic in the community, as well as providing significant expertise to the development of technical and emergency management capability.

The District Operations Team also plays the primary role in rapid first attack to bushfires across the public land estate and, as part of the regional readiness and response arrangements, contributes key capability to respond to bushfires and other emergencies.

Accountabilities

1. Fire and Emergency Management

SFFOO - Rappel crews are involved in activities associated with fire suppression, other emergency response and/or recovery operations. This may include:

- Participate in activities that require descending down ropes or stepping from hovering helicopters and working in remote un-serviced locations.
- General firefighting, including remote area activities
- Use of chainsaws
- Fire retardant mixing, aircraft loading and aircraft refuelling
- Driving small fire tankers/vehicles
- Planned burning and fuel management activities
- Responding to other emergencies, including but not limited to bushfire, flood, storm, biosecurity and other emergencies, in line with DEECA and FFMVic requirements
- Using specialised skills in emergency response activities
- Maintain Rappel role based on accreditation and fitness level
- Map reading, navigation and orientation skills

2. Land and Forest Management Activities

SFFOOs - Rappel crews are involved in activities associated a range of outdoor land and forest management operations which may include the following:

- Road and track construction and maintenance
- Weed control/chemical weed control (holder of ACUP)
- Brush cutting
- Seed collection and tree planting/Seed Processor - activity

- Mowing/slashing and other vegetation management
- Pest plant and animal control works

Operate and maintain facilities, plant and/or equipment using skills requiring accreditation or supervision at a competent level, including the following:

- Recreation facility construction and maintenance
- Operating/maintaining plant and equipment in accordance with prescribed standards and regulations.
- Fire facility maintenance and checking
- Equipment Maintenance (within scope of user manual) and serviceability inspection.
- Vehicle and Plant maintenance (within scope of user manual or departmental procedure).
- Plant Operation
- Basic carpentry and/or fabrication

3. Collaboration and Systems Use

Provide administrative support to the workcentre, such as:

- Using computer systems and email
- Knowing where to find information about standards, procedures and regulations and follow these instructions with limited guidance

Complete administrative tasks associated with field operations work, specifically:

- Contributing to and implementing Risk Assessments/JSP's/Site Safety Surveys
- Reporting on safety issues, works progress and field issues
- Field data collection, recording, and analysis
- Timesheet recording

Contribute as part of a team, communicate and undertake tasks with others, specifically:

- Appropriately representing the department to external stakeholders
- Providing departmental information to stakeholders including information on regulations and requirements
- Leading work teams in delivery of tasking and supervision of less experienced staff
- Complying with safe working practices
- Under guidance, providing on-the-job training, coaching and guidance for staff
- Maintaining positive relationships with peers, team members and supervisors
- Interacting respectfully and appropriately with team members, supervisors, other agency staff, contractors, and community members

4. Compliance with Departmental Policy and Procedures

Follow and comply with all DEECA policies including:

- Occupational Health & Safety standards and participate in workplace OH&S processes
- Report on Safety issues
- Compliance with departmental documentation requirements
- To practice cultural safety by creating environments, relationships and systems free from racism and discrimination so that people can feel safe, valued and able to participate.

Key Selection Criteria

The key selection criteria specified below outline the capabilities required for the position.

Specialist/Technical Expertise/Qualifications

- Understanding of application of safe work practices including awareness of regulations and codes of practice and safety documentation systems.
- Demonstrated recent experience working in bushfire response and forest operations.

Capabilities

Teamwork

- Builds trust and rapport with others.
- Cooperates and works well with others to achieve team goals.
- Share information and acknowledge the efforts of others.
- Step in to help others where required.

Resilience

- Maintain a positive attitude and consistently deliver quality work in challenging situations.
- Be open to new ideas, approaches and feedback.
- Offers own opinions; asks questions; makes suggestions.
- Does not give up easily.
- Maintains discipline in keeping to and completing assigned work.
- Confident in working in remote bush locations.

Communication

- Use various communication methods to convey information, ideas and insights.
- Possess good written and verbal communication skills.
- Includes content appropriate to the purpose and audience.

Delivery

- Executes tasks in accordance with work plan.
- Uses approved tools to complete tasks.
- Reports on progress
- Is open to acquiring and developing new skills and knowledge.
- Maintains accurate project records.

Position specific requirements

Financial Delegation Value	\$0 A declaration of Private Interests will be required for positions with financial delegations of >\$20,000
Mandatory Requirements	Hold a current manual drivers licence (Conditions A, I & V not acceptable for employment). Be an Australian Citizen, Permanent Resident or hold a valid work visa for the employment period. Maintain a maximum body weight of 95kg in overalls and boots. Have at least one year's experience as a General Firefighter with either DEECA or Parks Victoria and have gained accreditation as a General Firefighter; or equivalent Wildland Firefighter experience. Be comfortable working at heights and from helicopters. Be comfortable working and camping in extremely remote places. Be able to implicitly follow verbal and written instructions and hand signals. Meet the "Category A – Firefighter Rappel" medical and fitness requirements. This requires meeting the DEECA firefighter medical assessment requirements at least every two years (or as specified by the assessing doctor), and successful completion of the "Pack Hike Test" plus the Rappel "Circuit Test" prior to commencement each year. This requirement also includes notification of any changes in your medical condition prior or after your medical assessment.
The occupational health and safety requirements of this position may include, but are not limited to:	• Undertaking a variety of physical tasks including endurance walking, lifting, handling or movement of heavy and awkward objects. • Operating or working near manual powered hand tools. • Participation on rosters for both emergency response and planned burning. • Travelling away from the home workcentre to other regional locations within the state or interstate may be required. • Working in remote locations with the possibility of camping for up to a week at a time. • Travelling in or working near heavy plant, 4WD's, vehicles, helicopters and light aircraft and working from heights.

	• Operating in environments subject to extreme heat, cold, dust, smoke, pollens and chemical and biological agents. • Wearing personal protective equipment and clothing, including equipment that may increase metabolic heat and workloads, and reduce vision, respiration, smell, touch and hearing. • Undertaking work requiring sustained physical effort and intense concentration in adverse conditions over extended periods of time. • Work associated with firefighting and other emergency responses may be required (e.g. overtime, standby duty, unusual hours of shift work duty, weekend work, long shifts, work at night, weekends and public holidays).
DEECA will conduct relevant checks about applicants and the information provided within an application. Checks will include but are not limited to:	A Declaration and Consent form consenting to DEECA contacting current and previous employer(s) to substantiate employment history, past conduct and performance is required. A satisfactory National Police Check will be required (for all non-DEECA employees).
Employment terms and conditions	Conditions of employment will be governed by the <i>Field Staff and Wild Dog Controllers Agreement 2021</i> and the <i>Public Administration Act 2004</i>. Non-department applicants will be subject to a probation period of six months. Shift work or out of hours work that will involve evening or weekend work including occasional overnight travel will be required. Be available for standby for an immediate return to work during the employment period. A maximum 20-minute response time is preferred.
Privacy	The department affirms that the collection and handling of applications and personal information will be consistent with the requirements of the <i>Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014</i>.
Workcentre requirements (achieve accreditations and maintain competencies)	Training for the below will be provided during employment. • Safe and effective driving of manual 4WD vehicles. • Map reading, navigation and orientation skills. • Basic administrative skills such as record keeping, data collection and basic computer usage. • Safe and effective use of tools and equipment including non-powered and small hand tools, chainsaws, brush-cutters and pole saws, basic carpentry, small pumps (slip on/tanker and filler), field radios and other communication equipment. • Application of Safe Work Practices including awareness of Regulations and Codes of Practice (Manual Handling, Noise, Dangerous Goods, Prevention of Falls, Plant), use of Standard Operating Procedures, use of Job Safety Planning (SWPs/SOLs)/Risk Assessments/Site Safety Surveys. • Understanding of Department policies and procedures. Training for the below will be provided during employment depending on role requirements. • Rappeler • Chainsaw Operator/Faller • Remote Area First Aid

About the Department

We employ approximately 6,300 staff, including around 600 seasonal staff, across more than 86 locations throughout Victoria, across energy, environment, climate action, water, agriculture, and resources portfolios. Our challenge is to maintain Victoria's liveability, with a population expected to almost double by 2050, while responding to climate change and protecting our natural environment, infrastructure and heritage for future generations. We take a community-centred approach and involve communities and key stakeholders in decisions and policies that affect them and we collaborate across our portfolios to design and deliver services and programs.

For further information about the department, please visit our website www.deeca.vic.gov.au

Our values

Our values align with the core Public Sector values – responsiveness, integrity, impartiality, accountability, respect, leadership and human rights. Additionally, we use our Leadership Model to shape the way we work. Using the principles of ‘Work Together’, ‘Do What Matters’ and ‘Make a Difference’ we create a culture that puts our people at the centre of everything we do. The Leadership Model reminds us of what’s important in our daily interactions with each other, and in the actions and decisions we take to deliver our work.

Our Community Charter

We are committed to the Victorian Government Public Engagement Framework that enables meaningful and inclusive engagement to make better decisions and improve the lives of Victorians. Our Community Charter is our promise to be available, be involved and listen, and take action as we deliver services and create opportunities that supports thriving, productive, and sustainable communities, environments and industries.

Emergency Response and Health and Safety Requirements

The department plays a major role in Victoria’s emergency response activities, through an all-hazards, all-emergencies approach. Staff may be directly employed for these roles or may be called upon to support these activities as required following the appropriate training and “fit for work” assessment.

A Diverse, Inclusive and Flexible Workplace

DEECA welcomes applicants from a diverse range of backgrounds and we focus on the essential requirements of the job and being consistent and fair in our treatment of all applicants. Our diversity and inclusion outcome pillars:

1. We are connected to liveable, inclusive, sustainable communities
2. We are diverse
3. We are inclusive and flexible
4. We are safe and respectful

DEECA can provide reasonable adjustments for people with a disability. If you need assistance to fully participate in the application or interview process, please use the contact listed under ‘Position Details’.

Aboriginal Cultural Safety

Cultural safety of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians, as an underpinning principle of self-determination, is embedded in everything we do. Under the Aboriginal Cultural Safety Framework DEECA is committed to creating a culturally safe workplace, where there is space for culture to live and for spiritual and belief systems to exist. For further information, please contact aboriginal.employment@deeca.vic.gov.au.

Balancing your Life / Hybrid Working

We understand that a balanced life is important to our employees and we offer a wide range of flexible options to help you manage family, health, carer responsibilities, study, career or personal interests. Options may include working some days from home or other suitable locations, starting early or late, working part time, job share or accessing paid or unpaid leave in line with our flexible working policy.

To receive this information in an accessible format (such as large print or audio) please call the Customer Service Centre: 136 186, TTY: 133 677, or email customer.service@deeca.vic.gov.au