# Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action

Identified Position Description





## Position details

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Position title:** | Senior Policy Officer |
| **Position number:** | 50966848 |
| **Classification:** | VPS Grade 5 |
| **Salary range:** | $113,022 to $136,747 plus superannuation |
| **Employment type:** | Fixed Term until 30 June 2028 |
| **Group:** | Water and Catchments |
| **Division & Branch:** | Water Sector Strategy and Partnerships; First Nations Water |
| **Work location:** | Flexible within Victoria  Hybrid work arrangement available: Yes  No |
| **Reports to:** | Senior Manager Self-Determination Support, First Nations Water Branch |
| **Direct reports:** | Yes  No If yes, how many? |
| **Further information:** | Chloe Wiesenfeld, A/Senior Manager Self-Determination Support, 03 8508 0564 |

Identified Position

This position is classified as an “identified position” aimed at increasing employment opportunities for Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People. The position requires an in-depth knowledge of Aboriginal culture and an ability to communicate with Aboriginal communities. Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply.

Acknowledgment

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage, with Victoria's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.

DEECA Aboriginal Employment and Development Support

DEECA is committed to support the self- determination of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians. This is supported by Pupangarli Marnmarnepu ‘Owning Our Future” Aboriginal Self-Determination Reform Strategy 2020-2025 [Pupangarli-Marnmarnepu-Owning-Our-Future-Aboriginal-Self-Determination-Reform-Strategy-2020-2025.pdf (delwp.vic.gov.au)](https://www.delwp.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0038/483887/Pupangarli-Marnmarnepu-Owning-Our-Future-Aboriginal-Self-Determination-Reform-Strategy-2020-2025.pdf)

Aboriginal employees are supported, connected, and developed with the assistance of DEECA’s Aboriginal Employment and Development Team. Employees can join the Aboriginal Staff Network (ASN). The ASN hold forums, workshops and development sessions to assist staff on their journey at DEECA.

For any questions/queries please email [aboriginal.employment@deeca.vic.gov.au](mailto:aboriginal.employment@deeca.vic.gov.au). We can assist you with your application and help to prepare you for this process.

**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 [self.determination@deeca.vic.gov.au](mailto:self.determination@deeca.vic.gov.au).

About Traditional Owners and Custodians

For over a thousand generations, Traditional Owners and Custodians have cared for and managed the Countries across what we now refer to as Victoria. Traditional Owners and Custodians have spiritual, physical, and cultural connections to Country that remain unbroken and strong.

We need to learn from their experience and begin bringing traditional and western practices together.

DEECA acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the beautiful land, seas and waterways that make up the State of Victoria and pays respect to Elders past present and future.

Position purpose

The Senior Policy Officer will work collaboratively in a small, agile team to support self-determination and long term outcomes for First Peoples in the Victorian water sector. The position is responsible for leading the development and engagement on Victoria’s approach to an Inland Waters Target under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. The position will coordinate the inputs of relevant teams across Water and Catchments Group and provide support to senior staff in interjurisdictional engagements. The position will also support Water and Catchment’s intergovernmental responses in relation to First Nations water under the Basin Plan, National Water Agreement and the Aboriginal Water Entitlement Program as required. The role will work collaboratively across the First Nations Water Branch and Water and Catchments Group to identify and analyse new opportunities to return water to Traditional Owners to support Victoria’s commitments under *Water is Life: Traditional Owner Access to Water Roadmap* and Closing the Gap. The role is required to build relationships across Water and Catchments, the water sector, with other government departments and agencies, and with peak Aboriginal bodies and Traditional Owner groups.

The role is well suited to someone with experience in strategic policy development and building effective partnerships, particularly with Traditional Owners. An understanding of the Victorian water sector and entitlement framework is highly desirable.

Context

*The Group*

The Water and Catchments Group (WCG), in partnership with water corporations, catchment management authorities, Traditional Owners and the community, is responsible for managing Victoria’s water and catchment resources.

*The Division*

The Water Sector Strategy and Partnerships Division partners with Traditional Owners and the Water Sector for efficient and effective delivery of water services and outcomes for Victorians. This includes developing sector strategy and policy reform so that the Water Sector can continue to be a strong sector that is able to respond to future opportunities and challenges. The Water Sector Strategy and Partnerships Division works with Traditional Owners, grounded in the principles of Self-Determination to foster a more inclusive approach to water management. The Division applies modern corporate governance and oversight to the sector.

*The Branch*

The First Nations Water Branch within the Water Sector Strategy and Partnerships Division works to ensure a more inclusive and culturally appropriate approach to water management and governance in the water sector. This Branch partners with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians on water and catchment management, supporting Traditional Owners to progress their self-determined water priorities. It is responsible for driving, consistent with the principle of self-determination, key water reforms and facilitating input of the water sector into whole of government reforms including Treaty readiness activities.

Accountabilities

* Lead and coordinate the development of government commitments for the return of water to First Peoples including those under Closing the Gap and *Water is Life: Traditional Owner Access to Water Roadmap*.
* Collaborate across the branch and Water and Catchments Group to formulate policy options and advice related to new opportunities to return water to Traditional Owners in Victoria.
* Support Water and Catchment’s intergovernmental responses to Commonwealth Government commitments to First Peoples.
* Prepare high level policy discussion papers, reports and briefs to the Minister for Water and senior government officials on complex issues associated with self-determination support related activities in the water sector as required.
* Manage project timelines and coordinate the input of internal and external partners and stakeholders into relevant policy development.
* Establish and maintain collaborative working relationships with internal and external partners including Traditional Owner groups, Closing the Gap partners, other parts of the Department, across State Government, water sector, and other key stakeholders as required.
* To work effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and acknowledge their diverse backgrounds, personalities and varying needs and the unique cultural ways in which they may be expressed.
* 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**

* Demonstrated skills, experience and knowledge of Aboriginal Culture and contemporary issues affecting Aboriginal Victorians today to deliver culturally informed government policies and services is required.
* Understanding of the Victorian water sector is highly desirable.
* Relevant work experience in policy development or a tertiary qualification specialising in public policy, social sciences, law, or natural resource management or similar is highly regarded.

**Capabilities**

**Policy Design and Development**

* Formulates & communicates public policy options & recommendations; Champions the importance of partnership through co-creation approaches; Develops a clear narrative for the policies including clear problem definition and objectives; Considers impact of policy to strategic plans, community needs, complementing programs and policies across the service.

**Project Delivery**

* Translates strategies into programs or projects that enables achievement of outcomes required; Defines governance (e.g. success measures, roles and responsibilities, progress monitoring) required to manage risks and maximise probability of success.

**Outcomes Thinking**

* Is up to date with needs of community and formulates strategies that are aligned to community needs; Ensures team/organisation’s delivery model is designed in ways that creates a positive impact on community; Establishes mechanisms to monitor impact of work on the community.

**Working Collaboratively**

* Build a supportive and cooperative team environment; Identifies opportunities to work with other teams to deliver outcomes; Looks for and facilitates opportunities to collaborate with external partners and stakeholders.

Position specific requirements

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Financial Delegation Value | $0 A declaration of Private Interests will be required for positions with financial delegations of >$20,000 |
| The occupational health and safety requirements of this position may include, but are not limited to: | * Sedentary desk work |
| 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 | Are governed by the *Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 2024* and the *Public Administration Act* *2004.*  Recipients of Victorian Public Service (VPS) voluntary departure packages should note that re-employment restrictions apply.  Non-VPS applicants will be subject to a probation period of six months. |
| Privacy | The department affirms that the collection and handling of applications and personal information will be consistent with the requirements of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014. |

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](http://www.deeca.vic.gov.au)

Our values

Our values align with the core [Public Sector values](https://careers.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-sector/public-sector-values-integrity) – 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 departmentplays 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’.

**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](mailto:customer.service@deeca.vic.gov.au)