# Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action

Position Description





## Position details

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| **Position title:** | Fire Lookout Observer |
| **Position number:** | 50815415 |
| **Classification:** | FLO Band 1-2 |
| **Salary range:** | $56,044 - $65,221 p.a. plus superannuation |
| **Employment type:** | Casual until 31 May 2026 |
| **Group:** | Bushfire and Forest Services |
| **Division & Branch:** | Forest and Fire Operations / Gippsland (FFOD) |
| **Work location:** | Mt Moornapa  Hybrid work arrangement available: Yes  No |
| **Reports to:** | Workcentre Operations Coordinator |
| **Direct reports:** | Yes  No If yes, how many? |
| **Further information:** | James Russell, 0428 173 285 |

Position purpose

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) employ Fire Lookout Observers (FLO’s) annually to assist in the early detection of fires in Victoria’s National Parks, State Forests, Protected Public Land and some private land.

These positions form part of the Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) Fire Lookout network based at over 60 locations across Victoria. Each position is a key contributor to the ongoing effectiveness and output of the Fire District and has involvement with departmental personnel, contractors and other Fire Lookout Observers. Interaction with members of the community is also a key function of FFMVic.

Detection and monitoring of fires to determine location, size, direction, fire behaviour and monitoring planned burning operations is the major focus of the job. Work is often carried out at heights in isolated locations and for extended periods of time.

Successful applicants may be required to operate from a number of tower locations within a district for both emergency response and planned burning activities.

Context

*The Group*

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

Underpinned by our commitment to work in partnership with Traditional Owners, BFS collaborates across government and DEECA to deliver key policies and outcomes in support of communities and industries that use our forests and is directly responsible for recreation policy and service delivery in state forests.

BFS plays a key role in working alongside emergency services under the Victorian Government’s ‘all communities, all emergencies’ operating framework, including meeting DEECA’s responsibilities before, during and after an emergency event.

BFS undertakes regulatory functions for timber harvesting, biodiversity, public land use and fire prevention, leads development and advice on forest, fire and emergency management policy, strategy and legislation, and delivers safe and fit-for-purpose capability solutions including statewide assets, equipment, technology and learning, ensuring consistency with the Victorian Government’s broader strategic objectives.

*The Division*

Forest and Fire Operations Division provides place-based design and delivery of forest, fire and emergency management operations and supports Regional Directorates to deliver programs and projects.

Forest and Fire Operations Division also works across the department, Forest Fire Management Victoria partners, and fire and emergency management agencies to support the operational implementation of Safer Together: an approach to reducing the risk of bushfire in Victoria

*The Region*

In the region, DEECA delivers a range of programs, often in collaboration with other departments, to protect environmental assets, manage public land, and respond to fire and other emergencies through an all-hazards approach. The department ensures appropriate planning, supports regional water management agencies and local governments, and delivers regional services to the community through strong partnerships with regional stakeholders.

Accountabilities

1. **Fire and Emergency Management**

FLOs are involved in activities associated with detecting bushfire and providing observations about weather conditions. This may include:

* Work independently and in conjunction with other Fire Lookout Observers to ensure the early detection and reporting of smoke from unplanned fires.
* Locate a feature and identify the corresponding map reference and provide knowledge on the local area in which the tower is located.
* Operation of radio and communications equipment; communicate clearly on multiple radio channels with emergency services personnel including other agencies
* Provide situation reports to the District Duty Officer as required on fire behaviour, occurrence of lightning activity or extreme weather conditions (heat, windy conditions/changes, storm activity).
* Monitor fires to determine what direction, or directions they may be expanding.
* Participate in activities associated with fire readiness, suppression, planned burning and other emergency response and recovery operations appropriate to role, training and accreditation.
* Maintain fire and emergency management roles based on accreditation and fitness level
* Map reading, navigation and orientation skills.

1. **Land and Forest Management Activities**

FLOs are involved in activities associated with a range of outdoor land and forest management operations which include the following:

* Participate as a Forest Fire Management team member to support the delivery of program objectives and ensure that tasks are carried out in a safe, effective and efficient manner.

1. **Collaboration and systems use**

Provide administrative support to the District, such as:

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

Complete administrative tasks associated with Tower operations work, specifically:

* Implementing Risk Assessments/JSP’s/Site Safety Surveys
* Reporting on safety issues, works progress and field issues via chain of command
* Data collection, recording, and analysis
* Timesheet recording
* Actively participate in training programs required for the role

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

* Appropriately representing the Department to external stakeholders
* Complying with safe working practices
* Under guidance, providing on-the-job training, coaching and guidance for staff as required
* Maintaining positive relationships with peers, team members and supervisors
* Interacting respectfully and appropriately with team members, supervisors, other agency staff, contractors, and community members

1. **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
* Compliance with departmental external communications procedures, including social media communications
* 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**

* Map Reading and Navigation: Has proven knowledge and experience in map reading including the ability to pinpoint a location on the ground and identify the corresponding map reference. Has the ability to locate fires using compass bearings and distance estimates is desirable.
* Basic understanding of fire behaviour is desirable.
* Ability to provide concise and accurate reporting
* Basic administration skills such as record keeping and data collection.
* Experience operating two-way radios and communications equipment is desirable.

**Capabilities**

Working Collaboratively:

* Builds trust and rapport with others;
* Sets common goals through a high degree of empathy;
* Display willingness to share control and responsibility with peers the service, external partners, and community in the delivery of work and outcomes;
* Cooperates and works well with others in pursuit of team goals;
* Share information and acknowledge others’ efforts;
* Step in to help others where required.

Outcomes thinking:

* Think and work in different ways to create better public value for Victorians;
* Establish ways to clearly and effectively measure the impact of government activity.
* Articulates how work, policies and services fit into organisation’s objectives;
* Accepts responsibility for own actions; shows commitment to completing work activities effectively.

Resilience:

* Maintain a positive attitude and consistently deliver quality work in the face of challenging situations;
* Is open to new ideas & approaches;
* Offers own opinions, asks questions makes suggestions;
* Does not give up easily;
* Maintains discipline in keeping to work planned or assigned.

Communicate with Impact:

* Use various communication media to convey information, ideas and insights in ways that maximises understanding of key messages
* Possess good written and verbal communication skills
* Organises information in a logical sequence
* Includes content appropriate to the purpose and audience

Position specific requirements

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| 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: | * Work associated with firefighting and other emergency responses will be required (e.g. overtime, standby duty, unusual hours of shift work duty, weekend work, long shifts and public holidays). * Undertaking physical tasks including walking, ladder climbing, lifting, handling or movement of heavy and awkward objects. * Working from heights and in isolation for long periods of time * Operating in environments subject to extreme heat, cold, dust, smoke, radio frequency hazards, 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 intense concentration in adverse conditions over extended periods of time. |
| 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).  This position has a requirement to work shift work or out of hours work will be required that will involve evening or weekend work including occasional overnight travel.  Be available for standby for an immediate return to work during the employment period. A maximum 20-minute response time is preferred. |
| Mandatory Requirements | Hold a current driver’s licence and have access to reliable transportation suitable to commute to and from various tower locations, including 4x4 where required.  Be an Australian Citizen, Permanent Resident or hold a valid work visa for the employment period.  Meet the “**Category H – Office**” (or higher if required by the Workcentre) 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). This requirement also includes notification of any changes in your medical condition prior or after your medical assessment. |
| Employment terms and conditions | Conditions of employment will be governed by the *Field Staff and Wild Dog Controllers Agreement 2021* and the *Public Administration Act 2004*.  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.  Recipients of Victorian Public Service (VPS) voluntary departure packages should note that re-employment restrictions apply. |
| 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. |
| Workcentre requirements (achieve accreditations and maintain competencies) | Training for the below will be provided during employment depending on district requirements.   * Ability to achieve competent result in the following training:   + Basic Wildfire Awareness Training   + Map reading and navigation   + Working Safely at Heights Accreditation (if required)   + RF-EME Awareness Course   + Level 2 First Aid   + DEECA Tait radio awareness course eLearning   + Fire Weather 1   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/SOIs)/Risk Assessments/Site Safety Surveys.  Understanding of Department policies and procedures. |

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’.

**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).

**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)