# Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action

Position Description





## Position details

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| **Position title:** | Senior Policy Officer |
| **Position number:** | 50925264 |
| **Classification:** | VPS 5 |
| **Salary range:** | $113,022 - $136,747 plus superannuation |
| **Employment type:** | Fixed term 22 January 2026 until 22 January 2027 |
| **Group:** | Bushfire and Forest Services Group |
| **Division & Branch:** | Policy and Planning Division, Forest and Fire Policy Branch |
| **Work location:** | 8 Nicholson St, East Melbourne  Hybrid work arrangement available: Yes  No |
| **Reports to:** | Manager Priority Projects |
| **Direct reports:** | Yes  No If yes, how many? 1 |
| **Further information:** | Kristen Hedgecoe, Manager Priority Projects 0493 092 652 |

Position purpose

The Senior Policy Officer will lead key strategic policy projects and deliver forest management policy advice and reform, balancing multiple forest values and uses. The Senior Policy Officer will be responsible for providing high quality advice on forest management policy issues in the context of legislative and regulatory frameworks, including supporting the Conservation Regulator and DEECA’s Forest and Fire Operations Division.

Context

**Group**

Bushfire and Forest Services (BFS) is the public land manager for 3.2 million hectares of State forests. BFS manages 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 DEECA and government 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 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.

**Division**

The Policy and Planning Division provides advice and develops policy, strategy, strategic planning frameworks and legislation for forest, fire and emergency management. We lead and support design and delivery of knowledge and engagement support services across the Bushfire and Forest Services Group and DEECA.

We collaborate across DEECA and government to deliver key policies, plans and regulations that support the sustainable public use and management of Victoria's forests.  We are committed to progressing and advancing self-determination and supporting the delivery of DEECA's associated obligations.

We lead the strategic approach to bushfire risk management that evolves in response to climate change, utilising sophisticated science and evidence to inform, design and support forest management, and Forest Fire Management Victoria and the broader bushfire management sector's work to reduce the risk, severity and impacts of fire.

We deliver one-DEECA emergency management policy advice and deliver priority projects to uplift capability, capacity and support continuous improvement. We also have governance and coordination functions across DEECA, supporting DEECA’s participation in key inter-governmental committees, as well as internal committees and governance systems.

**Branch**

The Forest and Fire Policy Branch provides policy and strategic planning advice to support sustainable management of state forests. This includes integrated strategic planning for forest and fire management, regulatory design, policy frameworks for forest health, strategic consideration of social and economic values from forests and consideration of the future management and use of state forests. Importantly, it works in partnership with Traditional Owners to realise their self-determined objectives in state forests, as well as engaging communities and working closely with tourism and recreation portfolios to ensure the value of Victorian forests to Victorians and visitors is maximised, while maintaining unique environmental and cultural values.

Accountabilities

* Provide high quality and authoritative strategic policy advice to deliver key projects and outcomes, including the preparation of government submissions, business cases and reports, responses to issues papers and implementation plans.
* Develop high quality briefings, meeting papers, presentations and correspondence, consistent with key policy objectives for a range of audiences including Ministers, DEECA Executives and central agencies.
* Identify emerging complex or highly sensitive issues, risks and trends impacting on the successful achievement of objectives and priorities and develop innovative solutions and options.
* Manage projects and forward plan to deliver business objectives, fostering an environment of continuous improvement and high-performance.
* Influence and negotiate effectively with stakeholders and initiate and maintain extensive internal and external networks that will ensure the success of agreed priorities.
* Other duties commensurate with the role that support the Policy and Planning Division to deliver its requirements and obligations.
* Maintain confidentiality and display sound judgment when dealing with sensitive information and issues to provide quality and relevant information in line with government policies.
* Actively contribute to a positive, open, delivery focused culture that values, supports and mentors people and is based on collaboration, accountability and performance excellence.
* 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**

* An appropriate tertiary qualification(s) in public policy, law, natural resource or environmental management or similar is desirable.
* Experience in development of land management, forest or fire policy or similar is desirable.

**Capabilities**

* **Policy Design and Development:** Formulates and communicates public policy options and recommendations; Develops a clear narrative for the policies and business cases including clear problem definition and objectives; Considers impact of policy to strategic plans, community needs, complementing programs and policies across the service.
* **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Works to find new ways to deliver outcomes; Recognises the merits of different options and acts accordingly; Has courage to alter strategies in situations when there are clear indications of existing strategy may not deliver the best outcome; where significant amount of effort or investment has been put in. Builds commitment of others to adopt new strategies to deliver against outcomes.
* **Influence and Persuasion:** Gains agreement to proposals and ideas; Build behind the scenes support for ideas to ensure buy-in & ownership; Uses chains of indirect influence to achieve outcomes; Involves experts or other third parties to strengthen case.
* **Project delivery:** Translates strategies into programs or projects that enables achievement of outcomes require; Defines governance e.g. success measures, roles and responsibilities, progress monitoring) required to manage risks and maximise probability of success.

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: | * Sedentary desk work * Field 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’.

**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)