



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**NICS Grading Unit**

**Date:** 3 April 2019

**To:** [REDACTED]

**cc** [REDACTED]

## **GRADING EVALUATION – proposed G7 Head of Departmental Health & Safety**

### **Background**

1. The NICSHR Grading Unit was asked to provide an independent opinion on the appropriate grade of the proposed Head of Departmental Health & Safety role in the Health & Safety Branch, DAERA. The evaluation of this role is presented below.

#### **Approach**

2. We have reviewed the information provided on 3 April 2019. The resultant information was considered against the NICS Grading Guidance for Administrative Grades to confirm the appropriate grade. It is important to note that grading determinations are based on the preponderance of the duties described and not confirmed of the need for the role, which is a matter for management.

### **Conclusion**

3. Based on the evidence provided, I can confirm that the duties of role are consistent with G7 grade.
4. I hope this is helpful and if you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

[REDACTED]

**NICS Grading Unit**

Ex [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]@finance-ni.gov.uk

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b>GRADE</b>	<b>Grade 7 Principal</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs</b>
<b>DIVISION</b>	<b>Central Services Division</b>
<b>BRANCH</b>	<b>Health and Safety</b>
<b>JOB TITLE</b>	<b>Head of Departmental Health and Safety</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>3.4.2019</b>

### **1. BACKGROUND**

The Vision of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (DAERA) is a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone. The Department is responsible for food, farming, environmental, fisheries, forestry and sustainability policy and the development of the rural sector in Northern Ireland. The Department assists the sustainable development of the agri-food, environmental, fishing and forestry sectors of the Northern Ireland economy, having regard for the needs of the consumers, the protection of human, animal and plant health, the welfare of animals and the conservation and enhancement of the environment. As such, the Department undertakes a wide range of activities to achieve its vision.

Risk is inherent in all the Department's activities, therefore managing risk is the common, significant, component in everything undertaken. Each DAERA member of staff has a Health and Safety responsibility, for themselves and others.

The Department's work brings it into contact with hazardous substances, vehicles and machinery, large animals, pathogens and dangerous terrain in all weathers. Staff work on water, in water, underwater, and they work at height

and below ground. Some staff are office based and work long hours with computers. Whatever the nature of the activities, the Department works to ensure that staff, and everyone using its estate or who are impacted by the work, remain safe and well. In addition, the Department encourages health-positive lifestyle behaviours for everyone.

The Department is required to comply with Health and Safety legislation, and has robust and detailed procedures in place. The varied and potentially dangerous nature of some of the activities carried out in the Department requires a culture where Health and Safety is a fundamental element of the work and where personal professional responsibility is supported by processes, people, training, knowledge and experience.

## **2. CONTEXT**

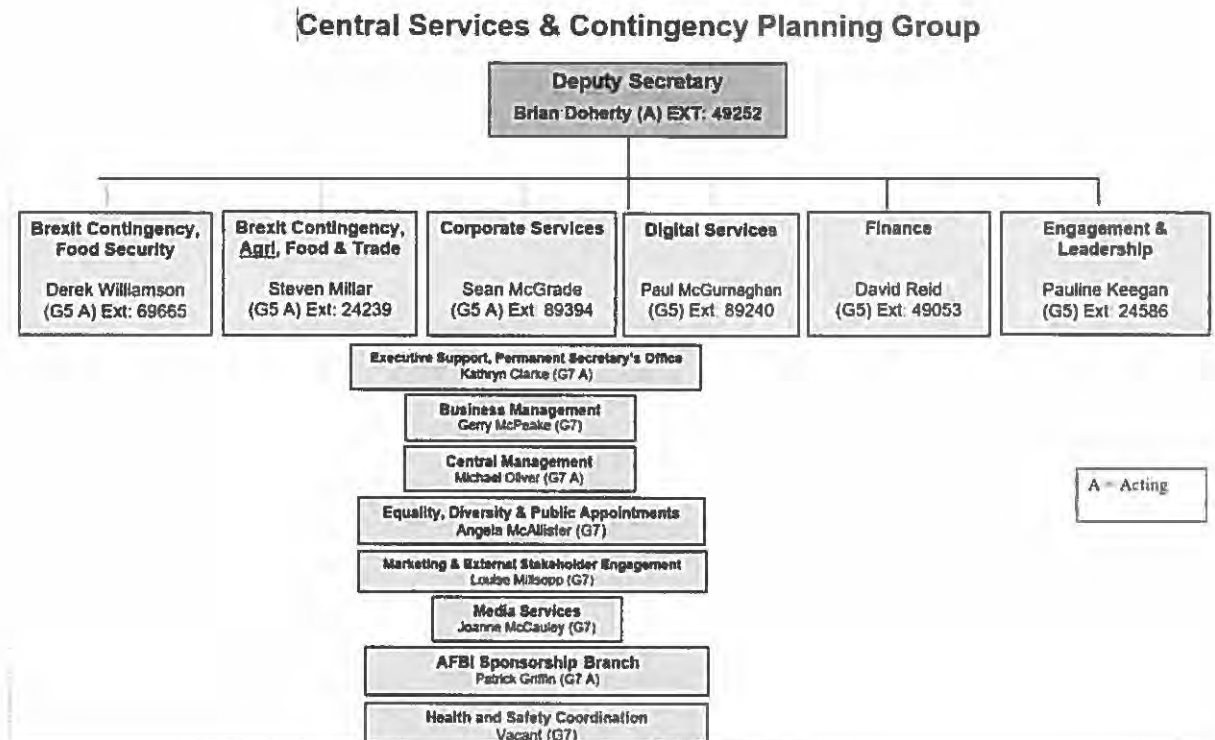
From a Health and Safety perspective, DAERA is the most diverse Department in the NICS. It has 5 groups: Central Services and Contingency Planning, Food and Farming, Veterinary Service Animal Health, Environment Marine and Fisheries, and Rural Affairs, Forest Service and Estates Transformation.

Central Services and Contingency Planning Group (CSCPG) has 7 Directorates, including Corporate Services Division. In December 2018 the Departmental Board agreed that the management and coordination of Departmental Health and Safety should be centralised within Corporate Services. Until now it has been coordinated from within Environment Marine and Fisheries Group by the Senior Health and Safety Advisor at Deputy Principal level. This arrangement is an artefact of the formation of DAERA, reflecting the availability of Health and Safety staff from the legacy Departments.

The Departmental Board also agreed that governance arrangements in respect of Health and Safety were not changing, and that Groups should continue to have corporate responsibility for the issue within their business areas.

DAERA has a Health and Safety Director at Grade 3 level who is appointed by, and is a member of, the Departmental Board. The role of the DAERA Health & Safety Director is to champion Health & Safety at Board level; update the Board on significant Health & Safety issues; and ensure Health & Safety is considered in Board decisions. The role of Director of Health & Safety will transfer to the Head of Corporate Services and Contingency Planning Group with the introduction of this new role.

### 3. ORGANISATIONAL POSITION



The new post holder will be a new addition to CSCPG's Corporate Services Division, in a new Branch to be known as 'Health and Safety Coordination'. The post holder will initially manage one H&S Adviser (at Staff Officer Grade Equivalent). Structures are likely to change as the role develops.

#### 4. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the role is to provide leadership of the new Health and Safety Coordination Branch and coordinate Health and Safety across the Department. The post holder will also be responsible for providing the necessary assurance to the Permanent Secretary, Departmental Board, Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and Top Management Team that appropriate measures are in place to manage risks to acceptable levels.

The objectives of the post are to:

- provide leadership for Health and Safety throughout the Department, ensuring that it is embedded in every aspect of the Department's work and working culture;
- ensure that all Departmental legal responsibilities are complied with and statutory duties are fulfilled;
- review the delivery structure for Health and Safety throughout the Department and the grading of Health and Safety roles;
- produce a Departmental Health and Safety strategy that will drive improvements;
- monitor and report on the adequacy of Health and Safety measures across the Department, and produce an annual assurance statement and other reports to the Departmental Board;
- review and update Health and Safety arrangements;
- ensure that Health and Safety policies are comprehensive and complete;
- coordinate and develop a team of Health and Safety advisors embedded within the Department's Group governance structures;



- produce, along with Departmental Grade 3 Deputy Secretaries, annual Health and Safety Work Programmes;
- build Health and Safety resilience throughout the Department in order to minimise any staffing gaps or gaps in necessary expertise;
- liaise and negotiate with Trade Union Side on Health and Safety matters;
- be the contact point and spokesperson for Interdepartmental Health and Safety issues; and
- provide other Health and Safety related services required by the Director of Corporate Services, the Health and Safety Director, or the Permanent Secretary.

## 5. MAIN JOB ACTIVITIES

### Main job activities include:

	% of time spent
LEADERSHIP - Leading on and driving improvements in Health and Safety across the Department, and delivering work programmes in line with the Departmental strategy. Staff leadership.	40
ANALYSING AND DEVELOPING - Reviewing existing arrangements, policies and measures and producing a Departmental Health and Safety Strategy to meet or exceed statutory obligations.	25
COORDINATING - Coordinating a team of Health and Safety Advisers working across the Departmental Group governance structure and building Health and Safety capacity and resilience throughout the Department.	20

	% of time spent
REPORTING - Monitoring and reviewing Health and Safety performance, TUS engagement, reporting on those and providing assurance to senior management.	15

## 6. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The minimum qualifications for entry into the administrative occupational group are 2 GCSEs with a requirement for at least 10 years experience to perform proficiently in the grade. No additional formal qualifications are required for entry into the role. The post holder will not require significant professional/expert competence to be appointed. Rather, emphasis is placed on knowledge and skills to do the job effectively.

The characteristics and overall level of knowledge and skills which have to be most commonly applied in this role include:

- Experience in managing people and tasks at middle management grades;
- strong organisational and leadership skills;
- an understanding of the H&S legal and regulatory requirements and best practice in service delivery;
- the ability to create clear strategies, policies, plans and deliverable work programmes;
- an understanding of risk management;
- proven influencing skills with a wide range of stakeholders within and beyond the Department; and
- excellent communication skills and the ability to lead on and direct a wide range of work activities.



## 7. CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

### Within the Organisation

Grade/Level	Purpose
AA/AO/SG	Occasional contact re administration, preparation for meetings and events, trawls for information, coordination exercises.
EO11 – DP	Daily contact with the Professional and Technical Grade III Health and Safety Advisers (including Forest Service) to coordinate their activities, ascertain progress with work programmes, resolve problems and gain information for policy development. Occasional contact with SOs and DPs re Board papers, legislation, H&S delivery.
G7 / G6	Daily contact on the integration of Health and Safety into their work areas, encouraging the use of best practise, disseminating information, devising policy and delivery improvements.
G5 + above	Weekly reporting to Top Management Team in writing or attendance at meetings. Weekly meetings or reports to the Health and Safety Director or Permanent Secretary to provide Health and Safety assurance information, to discuss individual cases or issues. Monthly meetings with Grade 3 Deputy Secretaries to agree and check progress on annual work programmes. Monthly reports to the Departmental Board and the ARAC Committee. Monthly Divisional update meetings.

### Between Government Organisations

Grade/Level	Purpose
EO11 – DP	3 or 6 monthly - the interdepartmental Health and Safety Forum.
G7 / G6	Weekly contact with Health and Safety Executive (H&SE) on cross-cutting issues, legislative and policy developments, joint initiatives, targeted dissemination to stakeholders. 3 or 6 monthly - the interdepartmental Health and Safety Forum.
G5 + above	Quarterly contact this the H&SE to exchange and review information. To make any necessary returns to Defra annually. To act on behalf of the Health and Safety Director as required.

### All other external contacts

Organisation size & staff level	Purpose
Members of the public / small supplier / customer	To respond to Assembly Researcher queries and Freedom of Information Requests infrequently.
Medium sized supplier / customer/ MLAs*, MPs, External government	Professional Health and Safety bodies re professional development, capacity building, increasing Departmental resilience. To brief the Minister, and the Agriculture and Environment Committee of the Assembly at least annually. To responds to briefing requests from ad hoc or other Assembly Committees. TUS re changes to structures, staffing or procedures.

## 8. PROBLEM SOLVING

### Fact Finding and Analysis

The overarching problem that this post holder will face is to ensure that everyone in the Department continuously delivers on their H&S responsibilities whilst also delivering their core business. Underpinning this is the need to find out what may *actually* be happening across such a wide range of Departmental activities, rather than what is recorded or assumed to happen.

Examples of problems include:

- a) the post holder will need to develop a Departmental H&S strategy based on analysis of a broad range of H&S issues over a long time period, and get it approved by the Departmental Board;
- b) securing engagement from senior managers to review and adjust H&S arrangements – the post holder will need to gain cooperation and if necessary be persuasive in order to develop and achieve challenging H&S work programmes based on costs and benefits or costs and consequences;
- c) a sub-optimal structure and grading set-up for H&S across the Department – the post holder will need to convince the Departmental Board, with evidence, of the need or benefit for adjusting arrangements if improvements to Health and Safety delivery structure and grading is required;
- d) having insufficient resilience with the Department in terms of expertise or coverage – secure resourcing within Groups to train back-up expertise and create a pool from which to fill potential future vacancies quickly, if necessary by establishing a business case(s);
- e) coordinating a team of H&S experts while maintaining Group led governance arrangements – the post holder will need to develop and secure effective team coordination with approval from Grade 3s;
- f) looking ahead and steering senior management and keeping H&S high on their agenda and their priorities – the post holder will need to be imaginative

and persistent so that the H&S message does not become stale or overlooked,

g) ensuring effective engagement with TUS.

### **Initiative, Originality Creativity**

The post holder will take up a brand new post, unprecedented in this Department and unmatched within other NICS Departments, because DAERA has the broadest and highest level of risks of all the Departments.

Uniquely, the post holder will have an analytical role to assess existing arrangements and policies; a developmental role to create a strategy and work programmes; a role in persuading, encouraging and cooperating; a forceful and potentially confrontational role if required to deliver change; and ultimately the role to challenge the Permanent Secretary and Departmental Board to meet or exceed their legislative requirements.

There will be little opportunity to fall back on precedent on what has happened within the Department, or in other Departments. The role will be an original one. Past H&S roles will not have had the opportunity for dedicated full-time H&S creative thinking at senior management level across the whole Department. Past H&S roles will not have had the same managerial focus to drive changes. Past roles have had a more operational level focus.

It will be a constant challenge to get others to do things differently without being part of their direct line management structure, and for H&S to be always integrated as something positive, rather than a hindrance. This would require considerable creativity and reinvention even if circumstances were not to change – but of course there will be changes to respond to, including legislative changes and changes to best practice.

Although there is a well-established legislative framework to work within, the real ingenuity required will be to get Health and Safety 'culturally embedded' so that is second nature in all staff and TUS concerns are addressed – to get all

staff *wanting* to know what they should do, rather than *having* to know what they should do, and doing it right, all the time.

Further, creative thinking will be required to take the operational level information and experience from the H&S advisers in the Department, and transform that into really effective corporate learning.

## **9. DECISION MAKING**

### **Own Decisions**

The post holder will be the most senior officer dedicated exclusively to H&S in the Department and will be responsible for a wide range of strategic decisions on H&S issues. The post holder will decide what to present to the Departmental Board, what recommendations are proposed, and will put forward a Departmental Strategy, policies and work programmes.

Ultimately strategic decisions on H&S matters within the Department will be made by the Permanent Secretary, but he or she will make decisions based on his or her due diligence of the annual statement of assurance for Health and Safety and other reports provided by the post holder.

Effectively, this means that decisions, for example on acceptable levels of risk, investment, budgeting, staffing, procurement, organisational arrangements, and external service provision are heavily influenced by the work of the post holder. These decisions impact on the lives and wellbeing of staff and customers alike. Input to and influence over these decisions is the main role of the job.

### **Advising Others**

Working across the Department, the post holder will advise on cross-cutting H&S matters and will provide advice and support to all business areas. The post holder will also provide advice and updates to the Department Board and this will significantly influence decisions made at that level. The advice provided is highly influential and has important consequences and could well be the



scrutinised in the legal arena and have a bearing on liability cases, including the personal liability for corporate manslaughter that the Permanent Secretary carries. The advice provided is in the highest weighting category available.

### **Types of Decisions**

The decisions the post holder will make will be strategic, policy or programme related – they will not be operational level decisions that can be dealt with by Departmental H&S Advisers or colleagues in other business areas. The decisions will be evidence based (based on Departmental performance, legislative requirements, and best practice) and specifically adapted to our Departmental circumstances. They will also be based on professional networking and assessment of imminent regulatory requirements.

## **10. AUTONOMY**

The post holder will be the highest ranking officer in the Department dedicated to Health and Safety. The role is new and the post holder will, to a certain extent, need to develop it to maximise effectiveness. The post holder's work will be assessed and be relied upon by the Director of Corporate Services, the Health and Safety Director, the Deputy Secretary CS&CPG, the Permanent Secretary, the Departmental Board, and the ARAC Committee. The post itself is not defined in terms of legislation, guidelines, codes or other written instructions – rather, the nature of the post will be determined by the need to meet or exceed requirements making use of best practice in our unique Departmental context. Similar work but at an operational level has been carried out before within the Department in that the team of H&S Advisors have been coordinated by a Deputy Principal in Environment, Marine and Fisheries Group. The work that the post holder will do will be different in that it is more focused on the Departmental wide strategic improvements, and direct reporting to senior management with H&S liability. The decisions that the post holder will make will centre on the production of a strategy, policies, 'lines to take' and work programmes to be ratified by senior management. The post holder will be independent (of the Permanent Secretary, the Departmental Board, Grade 3s) in order to review effectiveness and be constructively critical.



## **11. MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES**

### **Financial Resources**

The post holder is expected to evaluate existing expenditure on H&S across the Department in order to achieve improved outcomes and value for money. That said, direct financial management is not anticipated to be a significant part of the post holder's role. However, the post holder may need to commission independent work (for example on delivery structure and grading, or subject specific expert H&S input, or training requirements). It is expected that appropriate business cases may have to be developed by the post holder. The post holder will be expected to work with Grade 3 Deputy Secretaries with regard to budget planning to deliver H&S work programmes across the Department.

### **Leadership and Team working**

The role centres on both taking a leading role for H&S across the Department and a coordinator role for the in-house H&S Advisory team spread across the Department's Groups and delivery structure. The post holder will define the priorities for H&S improvements and secure approval for those with the Health and Safety Director, and the Departmental Board – essentially setting out the direction for the Department. The production of annual work programmes will involve leadership, coordination, and collaboration. For example, the H&S outputs of one Departmental Group may be relevant and beneficial to other Groups, and the post holder will rationalise and prioritise work across the Groups. Liaising and negotiating with TUS on H&S matters will require strong leadership and team working.

### **Nature of Management Role**

The post holder will provide input to performance management reporting of the technical H&S Advisory team, but the Departmental Board has determined that governance arrangements will remain such that Groups will have corporate responsibility for the issue within their business areas. Approximately 20% of the post holder's time will be spent coordinating the work of the H&S Advisers

team based throughout the Department, but less on the day-to-day management of the team. (Note that this could change in light of any specific short term review or investigation.) In addition to this, the post holder will adopt managerial aspects of the work of other managers – notably by cooperating with Grade 3s to establish annual work programmes, capacity building and resilience improvement.

## **12. IMPACT**

H&S is a key area of responsibility across the Department and this post is central to ensuring that H&S obligations are met. The role of the post is specifically envisaged to have a positive impact right across the Department, operating across the Department's Group structure in order to engage with the Permanent Secretary and with a unique authority based on that. The Department's H&S performance is its highest priority – the post holder will both help establish performance targets and report on the degree to which targets have been reached. The Department's image as an employer is significantly influenced by its H&S performance. Equally, departmental H&S performance reflects on the NICS as an employer.

A failure to deliver on H&S would have significant legal and life threatening consequences and would attract wide internal and public criticism. It would also create concerns and uncertainties amongst staff and the trade unions.

Signed: 

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 05 April 2019 17:16  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** creation of G7 post

Hi [REDACTED]

A head's up.

I created a new Grade 7 Health and Safety Coordinator post on HRC which will probably land with you.

If it falls to you to match up an approved head count form I can help out there if that speeds things up.

Our intention is to trawl and interview in the next weeks. I'm unclear who and how a trawl is generated – do I do that after your approval on a form that you provide?

Please give me a call if I've missed anything or you need me to do anything.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

HoB (Acting) Central Management Branch | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs |  
Room 428 | Dundonald House | Upper Newtownards Road | Belfast | BT4 3SB  
Tel: 02890524252 | Internal Tel: 24252  
Mobile: 07825141380  
Email: [REDACTED]@daera-ni.gov.uk



Department of  
**Agriculture, Environment  
and Rural Affairs**  
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

**A living, working, active landscape  
valued by everyone.**

[Redacted]

---

**From:** [Redacted]  
**Sent:** 30 April 2019 09:44  
**To:** [Redacted] n  
**Subject:** created new vacancy

[Redacted]

I created new vacancy IRC 242042 in the newly created H&S coordination Branch.

Please call me to discuss progress.

Thanks

[Redacted]

[Redacted]  
HoB (Acting) Central Management Branch | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs |  
Room 428 | Dundonald House | Upper Newtownards Road | Belfast | BT4 3SB  
Tel: 02890524252 | Internal Tel: 24252  
Mobile: 07825141380  
Email: [Redacted]@daera-ni.gov.uk



Department of  
**Agriculture, Environment  
and Rural Affairs**  
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

**A living, working, active landscape  
valued by everyone.**

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 30 April 2019 11:21  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Health and Safety Coordinator

Hi [REDACTED]

This is just a head's up that Alison Noble will be putting the details of the new G7 Health and Safety Coordinator post your way soon.

We're keen to get this key post filled as soon as possible so please call me if you have any concerns or need any clarity – much appreciated.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

HoB (Acting) Central Management Branch | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs |  
Room 428 | Dundonald House | Upper Newtownards Road | Belfast | BT4 3SB  
Tel: 02890524252 | Internal Tel: 24252  
Mobile: 07825141380  
Email: [REDACTED]@daera-ni.gov.uk



Department of  
**Agriculture, Environment  
and Rural Affairs**  
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

**A living, working, active landscape  
valued by everyone.**

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 30 April 2019 11:22  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: template (G7 H&S Coordinator)  
**Attachments:** INTERNAL blank CIB Sep 17.doc; DAERA Background Jan 2019.doc

[REDACTED]

Trawl template attached with background information to be inserted.

Regards

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

NICS HR Resourcing | DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE  
3rd Floor | 2-4 Bruce Street | Belfast | BT2 7JD  
Tel: (028) 90 251612 | DD: 51612 | [REDACTED]@finance-ni.gov.uk



Please consider the environment - do you really need to print this email?



**Candidate  
Information  
Booklet  
Trawl / Interest Circular**  
(delete as appropriate)

**IRC  
Job Title  
Department**

**Completed Application Forms  
must be returned to HRConnect  
no later than 12 noon (UK time)  
on  
*Day Date Month Year***

***Enter Department here***

**Department specific strapline** (changeable)

**Communication between HRConnect and you**

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

**Contents**

**Page**

**Background**

**Job Description**

**Key Responsibilities**

**Eligibility Criteria**

**Person Specification**

**Selection Process**

## **BACKGROUND**

Insert text as supplied by Department. Typically this will describe the Department/Division/Agency in which the post is located.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

There is currently x permanent, full time vacancy.

Further appointments may be made from this competition should NICS positions become vacant which have similar duties and responsibilities.

### **Applications Invited From**

\*[Delete as appropriate]

\*Trawls are open to all staff in all grades and disciplines who consider that they meet the eligibility criteria. Staff who have been advised by their Department in writing that they have been excluded from promotion/selection are excluded from the field of consideration.

\*Interest Circulars are open to all staff in the Northern Ireland Civil Service at same grade or analogous grade who consider that they meet the eligibility criteria. Staff who have been advised by their Department in writing that they have been excluded from promotion/selection are excluded from the field of consideration.

### **Salary and Allowances**

£xx,xxx - £xx,xxx

Salary will be within the above range. Pay progression will be as per current NICS pay policy. Starting salary on appointment will be determined by promotion, re-grading or downgrading terms. Please refer to the Pay and Grading Chapter of the Staff Handbook.

### **Location**

The post holder will be based at [Insert location].

### **Hours of Work**

The normal conditioned hours of work are full-time: 37 hours excluding meal breaks Monday to Friday. Most offices work flexi-time.

### **Travel [Delete if not required]**

The successful candidate must have access to a form of transport which will enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.

### **\*Pre-Appointment Checks [Delete if not required]**

\*The successful applicant will be required to satisfy a pre-employment check undertaken by AccessNI in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007.

\*The successful applicant will be required to satisfy the Counter Terrorist Check security vetting requirements for the post.

### **Trial Period**

On transfer as the result of a trawl/interest circular [delete as appropriate], you will serve a 12 month trial in your new post. This will commence from the date of placement. At the end of the trial period both you and the employing Department or Branch will consider whether the posting should be made permanent.

If the posting is not made permanent, the officer will be transferred back to the former grade/discipline (where applicable) but will remain in their new Department (where applicable). Only where absolutely necessary will the officer be considered for a return to their former Department or, if necessary the wider NICS.

### **Conflict of Interest**

It is a basic requirement of all Civil Servants that their private activities should not bring them in to conflict with their official duties. Conflict of Interest is not limited to the individual's own private, financial or other interests, as family, friends and associates may also have dealings which affect the Department's business directly or indirectly. Therefore to avoid any conflict or potential conflict and to demonstrate impartiality to the public at all times, an officer must not, without prior approval, engage in any activity which could be considered to be in conflict with official business. As such, to protect employees and the Department from public criticism, it will be mandatory for the successful candidate to complete a Conflict of Interest declaration on appointment.

### **Further Information**

Applicants wishing to learn more about the post before deciding to apply may telephone xxxxxx on xxxxxx or email xxxxxx.

If you have any questions about the competition process, you should contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330 or email: [recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net](mailto:recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net).

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Insert text as supplied by Department. This will include the duties of the post.



## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications:

*Insert text as supplied by Department*

1.

*(if appropriate)*

Applications will also be considered from applicants with relevant formal qualifications/professional memberships (delete as appropriate) considered by the selection panel to be of an equivalent or higher standard to those stated.

*(if appropriate)*

**Relevant or equivalent** qualifications: give the type of qualification and date awarded (the date awarded is the date on which you were notified of your result by the official awarding body). If you believe your qualification is equivalent to the one required, the onus is on you to provide the panel with details of modules studied etc so that a well-informed decision can be made.

*(if appropriate)*

**Equivalent** professional memberships: give details of the professional membership held, and reasons why you consider it to be equivalent to the membership required. The onus is on you to provide the panel with details of the professional membership so that a well-informed decision can be made.

## SHORTLISTING CRITERIA

*(if appropriate)*

In addition applicants should be aware that after an eligibility sift, should it be necessary to shortlist candidates to go forward to the next stage of selection, the following shortlisting criteria will be used in the order listed (delete as appropriate):

*Insert text as supplied by Department*

**Please note:**

- **It is essential that you clearly demonstrate in your application form how and to what extent (including dates where applicable) you meet each of the essential criteria and shortlisting criteria for the post.**
- **You must provide sufficient details to allow the panel to assess how well you meet these requirements.**
- **It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure the application form is completed appropriately, candidates are therefore strongly advised to demonstrate each criterion in the section of the form that specifically addresses that criterion.**
- **If you do not clearly demonstrate in your application form that you meet all the essential criteria and if necessary, the shortlisting criteria you will not be invited to interview.**
- **Only the details provided by you for the eligibility and shortlisting criteria, in Part 3 of your application form will be available to the sift panel.**

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate the skills and competencies set out in the eligibility criteria *and shortlisting criteria (if applicable)*. In addition, they will also be required to demonstrate the skills and competencies set out in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) competence framework at Level <<Level>> for the purposes of personal and professional development.

Title is analogous to Grade in the NICS.

### **What is the NICS competence framework?**

The competence framework sets out how all NICS employees should work. It puts the Civil Service values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality at the heart of everything they do, and it aligns to the three high-level leadership behaviours that every civil servant needs to model as appropriate to their role and level of responsibility: Set Direction; Engage People and Deliver Results. Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. The framework outlines ten competencies, which are grouped into three clusters. The competencies are intended to be discrete and cumulative, with each level building on the levels below i.e. a person demonstrating a competence at level 3 should be demonstrating levels 1 and 2 as a matter of course.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service competence framework can be accessed through [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk)

**It is important that all candidates familiarise themselves with the competence framework as this forms the basis of the assessment / interview criteria as outlined below.**

## INTERVIEW CRITERIA

**The selection process will include a presentation\* and a competence based interview\* - \*Delete as appropriate.**

### PRESENTATION

As part of the selection process candidates will be required to make a presentation relevant to the responsibilities of the post lasting no longer than 7 minutes. Candidates will be advised of presentation topic when they report for interview and will be given a maximum of \_\_\_ minutes to prepare for their presentation. Candidates should therefore report for interview at least \_\_\_ minutes earlier than their scheduled interview appointment to allow time to prepare their presentation.

A flipchart and writing materials will be provided for candidates' use. No personal documentation may be brought in to the pre-interview room. Candidates will be allowed to bring any flipchart sheets and some short speaking notes into the interview room for assistance during the presentation (but note that use of the flipchart is not mandatory). No other materials or visual aids will be permitted.

**Marks available:**

### COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEW

The selection panel will design questions to test the applicants' knowledge and experience in each of the following areas below and award marks accordingly.

1. **TBC**  
Description  
  
Marks available:  
Minimum standard:
  
2. **TBC**  
Description  
  
Marks available:
  
3. **TBC**  
Description  
  
Marks available:

4. **TBC**  
Description  
  
Marks available:
  
5. **TBC**  
Description  
  
Marks available:
  
6. **TBC**  
Description  
  
Marks available:

**Total Marks Available:**  
**Overall Pass Mark:**

#### **INTERVIEWS DATES**

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in <<location>> during week commencing <<date>>.

## **INTERVIEW GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS**

**If this is your first experience of a competence-based interview, bear in mind that it does not require you to:**

- Talk through previous jobs or appointments from start to finish;
- Provide generalised information as to your background and experience; or
- Provide information that is not specifically relevant to the competence the question is designed to test.

**A competence-based interview does however require you to:**

- Focus exclusively, in your responses, on your ability to fulfill the competences required for effective performance in the role; and
- Provide specific examples of your experience in relation to the required competence areas.

**In preparation for the interview you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, such as:**

- Situation – briefly outline the situation;
- Task – what was your objective, what were you trying to achieve;
- Action – what did you actually do, what was your unique contribution;
- Result – what happened, what was the outcome, what did you learn.

The panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience in relation to each of the competences. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples which best illustrate your skills, abilities and experience in each competence area. You may draw examples from any area of your work / life experiences.



## SELECTION PROCESS

### Making your application

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

### Guidance for Applicants

- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either typescript font size 12, or legible, block capitals using black ink.
- Applicants must not reformat application forms.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline.
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your branch or your job.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria.– This is very important as the examples which you provide may be explored at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your *unique* role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.
- Where qualification form part of the eligibility/shortlisting criteria, candidates will be required to provide documentary evidence, if invited to interview.

### Application Form Submission

- Please refer to the Candidate Information Booklet before completing an application.
- **All** parts of the application form **must** be completed by the applicant before this application can be considered. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.
- All applications must be received by the advertised closing date. Late applications or applications received by fax or by email will not be accepted. Applicants using Royal Mail should note that 1<sup>st</sup> class mail does not guarantee next day delivery. It is also the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient postage has been paid to return the form to HRConnect. HRConnect will not accept any application where they are asked to pay any shortfall in postage.

- Only the eligibility and shortlisting sections will be made available to the panel (delete as appropriate).
- Applicants are encouraged to submit online applications wherever possible. However, all requests for hard copy application packs are welcomed and all applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are hard copy or online.
- When completing the online application, your information is saved as you move through the pages. You may leave the application at any time, providing you have clicked on the 'Save & Continue' button. Once your application has been submitted the option to edit will no longer be available.
- Please note - the session timeout for the online application is 40 minutes, if you do not save or change page within this time you will automatically be logged out and any unsaved work will be lost.
- Please do not attempt to reformat application forms as this will result in disqualification.

### **Communication between HRConnect and you**

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

### **Transgender Requirements**

Should you currently be going through a phase of transition in respect of gender and wish this to be taken into consideration in confidence to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process please contact HRConnect. Details of this will only be used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process.

### **Further appointments from this competition**

Where a further position in the NICS is identified during the lifetime of the competition which has the same location, skills and experience requirements to that outlined in this candidate information booklet, consideration may be given to filling the position from this competition.

### **Disability Requirements**

Any candidate who because of a disability cannot complete the application form in its current format should contact HRConnect.

## **Vetting Procedures**

### **1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard**

The successful candidate will be required to be cleared to Security Check (SC) / Counter Terrorist Check (CTC) / Developed Vetting (DV) (delete as appropriate) level.

### **Order of Merit**

The selection panel will assess the information presented by the candidate at interview against each selection criterion. A score will then be allocated against each selection criterion and a total interview score derived accordingly. Following the interview process HRConnect will add the score achieved at interview to the score(s) achieved in any other assessment(s) where applicable. Those candidates who achieve the overall competition and (if appropriate) individual criterion pass mark(s) will be deemed suitable for appointment subject to the number of posts to be filled. HRConnect will then publish the list on the portal and allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in merit order. The findings of the competition cease to be valid on the day on which a new competition is advertised or 2 years from the date of publication of the initial list, whichever is earlier.

### **Feedback**

Feedback in respect of eligibility/shortlisting will be communicated automatically to those candidates who fail to satisfy any criteria. All other requests for feedback are welcome.

**Completed Application Forms should be sent to the HRConnect Recruitment Team:**

HRConnect  
PO Box 1090  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
The Metro Building  
6-9 Donegall Square South  
Belfast  
BT1 9EX

**NOTE:** Late Applications or applications received by fax or email will not be accepted.

**Contact details:**

If you have any queries regarding the competition process please contact HRConnect at the address above or by:

**Email:** [NICS@HRConnect.nigov.net](mailto:NICS@HRConnect.nigov.net)  
**Tel:** 0800 1 300 400  
**Fax:** 028 9024 1665

## **BACKGROUND**

### **DAERA BACKGROUND**

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has responsibility for food, farming, environmental, fisheries, forestry and sustainability policy and the development of the rural sector in Northern Ireland. The Department assists the sustainable development of the agri-food, environmental, fishing and forestry sectors of the Northern Ireland economy, having regard for the needs of the consumers, the protection of human, animal and plant health, the welfare of animals and the conservation and enhancement of the environment.

DAERA provides a business development service for farmers and growers and a veterinary service for administration of animal health and welfare. The Department's College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) delivers training and further and higher education courses in the agri-food sector. DAERA is responsible to the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in Great Britain for the administration of schemes affecting the whole of the United Kingdom. The Department also oversees the application of European Union agricultural, environmental, fisheries and rural development policy to Northern Ireland.

The Department is currently preparing for BREXIT working closely with our partners in Northern Ireland and with colleagues in the other UK Administrations.

### **DAERA VISION AND STRATEGIC GOALS**

#### **Vision**

"A living, working, active landscape valued by everyone"

#### **Strategic Outcomes**

1. Sustainable agri-food, fisheries, forestry and industrial sectors.
2. A clean, healthy environment, benefiting people, nature and the economy.
3. A thriving rural economy, contributing to prosperity and wellbeing.
4. A well-led, high performing organisation focused on outcomes.

#### **DAERA Top Management Group comprises:-**

- Forest Service, Rural Affairs and Estate Transformation
- Central Services and Contingency Planning
- Veterinary Service Animal Health Group
- Environment Marine and Fisheries Group; and
- Food and Farming Group

**DAERA has two Executive Agencies:**

- Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
- Forest Service

The Department also sponsors a number of NDPBs including the Agri-food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI).

The Permanent Secretary of DAERA is Dr Denis McMahon.