

Working for the NSW Department of Water and Energy

Applicant information package



Contents

1	About the Department	1
2	How to apply	2
3	Selection criteria	2
4	Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)	3
5	Ethical practice	6
6	Ethnic affairs and cultural diversity	8
7	Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S)	9
8	Interview and selection	11
9	What happens then?	12
	Sending your application	12
	Further information	12

1 About the Department

Thank you for your enquiry. This package is designed to provide you with information about the Department's recruitment and employment process and general conditions of employment.

Information about the Department such as the Corporate Plan and Organisation Structure can be accessed by visiting the *About Us/Careers* section on [our website](http://www.dwe.nsw.gov.au) (www.dwe.nsw.gov.au). Supplementary material that may be of interest, such as reports published by the Department can be found in the section on the website entitled Publications. The Annual Report is located in the section entitled *About Us*.

On Friday April 27 2007, the Department of Water and Energy was created, incorporating most of the functions of the former Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability, water-related functions of the former Department of Natural Resources as well as the Metropolitan Water Directorate from the former NSW Cabinet Office.

Some of the functions of the former Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability, such as the Energy and Water Savings Funds and Action Plans have been transferred to the new Department of Environment and Climate Change. The Accredited Service Provider program was also transferred to the Office of Fair Trading.

2 How to apply

The following pages contain a lot of information. Read it all carefully. Studying these pages will make you more likely to get an interview. Remember, applying for government jobs is different to applying for a job elsewhere.

Get information

You will have a much better chance of getting the job you want if you take the following steps:

Read the job advertisement carefully

All NSW Government job advertisements list 'selection criteria'. The selection criteria describe the skills, knowledge and experience needed to do the job.

Advertisements also have a brief description of the job, the name of the inquiries person, an address and a closing date for applications.

Read the advertisement and make a note of anything you don't understand so you can ask questions. Keep a copy of the advertisement for future use.

Telephone the inquiries person

You can get more information about the job by phoning the inquiries person named in the advertisement. Speak to them after you read the advertisement and position profile so your questions will be more relevant.

Speaking to the inquiries person will help you decide whether to apply for the job, and what to emphasise in your application.

Other information

Get as much extra information as you can to write a good application. You might meet with the inquiries person at the workplace.

If possible, search the internet or talk to people who work in similar areas. This will give you a better idea of the workplace.

Write your application

You need to apply in writing to the Department. You can do this on-line on [jobs.nsw](http://jobs.nsw.gov.au) (www.jobs.nsw.gov.au). If you are unable to apply on-line you can send your application by email, mail or fax.

It is important to prepare a good application as it will be used to decide whether you get an interview. A good application shows why you are the best person for the job and how your skills, knowledge and experience match the selection criteria. More information is available at [Jobs.NSW - How To Apply](http://www.jobs.nsw.gov.au) (www.jobs.nsw.gov.au) and at [Finding a great job in NSW government](http://www.eeo.nsw.gov.au) (www.eeo.nsw.gov.au).

Your application should contain:

- a brief covering letter (optional)
- your claim for the position [application]
- your résumé (or CV-curriculum vitae)
- a completed [NSW Government Job Application form](http://www.jobs.nsw.gov.au) or apply online through jobs.nsw (www.jobs.nsw.gov.au).

Your claim for the position — the most important part of your application

You must include a 'claim for the position' in your application. If not, you are unlikely to get an interview.

You write a claim for the position to show the selection panel that you have the right mix of skills, knowledge and experience to do the job.

Make a separate heading for each selection criterion. For each one, describe your skills, knowledge and experience and show how they could be used in the job. Emphasise your major achievements. Use positive language, for example: 'In my current role I take responsibility for ...' is better than 'I have limited experience in ...'

Your résumé

Prepare a résumé (or a CV - curriculum vitae) which is clear, concise, up to date and includes:

- personal details
- education and training
- employment history (name of organisation, period of employment, job title, major duties and responsibilities, main achievements)
- skills/experience gained outside of paid work
- contact details for two referees, including complete phone and fax numbers and whether an interpreter is needed.

Ideally, your referees will be able to comment on your recent work performance. If you can, give them a copy of the job advertisement.

The application form

The jobs.nsw system completes this information when you apply on-line so you will not need to fill out a separate application form. If you apply off-line you will need to complete the *Application for NSW Government Jobs* which is available with the position advertisement on [jobs.nsw](http://jobs.nsw.gov.au) (www.jobs.nsw.gov.au).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

If you are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander you may wish to state your Aboriginality in your application. The Department promotes cultural diversity and also from time to time offers targeted cadetships, traineeships or apprenticeships.

People with a Disability

You do not have to disclose your disability during the application process if you do not believe that it would affect your ability to do the job. For further information on discussing any workplace adjustment you may require if offered the job go to [Finding a great job in NSW government](http://www.eeo.nsw.gov.au) (www.eeo.nsw.gov.au).

Overseas qualifications

Some job advertisements require that you have a qualification and this will be clearly stated in the Selection Criteria. If you have overseas qualifications you will need to have them translated and assessed for Australian equivalency. For more information about organisations which can assist you with this, go to [Finding a great job in NSW government](http://www.eeo.nsw.gov.au) (www.eeo.nsw.gov.au).

3 Selection criteria

All NSW Government job advertisements list 'selection criteria'. The selection criteria describe the skills, knowledge and experience needed to do the job.

There are two crucial things you need to know about selection criteria:

- you will be expected to include a separate claim for the position with your application. For this, you make a separate heading for each selection criterion. For each one, describe your skills, knowledge and experience and show how they could be used in the job.
- NSW Government jobs no longer have Common Selection Criteria. However, all employees and managers are expected to understand and support the principles and practices which ensure a diverse, fair and safe workplace, and to meet their responsibilities in these areas. These principles include:
 - [Cultural diversity](#)
 - [Equal Employment Opportunity \(EEO\)](#)
 - [Ethical Practice](#)
 - [Occupational Health and Safety \(OH&S\)](#)

The information provided at the above links at www.eeo.nsw.gov.au is designed to give you a broad understanding of these areas.

Some key words used in selection criteria

Demonstrated knowledge: You need to give examples that prove you have this area of knowledge.

Ability to: You do not need to have done this kind of work before, but you need to describe how your skills, knowledge and experience show that you are capable of **doing this part of the job.**

Experience in: You have to show you have done this work before. Give examples.

Effective, Proven, Highly developed, Superior: You need to show your level of skill. Use examples of your achievements to show your level of skills, knowledge and experience.

Good communication skills: This is not about whether you speak English with an accent. This is about showing you have the communication skills needed to do the job. You could include: experience in dealing with people, details of things you have written, and examples of problems you have solved using your communication skills.

4 Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

What is EEO about?

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) is about:

- making sure that workplaces are free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment, and
- providing programs to assist members of EEO groups to overcome past or present disadvantage.

This means having workplace rules, policies, practices and behaviours that are fair and do not disadvantage people because they belong to particular groups.

EEO groups are people affected by past or continuing disadvantage or discrimination in employment. These groups are:

- women,
- Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders,
- members of racial, ethnic, and ethno-religious minority groups, and
- people with a disability.

Eliminating discrimination

Discrimination is treating someone unfairly or harassing them because they belong to a particular group. It is against the law in NSW for any employer, including the Government, to discriminate against an employee or job applicant because of their:

- age,
- sex,
- pregnancy,
- disability (includes past, present or possible future disability),
- race, colour, ethnic or ethno-religious background, descent or nationality,
- marital status,
- carer's responsibilities,
- homosexuality, or
- transgender.

This is the law in most cases. (There are a few exceptions allowed — e.g. sometimes employers get permission to fill a job with a person from a particular group.)

Both direct and indirect discrimination are against the law.

Direct discrimination means treatment that is obviously unfair or unequal. For example, if an employer won't hire someone just because they are a woman this is likely to be direct sex discrimination.

Indirect discrimination means having a requirement that is the same for everyone but has an effect or result that is unfair to particular groups. For example, not considering an employee's overseas skills and training when determining his or her level of pay can constitute indirect race discrimination.

Every employee is responsible for helping prevent unlawful discrimination in their workplace.

How does EEO affect you as a NSW Public Sector employee?

As a staff member

You have the **right** to:

- a workplace that is free from unlawful discrimination and harassment,
- competitive merit-based selection processes for recruitment or promotion,
- training and development that enables you to be productive in your work and to pursue a career path,
- equal access to benefits and conditions including flexible working arrangements, and
- fair processes to deal with work-related complaints and grievances.

You have the **responsibility** to:

- act to prevent harassment, discrimination and bullying against others in your workplace,
- respect cultural and social differences among your colleagues and customers, and
- treat people fairly (don't discriminate against, harass or bully them).

You may also be asked to complete EEO surveys.

As a Supervisor / Manager

You have the same rights and responsibilities as staff members and you also have the responsibility to:

- take steps to ensure that all work practices and behaviours are fair in your workplace,
- ensure the work environment is free from bullying and from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment,
- provide employees with training and development and give them equal opportunity to apply for available jobs, higher duties and flexible working arrangements,
- ensure selection processes are transparent and the methods used are consistent,
- provide access to fair processes to deal with complaints and grievances.

You may also be accountable for achieving specific EEO outcomes in your agency.

Who benefits from EEO?

Everyone — staff, managers and customers — benefits from EEO. Skilled and diverse workplaces, free from unlawful discrimination and harassment, are fairer, more productive and better able to meet business goals.

Where can I go to find out more?

Every agency has personnel responsible for EEO who can assist you with:

- information on programs for members of EEO groups
- problems with discrimination or harassment
- grievance procedures
- merit selection issues
- any other questions or suggestions you may have about EEO in your agency.

The Public Sector Workforce Office, through the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment, (www.eeo.nsw.gov.au) produces a wide range of practical [publications](#) designed to assist managers and employees understand EEO and what it means to them in the workplace. Many are available free within NSW by [emailing their Office](#) (eeo@dpc.nsw.gov.au). You can also research EEO in the Office's library.

5 Ethical practice

People who work for the NSW Government must always work ethically and act in good faith in the public interest. This is their public duty.

The Independent Commission against Corruption (ICAC) has developed these principles to help Government employees make better decisions and resolve ethical dilemmas that they face at work:

Serving public above private interests

Government employees must make decisions and take actions which best serve the public interest. When making decisions, employees should not consider their private or personal interests.

Integrity

Government employees should ensure that any decision made, or action taken, has these qualities:

Openness

- Giving reasons for decisions
- Revealing all avenues available to the client or business
- When authorised, offering all information
- Communicating clearly

Honesty

- Obeying the law
- Following the letter and spirit of policies and procedures
- Observing codes of conduct
- Fully disclosing any possible conflicts between the public interest and your personal interest

Accountability

- Recording reasons for decisions
- Submitting to scrutiny
- Keeping proper accessible records
- Establishing audit trails

Objectivity

- Fairness to all
- Impartial assessment
- Merit selection in recruitment and in purchase and sale of government resources
- Considering only relevant matters

Courage

- Giving advice fearlessly and frankly where required
- Doing the right thing even in the face of adversity
- Reporting and dealing with suspected wrongdoing
- Acting in the public interest above loyalty to colleagues or supervisors.

Leadership

Demonstrating, by your own ethical behavior, the value of these principles in serving the public interest. Promoting public duty to colleagues and others in an agency and outside.

For more information about ethical practice, see the [ICAC web site](http://www.icac.nsw.gov.au) (www.icac.nsw.gov.au). You can also ask any Government agency for a copy of their Code of Conduct for employees.

6 Ethnic affairs and cultural diversity

The below information was provided by the [Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW](http://www.crc.nsw.gov.au) (www.crc.nsw.gov.au).

Ethnic affairs priorities statements (EAPS)

The NSW Government recognises and values the different linguistic, religious, racial and ethnic backgrounds of all the people of NSW.

The Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000 sets out **four principles of multiculturalism**.

These are:

- All individuals in NSW should have the greatest possible opportunity to contribute to, and participate in, all aspects of public life in which they may legally participate.
- All individuals and institutions should respect and make provision for the culture, language and religion of others within an Australian legal and institutional framework where English is the common language.
- All individuals should have the greatest possible opportunity to make use of and participate in relevant activities and programs provided or administered by the Government of NSW.
- All institutions of NSW should recognise the linguistic and cultural assets in the population of NSW as a valuable resource and promote this resource to maximise the development of the State.

All NSW Government agencies must include an **Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS)** in their annual report to Parliament. These contain the agency's strategies and plans for future action to meet the principles of multiculturalism. Strategies include:

- offering programs and services which reflect the needs of the entire community
- developing and implementing policies which are sensitive to the needs of all staff and clients
- providing information in ways that will reach all staff and clients
- providing language services for all clients
- ensuring that boards and committees reflect the multiculturalism of the community
- training staff on multiculturalism issues and how these apply in their jobs
- using flexible, inclusive consultation processes.

A number of NSW agencies have been identified as key agencies on the basis of:

- a high degree of client contact, especially in the areas of welfare, justice, education and employment, and/or
- responsibility for developing and implementing Government policy in these areas.

These key agencies are also required to work closely with the Community Relations Commission in the preparation of their EAPS and to lodge their EAPS with the Commission.

7 Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S)

Every applicant should read the first section 'What everyone needs to know'.

If you are applying for a job as a **manager or supervisor**, you should also familiarise yourself with 'What managers also need to know'. This sets out the obligations of employers that you may be responsible for as a manager, and other relevant information.

This page was adapted from information supplied by [WorkCover NSW](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au) (www.workcover.nsw.gov.au).

What everyone needs to know

The NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 aims to protect the health, safety and welfare of people at work by laying down general requirements which must be met at every place of work in NSW.

The Act covers employees as well as employers and self-employed people.

Employees must:

- take reasonable care of the health and safety of others
- co-operate with employers in their efforts to comply with occupational health and safety requirements.

Employers must:

- act to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees.

All persons must not:

- interfere with or misuse things provided for the health, safety or welfare of persons at work
- obstruct attempts to give aid or attempts to prevent a serious risk to the health and safety of a person at work
- refuse a reasonable request to assist in giving aid or preventing a risk to health and safety
- disrupt a workplace by creating health and safety fears.

What Managers need to know?

Employers must act to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. They must:

- maintain places of work under their control in a safe condition and provide and maintain safe entrances and exits
- make arrangements for ensuring the safe use, handling, storage and transport of equipment and substances
- provide and maintain systems of work and working environments that are safe and without risks to health
- provide the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure the health and safety at work of employees
- provide adequate facilities for the welfare of employees
- consult with employees to enable them to contribute to decisions affecting their health, safety and welfare
- adopt a risk management approach to managing workplace health and safety.

For more information

If you are interested in finding out more about occupational health and safety, see the [WorkCover NSW site](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au) (www.workcover.nsw.gov.au).

WorkCover NSW offers a wide range of services to help improve health and safety at work, including workplace inspections, advice on training, and expert scientific and technical assistance. Some information is also available in languages other than English.

For expert advice call the WorkCover Information Centre or find your nearest WorkCover office under WorkCover NSW in the White Pages of the phone book.

Copies of the Act and the regulations can be purchased from WorkCover.

Disclaimer

This page is intended solely for the use of job applicants. Managers and employees should seek more information once they enter the workplace. Nothing in this page shall be construed to waive or modify any obligations imposed by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* or the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001*.

8 Interview and selection

Selection is usually done by a committee which will include at least one man and one woman. One person usually works in a different work area to the job. Selection involves:

Short listing

The selection committee assesses all applications against the selection criteria. Applicants who best meet the selection criteria will be called for further assessment, usually an interview.

Interview preparation

If you are chosen for an interview, you should prepare carefully

Interview questions are based on the selection criteria. Read the criteria and think of likely questions. Practice your answers out loud or with a friend. Interviews are like public speaking — prepare and rehearse as much as you can.

Consider the challenges of the job and how your skills, knowledge and experience will help you meet them. Read your application and decide which points you want to emphasise.

At the interview

The selection committee may use a number of methods to assess your ability to do the job, including work samples or tests. If you have not been told what to expect, you can telephone and ask if there will be a test or exercise as well as the interview.

When answering interview questions remember:

- it is OK to take your time — think before you answer
- if the question is unclear, ask for it to be explained
- you will usually need to restate details which are in your application
- give examples from your experience with each answer
- give complete answers — don't assume that you can omit details
- interviewers may be more comfortable if you maintain eye contact.

At the end of the interview, ask any questions you have about the job. Restate your major strengths, adding anything that has been left out.

Referees

Your referees will be contacted if you are one of the best applicants for the job.

9 What happens then?

If you are **selected** for the job you will be telephoned with a job offer. You may be asked to provide some documents (for example, birth certificate, evidence of citizenship/resident status). There may also be some pre-employment checks (for example health assessment, criminal records). The offer will then be confirmed in writing. You will need to return a written acceptance of the offer. In accepting the offer you agree to support the core NSW public sector values of cultural diversity, equity and ethical practice and a healthy, safe and fair workplace.

If your application is **unsuccessful**, you will receive a letter. The letter may say that you have been placed on an eligibility list which means that you may be contacted in the future if similar positions become available. It is helpful to phone and ask for feedback. This can help you to understand the decision and improve your performance in future interviews.

Sending your application

By post To address as stated in the job advertisement.
On-line <http://www.jobs.nsw.gov.au>

Further information

If you require further information regarding the recruitment process please contact Employee Services at AskHR@dwe.nsw.gov.au or the Contact Officer nominated in the advertisement.