



Government of Western Australia
Department of Justice
Corrective Services



Prison Officer

- Special Operations
Group

Information Booklet

The Department of Justice is committed to ensuring that its workforce reflects the diversity of the community it serves by encouraging people from all parts of the community including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, and people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds to apply.

About the Department of Justice

The Department of Justice, Corrective Services is responsible for:

- managing adult and juvenile offenders in custody
- managing adult and young people in community corrections centres across the State
- delivering justice services through:
 - administration of the State's courts and tribunals
 - helping victims of crime
 - legal services to the State Government and legislative drafting services to State Parliament
 - translating government policy into laws
 - providing trustee services and promoting the rights of people with decision-making disabilities
 - registering births, deaths and marriages, and
 - supporting various review boards.

The Department reports to the Minister for Emergency Services, Corrective Services, the Honourable Francis Logan MLA, and the Attorney General, Minister for Commerce the Honourable John Quigley MLA. The Department is led by the Director General, Dr Adam Tomison.

Role of the Special Operations Group

Based in the metropolitan area at the Hakea Prison Complex in Canning Vale, the SOG is the major provider of specialist security and emergency support to all prisons within the State and Banksia Hill Detention Centre.

Services include:

1. Security/auditing evaluation
 - high security escorts
 - searching
 - perimeter security
 - control room operations
2. Operational and emergency management training.
3. 24/7 response to emergencies and major incidents

The SOG operates 24 hours a day in order to provide a state-wide response to emergency situations as required. A typical day will include operational duties such as high security escorts, search operations, security systems testing and high visibility patrols of prisons. With a commitment to ongoing learning and development, SOG Officers participate in various training programs to maintain and upgrade their work skills.

On occasion, operational duties or emergency responses will require intrastate, interstate and international air travel. Time is also allocated for strength and fitness training, to ensure our SOG Officers can provide the highest standard of response.

A typical day in the life of a SOG Officer

The SOG is staffed 24 hours a day in order to provide a statewide response to emergency situations as required. When not providing an emergency response, SOG Officers undertake daily operational duties which may include High Security Escorts (HSE), search operations, security system testing and high visibility patrols of prisons.

On occasion, operational duties or emergency responses will require intrastate, interstate and international air travel. Time is also allocated for strength and fitness training, to ensure our SOG Officers can provide the highest standard of response

A typical day will also involve maintaining and upgrading work skills and qualifications through various training programs.

You can expect that each day will vary from the next; however the following table provides an example of how an operational shift at the SOG base could look:

Sample daily schedule	
0700 – 0730	Daily brief and personal equipment issue.
0730 – 1130	Operational duties for the day and responding as required. On occasion, operational duties may require intrastate, interstate and international air travel (e.g., some high security escorts) or requalification or additional skills training, whilst maintaining a response capability.
1130 – 1230	Lunch.
1230 – 1800	Operational duties for the day and responding as required. On occasion, operational duties may require intrastate, interstate and international air travel (e.g., some high security escorts) or requalification or additional skills training, whilst maintaining a response capability.
1800 – 1900	Physical training, housekeeping and standby.

What it takes...

SOG Officers exemplify behaviours which demonstrate respect, integrity, good judgement, self-discipline and initiative.

SOG Officers are able to work effectively as team members, respond to directions and instructions, while building positive working relationships. Being able to operate within a structured environment with limited supervision, they are able to demonstrate sound reasoning and analytical skills to resolve problems, make decisions, and carry out tasks to completion.

Working with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, SOG Officers are able to recognise, respect and work with gender, social and cultural differences, including with Aboriginal people.

Physical Health and Fitness of a SOG Officer

SOG Officers are required to maintain a high level of physical fitness in order to effectively carry out many operational tasks. Some scenarios can involve lengthy periods of strenuous activity (e.g., cell extraction, non-compliant prisoner restraint, riot control). Officers may also be required to run, walk, bend, lift and carry objects whilst dressed in restrictive clothing, such as personal protective equipment and breathing apparatus.

If a SOG Officer was not physically fit, they would be at risk of suffering personal injury to themselves, and may jeopardise the safety of others. SOG Officers therefore should view physical fitness as a lifestyle choice and partake in regular exercise and physical training.

The most suitable candidates for the SOG Officer role will be those who regularly participate in team or individual sports, fitness activities, outdoors pursuits and/or arduous work.

Given the importance of physical fitness and health for SOG Officers, candidates will need to successfully complete two stages of fitness testing during the selection process (details in the Recruitment and Selection Assessments section).

Employment Conditions

Competitive Salary

Initially you will participate in an intensive SOG training program during which we will pay you a training salary of \$58,169 per annum. Upon successful completion of the training course, the salary increases to \$75,637 per annum, with increments up to \$87,543 per annum. Employer contribution to superannuation is an additional 9.50%.

If a candidate has had relevant custodial experience (set criteria applies) in the past he or she may be eligible to apply to commence on a higher salary (refer to the Recognition of Prior Experience section of this booklet).

Additional Allowances

Additional SOG allowances, up to the value of \$5,418 pa, which may consist of:

- Pager allowance (\$133.05 per fortnight)
- CABA (Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus) allowance (\$29.28 per fortnight)
- Annual Shoe (runner) allowance
- SOG Operational allowance (\$50.02 per fortnight)
- Travel allowance (for travel between Hakea and Casuarina).

Flexible Working Conditions / Shift Work / Travel

SOG Officers work in a 24/7 environment. Shift arrangements entail 12hr shifts, working days, nights, weekends and public holidays. Rosters are prepared and posted several weeks in advance. Due to circumstances that are unforeseen a rostered hours of duty may be changed, at short notice at times. There is also a requirement for occasional intrastate, interstate and international travel by airplane, including light aircraft.

Generous Leave Entitlements

- Six weeks of annual leave for SOG Officers working shifts
- Personal leave
- Parental leave (paid and unpaid)
- Purchased leave (ability to purchase additional annual leave on a pro-rata basis)
- Long service leave upon completion of 7 years continuous service.

Salary Packaging

A range of benefits can be included in salary packaging. For further information contact Smart Salary on 1300 554 489 or visit www.smartsalary.com.au

Other Benefits

- Uniform supplied (including boots, socks, jackets and hats)
- Job security
- Promotional and career development opportunities
- A rewarding and challenging career.

Pre-Appointment Requirements

Please be aware that to be eligible for employment as a SOG Officer, you must:

- Be an Australian or New Zealand citizen, or have permanent residency status within Australia
- Possess a valid C-Class (Manual) driver's licence
- Possess a valid and unrestricted Medium Rigid (MR) class heavy vehicle licence or equivalent (or be willing to obtain this within 12 months of employment at your own expense)
- Possess a HLTAID003 "Provide First Aid" qualification, which includes the HLTAID001 "Provide Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation", with a minimum of nine months validity remaining at the time of appointment.
- Obtain clearance through the Department's criminal history and integrity screening assessment process.

Recruitment and Selection Assessments

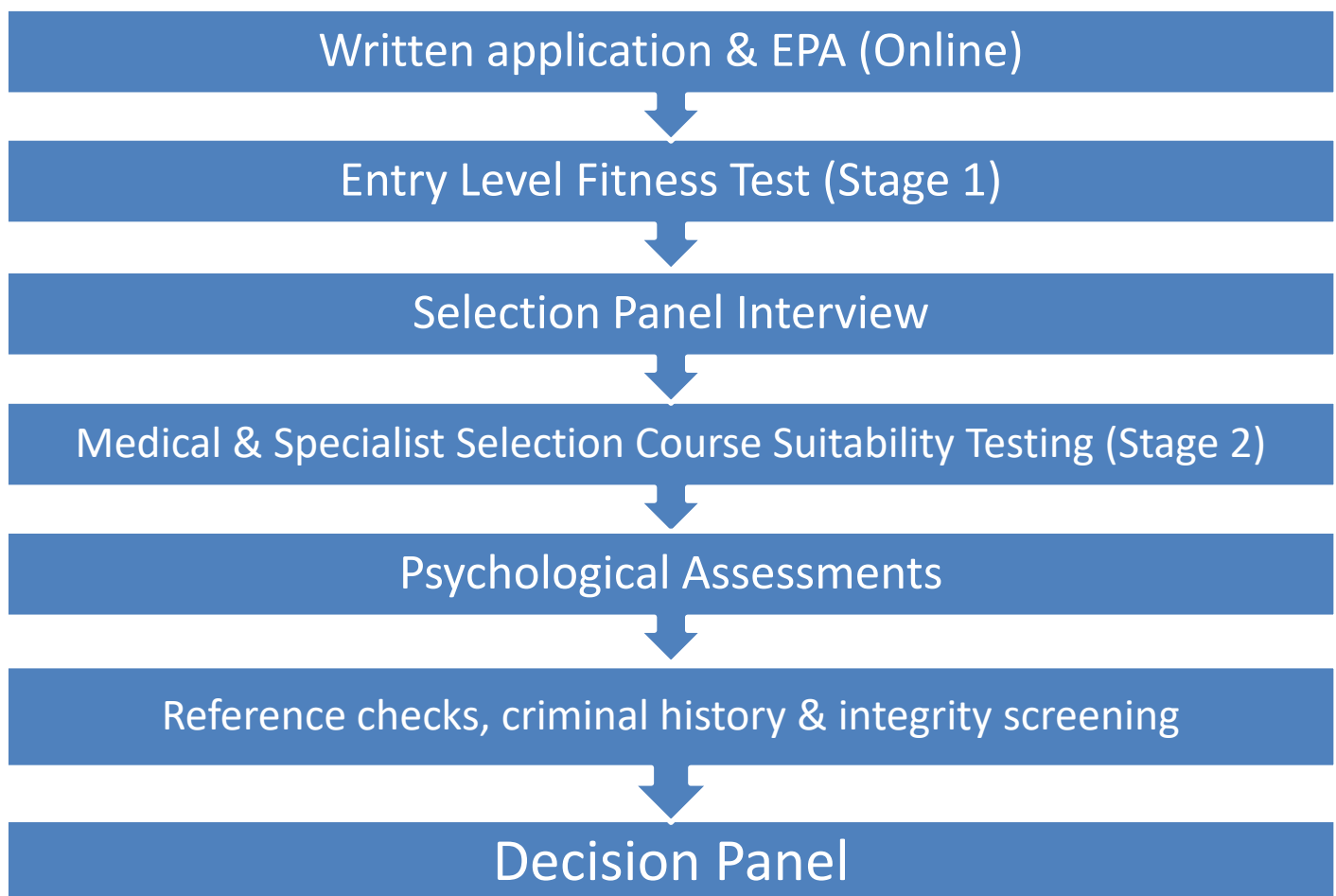
The selection process is conducted over a series of stages, and includes a number of assessments designed to assess your skills, knowledge, experience and abilities in the context of the SOG Officer role.

Important Points

1. Successful completion of all stages of the assessment process will require considerable time and commitment on your behalf. Please be aware that due to the high volume of applications this position attracts, the selection process may take around five months to complete.
2. Assessments will generally take place during business hours (Mon – Fri, 8am to 5pm). In most cases it will not be possible to offer assessments outside of business hours.

3. Exceptional arrangements cannot be made for candidates that are not available to attend allocated assessment times.
4. Travel to and from any assessment location is at the candidate's expense.
5. The selection stages and the order in which they are undertaken are not set and will vary depending on the needs of the Department.
6. You may be excluded from further assessment at any stage of the selection process. In this case you will be advised in writing via email.
7. Should you successfully reach the end of the selection process, this DOES NOT guarantee your employment. Your successful completion of the selection process means that you will be placed into an appointment pool for a period of up to 12 months, from which you can be considered for vacancies as they arise.

Summary of Selection Stages



Written Application

Your CV/resume incorporating the requested information and your responses to the three application questions will be assessed to determine whether your application is shortlisted for further assessment

Employment Profile Assessment (EPA)

The EPA consists of a number of psychometric tests and questionnaires that have been designed to provide information about your cognitive and psychological suitability for the

role. The EPA will be completed over different stages of the selection process, and will include both online and paper-pencil testing.

Entry Level Fitness Testing

You will need to successfully complete two stages of fitness testing during the selection process. Stage 1 will be conducted at the beginning of the assessment process, and Stage 2 at the end.

Stage 1 – If your application is shortlisted, you will be invited to the Stage 1 Fitness Test, which will be conducted at the Corrective Services Academy in Bentley, Western Australia. Stage 1 involves four tests: Beep Test (Shuttle Run); Agility Test; Grip Test; and the SOG Physical Abilities Test (PAT). You must pass each test to progress. To help you prepare, further detail about these tests is provided in the appendix to this booklet.

If invited to this stage, you will be provided with a medical clearance form to be completed by your doctor (at your own expense). It is necessary that you bring your completed medical clearance form on the day of testing in order to participate. **No exceptions will be made for candidates without a medical clearance.**

Stage 2 – Undertaken at the end of the SOG selection process, Stage 2 is more arduous than the first stage. You will complete various individual and group exercises, designed to by the SOG to gauge each individual's stamina, strength, and mental and physical fortitude. During this phase, candidates will also be assessed for their ability to follow instructions and their team work skills. Further details about Stage 2 will only be provided to candidates once they progress to the later stages of the selection process.

Selection Panel Interview

If you progress to the interview stage, you will meet with a panel of up to three SOG staff. You will be asked a series of questions, designed to gather information about your skills, abilities and knowledge, as they relate to the SOG role. Further details will be provided should your application progress, however you can expect the panel will be interested in how well you communicate, your interpersonal, team work and problem solving skills, and how well you can follow instructions. You should consider the following points in preparation for your interview:

- Be familiar with the role as outlined in the job advertisement and this information booklet.
- Consider the requirements of the role and think of specific examples of situations where you have applied the relevant skills and abilities
- Focus on the duties of the position and how they should be carried out, considering problems that might be encountered and how they would be resolved. It is also important to consider outcomes and results achieved.
- Be punctual and appropriately attired – neat and professional
- Take time to answer each question and present answers clearly and concisely
- Use the interview to ask any questions that you may have in relation to the position.

Medical Assessment

The medical assessment is designed to assess your overall health status, and whether you have any medical conditions which may impede your ability to safely perform the duties of an SOG Officer. Aspects of the medical assessment will include (but are not limited to):

- Vision – Near, distance and peripheral vision will be assessed. As a minimum, you must be able to meet the corrected visual acuity standard of at least 6/9 or better when wearing soft contact lenses. There is also a minimum unaided (uncorrected) vision requirement of 6/18 in the better eye and 6/36 in the weaker eye. Outside this range, an assessment of your circumstances will be conducted on a case-by-case basis.
- Respiratory – which may include a lung function test. A history of asthma will be carefully examined.
- Cardiovascular health.
- Musculoskeletal health.
- Hearing.
- General health and well-being.

Psychological Interview

You will be required to attend a one-to-one interview with a registered psychologist. Be prepared to answer questions about yourself including your work, family and social life, some of which may be more personal than you would expect in a normal job interview. Interviews generally take around one hour. It is recommended that you adhere to normal interview protocol including appropriate attire. If you are scheduled for a telephone interview, ensure that you are in a quiet and private area.

At the end of the process, the SOG Decision Panel will consider the views of the interviewing psychologist in making a final determination of your suitability (see section on Decision Panel).

Reference Checks

After interviews, the Department will start contacting referees from your current and former employers to gather further evidence of your suitability for the role. It is recommended that you forewarn your nominated referees to ensure they are prepared to speak/report on your behalf.

Criminal History and Integrity Screening

All departmental employees are subject to criminal history and integrity screening. This will involve the searching of both state and federal government databases, such as WA Police Records and the Department's Prisons Visitors Database, to identify any convictions or associations you may have that could compromise your employment within the Department. It can also include investigations into suspension from employment, disciplinary records, as well as spent convictions and pending charges.

The best advice we can give you is to be honest in your disclosures when you are asked to complete the relevant screening and consent forms. The circumstances for all candidates are assessed on a case-by-case basis and therefore a previous criminal conviction or pending charge may not necessarily preclude you from being employed with the Department.

Reference Checks

Your referees may be asked to verify information that you have provided at other stages of the application process. They will also be asked to provide information about your work performance, especially in relation to the skills and attributes that are expected of SOG Officers.

Decision Panel

The SOG Decision Panel has the responsibility to make a final determination and recommendation about your suitability for employment as an SOG Officer with the Department of Justice. The Decision Panel typically comprises senior SOG staff and other stakeholders, including staff from the Corrective Services Academy, Human Resources and any relevant assessment specialists (such as psychologists). The Decision Panel's role is to make a holistic assessment of your application based on information obtained throughout the selection process including your application, selection panel interview, reference checks, Employment Profile Assessment, psychological interview, medical assessment and fitness testing. Not all candidates who progress to the Decision Panel will be recommended for inclusion in the appointment pool.

Appointment Pool

If you have progressed through each assessment stage, and have been deemed suitable by the Decision Panel, you will be placed in the SOG appointment pool for a period of up to 12 months during which time you can be considered for any SOG Officer vacancies that may arise. **It is important to note that inclusion in the appointment pool DOES NOT guarantee appointment to a SOG Officer position.**

If there are more suitable candidates in the pool than vacancies available at any one time, the Department reserves the right to make offers to any candidate in the Appointment Pool. The appointment decision will be based upon a range of business needs including:

- the relevant knowledge and experience of pooled candidates;
- the competitiveness of pooled candidates based on the Decision Panel's assessment of the job requirements; and/or
- gender balance or other diversity requirements as outlined in the Department's Substantive Equality Policy.

SOG Training Program and Probation

If selected to fill a vacancy, you will commence employment and undertake training as a Probationary SOG Officer. The probationary period is typically 9-months.

You will initially undertake an 11-week Entry Level Training Program (ELTP) located at the Department's Corrective Services Academy. The training will cover core skills and topics such as communication skills, the judicial system, welfare skills, cross-cultural awareness, addiction studies, writing skills, offender management, prisoner programs, security and emergency procedures, and control and restraint.

You will then undertake a 4-week SOG Specialist Selection Course at the SOG base at the Hakea Prison complex, covering specialist SOG topics and skills such as: riot control, firearms, perimeter response, high security escorts, TASER, cell extractions, roof operations and chemical agents.

Probation

Upon successful completion of the SOG Training Program, you will complete the remainder of your 9-month probationary period on-the-job, whereby you will be required to demonstrate the competent application of specific skills and knowledge at the SOG and within a prison environment, through various formal and informal assessments. You will be required to collate and submit a portfolio of evidence in order to demonstrate ongoing competency during this on the job component of your training.

You must receive a satisfactory performance appraisal at the end of the 9-month probationary period to be recommended for permanent employment. Upon successful completion of all training and assessment requirements, you will also be awarded a CSC30115 Certificate III in Correctional Practice (Custodial).

Recognition of Prior Experience

Do you have prior adult custodial experience?

If successful, candidates with relevant and recent experience as a Prison Officer (or equivalent), in an adult custodial facility, can apply to have their prior service recognised which may increase their salary level upon successful completion of the ELTP. At the time of your appointment, we can assess the nature and extent of your previous service and responsibilities, training and qualifications against the requirements for an SOG Officer with the Department of Justice.

If you have relevant and recent custodial experience in an adult custodial facility, please indicate this in your application.

Fitness Assessment Information

See attached booklet

