



# **Prison Officer**

## **Special Operations Group**

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**Information Booklet POSH, POA, \$86,156 - \$98,107 pa**

The Department of Justice respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land as being the first peoples of this country. We embrace the vast Aboriginal cultural diversity throughout Western Australia and recognise their continuing connection to country, water and sky. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. The Department of Justice is committed to fostering respectful partnerships with our Aboriginal colleagues, clients and those in our care.

## About the Department of Justice

Thank you for your interest in the advertised Prison Officer, Special Operations Group (SOG) role within the Department of Justice. This booklet will provide you with information, guidelines and steps in the recruitment and selection process to assist you and provide you with every chance of success with your application.

### Mission

A fair, just and safe community for all Western Australians

### Principles

- High performing and professional
- Ethical and accountable
- Trained, safe and supported

### Values

- Respecting rights and diversity
- Fostering service excellence
- Being fair and reasonable

### Roles and services

The Department of Justice supports the community, Western Australia Government, judiciary and State Parliament through the provision of access to high quality justice, legal and corrective services, information and products.

The Department is the agency principally responsible for assisting the Attorney General and the Minister for Corrective Services in developing and implementing policy and the administration and compliance of approximately 200 Acts.

The Department has a diverse range of services, which have the potential to affect all Western Australians.

### Role of the Special Operations Group

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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
2. Operational support functions
  - high security escorts
  - searching

- perimeter security
3. Operational and emergency management training.
  4. 24/7 response to emergencies and major incidents

The SOG operates 24 hours a day 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

SOG officers work a 12-hour shift and operate in teams. You can expect that each day will vary from the next; however the following provides an example of how a typical operational shift at the SOG base:

#### Sample daily schedule

<b>0700 – 0730</b>	Daily operational brief and personal equipment issue.
<b>0730 – 1130</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Operational duties for the day, that may include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Conducting an escort, hospital visit, court appearance of a high security prisoner(s); OR</li><li>○ Armed perimeter response for maximum security prisons; OR</li><li>○ Security support tasks (search operations within or external to a prison), high profile patrols within a prison</li></ul></li><li>• Skills maintenance training – completing critical skills refresher training (firearms, taser, use of force, roof operations, etc)</li><li>• Maintaining (standby) a response capability</li></ul>
<b>1130 – 1200</b>	Lunch.
<b>1200 – 1800</b>	As above (see 0730 – 1130 duties).
<b>1800 – 1900</b>	Physical fitness training, administration and response standby.

### **What it takes...**

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

SOG Officers can 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 effectively work with inmates with gender, social and cultural differences.

### **Physical Health and Fitness of a SOG Officer**

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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 move rapidly, 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. 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, outdoor pursuits and/or arduous work.

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

## Salary, Entitlements and Benefits

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### Competitive Salary

You will initially commence your training and employment as a Probationary Prison Officer for a period of 9 months. Starting at the Department's Corrective Services Academy, you will complete a 12-week Prison Officer Entry Level Training Program (ELTP), during which we will pay you a training salary of \$66,658 per annum.

From there, the salary for a fully qualified Officer is \$86,156 per annum, with increments up to \$98,107 per annum.

If you have had relevant custodial experience (set criteria applies) in the past, you 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 \$6,520 pa, which may consist of:

- SOG contact allowance
- CABA (Breathing Apparatus) allowance
- Annual shoe (runner) allowance
- SOG operational allowance
- 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, 13 weeks upon completion of 7 years continuous service.
- Cultural leave
- 4 weeks paid military leave per year for active members of the Defence Force Reserves.

### 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](http://www.smartsalary.com.au)

### Other Benefits

- Uniform supplied (including boots, socks, jackets and hats)
- Fitness clothing supplied (sandshoes, shorts, shirts and track suit)
- Job security
- Promotional and career development opportunities

- A rewarding and challenging career.
- A workplace that celebrated diversity and fosters inclusion

### Aboriginal applicants

- Access to the Aboriginal Workforce Development team to discuss developmental opportunities or to seek advice on recruitment and selection process
- Dedicated Aboriginal Workforce Development Strategies are in place within the Department
- Opportunities to support Aboriginal people in the Justice system

## Pre-Appointment Requirements

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The following pre-appointment requirements are required to comply with the *Prisons Act 1981*, Prison Regulations 1982 and applicable Departmental policies and procedures.

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 current C class driver's license.
- Obtain clearance through the Department's criminal history and integrity screening assessment process.
- Possess a current HLTAID011 "Provide First Aid" qualification, which includes the units:
  - HLTAID009 "Provide Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation" and
  - HLTAID010 "Basic Emergency Life Support"

**Note:** qualification must have at least 12 months validity from the date of commencement.

- Obtain or possess a current clearance under the *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004*.
- Meet all requirements to be added to the Department of Justice corporate firearms license.

## Recruitment and Selection Assessments

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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 Process Stages

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- Application + CV
- Online Psychometric Testing
- Physical Readiness Test
- Interview
- PAI Online Testing
- Pre-Selection
- Medical
- Psychological Interview
- Reference Checks
- Screening + Integrity Check
- Decision Panel

Note assessments may be conducted in any order

### ***Written Application***

Your **CV/resume** and **online application responses** incorporating the requested information will be assessed to determine whether you are shortlisted for further assessment. Consideration will be given to eligibility requirements as outlined in the JDF and in the job advertisement.

### ***Psychometric Testing (Online)***

Psychometric testing is designed to assess your cognitive and psychological suitability for the role, and work style preferences. You will be invited to complete a series of online aptitude tests and a comprehensive personality questionnaire.

### ***Physical Readiness Testing (PRT)***

Applicants are required to successfully complete all components of the Department's Prison Officer Physical Readiness Test (PRT) and attaining a satisfactory medical clearance from a General Practitioner is a pre-requisite to undertake this assessment. To view a demonstrational video, click on the link: <https://youtu.be/OlbknWJQ-N0>.

Further detailed information about the standards required is outlined in the Physical Readiness Test Applicants Guide that is attached to the advert.

### ***Selection Panel Interview***

A selection panel will ask a series of questions relevant to the role designed to draw information about your skills, knowledge, and abilities against the job-related requirements (detailed in the JDF).

The panel will be interested in how well you communicate, your interpersonal, teamwork 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.

### ***Pre-Selection Test***

Candidates are required to demonstrate a high level of physical and mental endurance throughout training, and whilst on the job, in order to effectively provide an emergency response service.

Some scenarios demand lengthy periods of strenuous activity (e.g. cell extraction, non-compliant prisoner restraint, riot control). Candidates may also be required to walk, run, bend, lift and carry heavy equipment whilst wearing restrictive clothing, such as personal protective equipment (PPE) and BA.

Further detailed information about the assessment requirements and the standards are outlined in the SOG Pre-Selection Test Booklet attached to the advert.

**The Pre-Selection Test is anticipated to occur within the next 6-8 weeks**

### ***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.

### ***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.

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.

### ***Criminal History and Integrity Screening***

All Department of Justice employees are required to undergo an integrity and national criminal history check. You will be invited to complete the relevant application online. It is important you ensure the personal information you provide is correct, as providing false or misleading information can negatively impact the outcome of your application.

In positions that involve working with offenders an integrity check may also include investigations into suspension from employment, past employment records and performance, workers' compensation, spent convictions and pending charges.

A previous criminal conviction or pending charge will not necessarily preclude a person from being employed. The Department assesses these on a case-by-case basis.

### ***Decision Panel***

The Decision Panel typically comprises of various executive and operational stakeholders, human resources personnel, training staff and psychologists. They are responsible for making a holistic assessment of each applicant's suitability, based on all the information obtained throughout the selection process.

You will be formally notified in writing about the outcome of your application once the selection process is finalised. Notifications for all successful and unsuccessful applicants will be sent via email and will include information on how to seek feedback, which can help you to understand how the panel made their decision.

Not all candidates who progress to the Decision Panel will be recommended for inclusion in the appointment pool.

## Appointment Pool

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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.

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.

**It is important to note that inclusion in the appointment pool DOES NOT guarantee appointment to a SOG Officer position.**

## Training Program and Probation

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

**Prison Officer training:** For externally recruited candidates, you will initially undertake the 12-week Entry Level Training Program (ELTP) located at the 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.

This is followed by a three-month secondment to a correctional establishment to gain real life experience in the custodial system prior to attempting selection.

**SOG Officer training.** You will then undertake a 6-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 CSC30120 Certificate III in Correctional Practice (Custodial).

## Recognition of Prior Experience

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### *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 a 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.


## Smoke-Free Policy

The Department of Justice has introduced a smoke-free policy, which will be fully implemented across the Academy by 28 February 2024, and all women's prisons by 28 March 2024 with all other prison sites to follow over the next 12 – 18 months.

## Have questions regarding the role and selection process?

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**For all enquiries related to the role - contact Ian Wilson, A/Superintendent, Special Operations Group**

 **(08) 9366 6802**

**For all enquiries related to the selection process - contact the Bulk Recruitment Team**

 [recruitment@justice.wa.gov.au](mailto:recruitment@justice.wa.gov.au)


 **1800 974 199**

The Department of Justice is committed to ensuring 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. As such, we will apply Section 51 and may apply Section 27 (2) of the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*.

**For culturally appropriate application advice Aboriginal job seekers may contact Aboriginal Workforce Development Team**

 [aboriginalworkforcedevelopment@justice.wa.gov.au](mailto:aboriginalworkforcedevelopment@justice.wa.gov.au)

 (08) 9264 1700