



Government of Western Australia
Department of Fisheries



BECOMING A FISHERIES AND MARINE OFFICER

Fisheries and Marine Officers play a major role in the protection and conservation of Western Australian marine and aquatic resources by ensuring compliance with management rules through law enforcement, community education and liaison with our clients.

Successful applicants will be required to work **irregular hours and at a range of locations throughout the State**. Considerable time away from home may also be required. In some instances this will involve living on Departmental or other vessels for short periods. Given the conditions outlined, applicants need to ensure they understand and accept these requirements and have discussed them with their families.

Fisheries and Marine Officers are required to wear a uniform whilst on duty. The Department supplies uniforms as well as providing on and off the job training in the skills, techniques and responsibilities of a Fisheries and Marine Officer.

Role of the Fisheries and Marine Officer

Fisheries and Marine Officers maintain regular contact with the local community and fishing industry and their local knowledge is of vital importance in developing workable management strategies and management laws. Officers commit much of their effort to detecting illegal fishing activities and prosecuting offenders.

Promoting community awareness of the need to observe fisheries management laws is an important part of a Fisheries and Marine Officer's role. Officers are frequently called on to give talks to schools and community groups and may also be asked to assist with operations such as search and rescue, transport to remote islands and collecting biological data for research programs.

Fisheries and Marine Officers in some regions also undertake fisheries compliance activities in Marine Parks and Reserves in collaboration with the Department of Parks and Wildlife. Officers also undertake duties on-behalf of the Commonwealth Department of the Environment in Commonwealth marine parks and reserves.

Fisheries and Marine Officers based in the Metropolitan region are also jointly responsible for marine safety, in collaboration with the Department of Transport. This involves duties from routine checking of vessels for safety equipment such as flares and life jackets to commercial survey inspections of registered fishing vessels.

Following recent Government funding, Fisheries and Marine Officers now play a role in the management of State-wide biosecurity risks. Specifically, in relation to matters such as invasive marine pests, translocation of aquatic organisms, hull biofouling on vessels and disease outbreaks in the aquatic environment.

Fisheries and Marine Officers duties include the following:

- Assist with law enforcement programs requiring the apprehension, video interviewing and prosecution of offenders in field situations;
- Assist with customer awareness/education programs requiring the presentation of information to members of the public and community groups;
- Liaise with members of the fishing industry, community groups, members of the public and other government agencies and advise on fisheries matters;
- Adherence to Departmental policies, procedures and principles;
- Conduct marine and land based fisheries and marine safety patrols;
- Operate four-wheel drive vehicles and small vessels
- Present evidence in a court of law and serve summonses (Prosecution Notices);
- Preparation and submission of written reports and prosecution briefs;
- Maintenance of Departmental boats, vehicles and equipment;
- Issue licenses and attend to administrative duties;
- Carry out surveillance patrols and travel aboard aircraft and commercial fishing vessels; and,
- Liaise and undertake patrols with staff of other State and Commonwealth Government Departments.

Our locations

The Regional Services Division includes the five regions as well as the Communications and Education Branch and the Licensing and Registry Services Branch. We have over 230 staff, including approximately 120 Fisheries and Marine Officers. There is a network of 18 District Offices in areas where major fisheries are operating, including Perth and Fremantle. District Offices are located in the following centres:

Albany	Carnarvon	Exmouth	Jurien Bay	Mandurah
Broome	Denham	Fremantle	Karratha	Rockingham
Bunbury	Dongara	Geraldton	Kununurra	
Busselton	Esperance	Hillarys	Lancelin	

Each office is equipped with vehicles and small craft for coastal, estuarine and river patrols and three large ocean-going patrol vessels operate within the Fremantle and Geraldton Districts.

Upon completion of the training course, Fisheries and Marine Officers undertake a twelve month probation period, generally based in the Perth metropolitan region, before being placed in one of the District offices. It is highly unlikely that a Fisheries and Marine Officer will be located in their home town until they have at least three or four years' experience in the job.

No guarantee can be given as to which location successful applicants will be placed in. It is also important to note that Fisheries and Marine Officers are required to transfer to various locations across Western Australia throughout their careers.

What makes a good Fisheries and Marine Officer?

Core competencies have been identified for effective on-the-job performance as a Fisheries and Marine Officer and we utilise psychological profiling techniques to assist in identifying whether candidates possess these competencies. The competencies outline a combination of skills, knowledge and personal attributes that result in successful job behaviours and include (but are not limited to):

Stakeholder orientation - Proactively developing stakeholder relationships by making an effort to listen to and understand the stakeholder (both internal and external). Anticipating and providing solutions to stakeholder needs and giving high priority to stakeholder satisfaction. Representing Fisheries in an effective manner. Promoting responsible fishing practices and encouraging voluntary compliance.

Personal Drive and Integrity - Displaying integrity, influence and self-motivation, both on a personal and professional level. Behaving in an honest, ethical and professional manner at all times.

Teamwork Skills - Working as part of a team or with minimal supervision. Working with others in a professional and positive manner. Contributing to the goals and outcomes of a team environment. Developing and maintaining positive relationships with team members. Following directions and instructions. Working on own initiative, when required.

Conflict resolution and negotiation ability - Negotiating and resolving conflict, whilst engaging in potentially difficult and volatile situations. Recognises and copes with stress in self and others.

Proven focus on customer service - Providing educational advice to the members of the public, including presentations to fishing, diving and school groups.

Analytical reasoning and problem solving skills - Understanding, interpreting and applying relevant legislation, policy and procedures. Objectively gathering facts, determining options and drawing logical conclusions in accordance with agency guidelines.

Communication (verbal and written) and interpersonal skills - Liaising with internal and external stakeholders, including ability to work and liaise sensitively and effectively with people, while understanding cultural differences and diversity issues. Preparing documents to a high standard, including briefs, reports and general correspondence.

Ability to adapt to situational change - Having a flexible approach to your work program with regards to shifts, rosters and leave. Ability to transfer around the state. Work at sea and in land based environments, sometimes under difficult, stressful and extreme conditions.

Physical requirements

Working as a Fisheries and Marine Officer involves a great deal of physical activity. All successful applicants will be required to pass a physical and medical assessment prior to appointment to ensure that they have the physical capabilities for the job. Some of the physical activities a Fisheries and Marine Officer may be expected to perform include:

Stamina – working up to 12 hours per day over four to eight day periods, often in exposed environments and in all weathers both day and night. Examples include exposure to cold and rain whilst on night river patrols, exposure to summer heat whilst conducting surveillance for long periods in sand hills, lifting crates of lobster over a three hour period, walking 2 to 5 kilometres in exposed weather conditions.

Motion sickness –working effectively on vessels at sea and travelling significant distances by vehicle and aircraft, without being unduly affected by motion sickness.

Lifting – lifting the following objects (with assistance and training in appropriate techniques): lift a one metre diameter lobster pot, lift and carry small outboard motors, lift three metre dinghies and punts onto the roof racks of vehicles, lift other assorted gear and drag dinghies over beaches, sandbanks and shallows.

Jarring – ability to cope with driving 4WD vehicles over rough roads or operating a small vessel in open sea conditions.

Sitting/lying –able to remain in static observation positions for up to eight hours during surveillance operations.

Defensive Capacities – able to cope with and handle potentially volatile situations. (Training is provided in Defensive Capacities, focussing on enhancing an individual's situational awareness and ability to disengage from a high-risk encounter before physical threat or assault occurs).

Shark Hazard Mitigation - may be required to assist with shark hazard mitigation which may involve transporting a Departmental firearm. Fisheries and Marine Officers undertaking this work are required to be trained and licenced in the use of the firearm and to be added to the Corporate Firearms Licence.

Walking –ability to walk two to five kilometres in all weather conditions at day or night carrying up to 20kg of equipment. Examples include night patrols of dams for marron fishing inspection, walking into areas to establish observation posts and walking along beaches to inspect abalone and other fish catches.

Paddling – able to, on occasion, row or paddle dinghies or canoes 10-15 km in all weather conditions. Examples include canoe patrols of southwest rivers and closed water patrols.

Climbing – ability to climb hills or man-made structures. Examples include climbing trees for observation and placing radio aerials, climbing fences while apprehending offenders, climbing steep riverbanks, and climbing on boats that are mounted on trailers, to inspect catches.

Diving –may be required to undertake diving operations to carry out inspections of fishing activities and to gather or recover evidence. Officers are required to maintain a standard of swimming fitness and, depending on the Officer's location, dive training will be provided.

Physical testing

To ensure future employees have the capacity to meet the physical requirements outlined above, all potential Fisheries and Marine Officers must participate in pre-appointment medical tests and physical fitness assessments.

These assessments are required to ascertain whether individuals have any prior injuries or conditions that may pose an occupational safety and health risk to them or colleagues in the future. The tests are designed to measure a future employee's physical fitness level so that we can understand that person's ability to operate in adverse working conditions.

The pre-appointment medical assessment involves the applicant participating in a full examination, carried out by a qualified medical practitioner. The medical examination also includes an eyesight test and colour vision (ISHIHARA) test to ensure potential employees meet marine safety qualification requirements. The examination results are included in the selection process.

We also require prospective employees to undertake a swimming assessment to ascertain their physical capabilities in the marine environment. The assessment ensures that Fisheries and Marine Officers have the ability to rescue their colleagues or members of the public from the water and survive in the water themselves, in the event of a marine incident.

The physical fitness assessment of all potential Fisheries and Marine Officers is undertaken prior to employment and includes:

Standing broad jump

Body composition

Multi-stage fitness test (Shuttlerun/Beep Test)

The swimming assessment includes:

- Swimming 400 metres freestyle in less than 12 minutes (without fins);
- Diving to three metres and raising to the surface a weight of 1.5 kilograms and holding to the surface for two minutes;
- Treading water for 15 minutes, with your hands (not arms) removed from the water for the last two minutes;
- Diving to 5 metres (or deepest available equivalent) with the aid of mask and fins, retrieving an object from the bottom, swimming across the bottom with the object for five metres, depositing the object and returning to the surface; and
- Towing an inert person for 100 metres with the aid of fins in less than four minutes (inert person is to provide absolutely no assistance).

Career prospects

Starting Out

Candidates that are selected from the pool to become Fisheries and Marine Officers will initially be placed on a 14 week contract to undertake the training course based in Fremantle WA. After successful completion of the training, trainees will then undertake a twelve month probation period generally spent in the Perth metropolitan area. Fisheries and Marine Officers commence at Level 2, with a salary range of \$ 72,004 - \$ 78,191pa.

After a year on the job

Fisheries and Marine Officers become eligible to apply to progress from Level 2 to Level 3.1 after spending 12 months on the job following completion of the 14 week Induction Training Program. Progression is dependent on meeting a number of criteria, including completion of the Training Log Book, obtaining a satisfactory performance review and having made significant progress towards achieving a Coxswains certificate. The salary range for a Level 3 Fisheries and Marine Officer is \$ 82,620 - \$ 89,703pa.

Promotion and transfer opportunities

Promotion is based on a competitive merit selection process and Officers can be promoted through to a Level 5 Supervising Fisheries and Marine Officer with a salary of up to \$ 114,377pa.

Opportunities to transfer to other locations in the Department often arise and are made available for Fisheries and Marine Officers to express their interest.

Fisheries and Marine Officers at all levels also attract additional allowances for duties at sea or working in remote areas.

Is this the job for me?

Working as a Fisheries and Marine Officer is a lifestyle choice which can provide a great sense of satisfaction. However, there are a wide variety of challenges involved in the nature of the duties and work routine that may mean this job doesn't suit you.

As a Fisheries and Marine Officer you must be prepared to accept postings to areas in any region, including the Perth metropolitan area. This may mean that you and your family have to leave your own home and undergo the inconvenience of renting. Government housing is available in some country districts.

You will be required to work long hours at odd times and may be recalled to duty at any time of the night and on weekends to respond to complaints of illegal fishing activities. Leave is not generally granted during the peak fishing months. Most leave entitlements are therefore granted during the cooler winter months in the south and the 'wet season' in the north of the State.

A **self-assessment questionnaire** is available by navigating to the CAREERS link at the bottom of the homepage on the Department of Fisheries website at: <http://www.fish.wa.gov.au>

This questionnaire is not part of the selection process, but is available for you to check your suitability for a career as a Fisheries and Marine Officer. We **strongly advise** you to complete this self-assessment prior to submitting an application and to discuss the decision to apply with your family.

Further Information

Please visit our website at www.fish.wa.gov.au to learn more about the Department of Fisheries.

For information about the selection process and preparing and lodging your application, please refer to the Applicant Information Pack attached to the advertisement.

After reading all of the information and documents supplied in the advertisement, should you have any questions or require further job related information, please call the FMO Pool Recruitment Coordinator on **0429 317 779**. You may be asked to leave a message and your contact information, after which someone will call you back as soon as possible to answer your questions.