

Job Description and Person Specification

POST	Environment Protection Officer
PORTFOLIO	Compliance & Beyond
UNIT OR TEAM	Environmental Performance
REPORTS TO	Unit Manager
GRADE	E
LOCATION(S)	Elgin
POST STATUS	Temporary, part time (24hrs per week) until 31 March 2022 <i>SEPA is happy to consider flexible work arrangements and we proudly use the “Happy to Talk Flexible Working” logo on all our job vacancies. If you want to work part-time or through some other flexible arrangement, we strongly encourage you to apply.</i>

A. JOB PURPOSE

The Compliance and Beyond Portfolios regulatory strategy is to protect and improve Scotland's environment, helping regulated operators and individuals to understand and comply with environmental regulations.

We aim to help business realise the economic and social benefits of good environmental practice, which benefits the environment, the economy and communities and enables the portfolio to focus resources on tackling the most important environmental issues through engagement with the majority of SEPA customers. We will

- Work collaboratively to drive systemic change to regulation through engagement using our geographical presence as a primary liaison point for the majority of customers we regulate
- Help regulated operators and individuals to understand and comply with environmental regulations and encourage as many as possible to go beyond compliance
- Help businesses to realise the environmental, economic and social benefits of good environmental practice
- Focus resources (including enforcement powers) on tackling the most important environmental issues
- Use emerging regulatory tools such as Permit Reform, Sustainable Growth Agreements, Fixed and Variable monetary penalties, enforcement undertakings and environmental campaigns
- Utilise sector plans to deliver the reform of permit and compliance, and develop a shared vision of reaching, maintaining and going beyond compliance.

We want to provide you with a flexible role that will enable you to experience all aspects of the role within Compliance and Beyond and develop the skills and knowledge that will allow you to flourish within the organisation. Therefore, we commit to providing you with the training and development to deliver any of the tasks as outlined in the generic job description all of which support SEPA's flexible approach, the active management of tasks within other functions and response to environmental events.

Our regulatory responsibilities include activities that may pollute water; activities that may pollute air; and waste storage, transport, treatment and disposal.

The scale and impact of the activities can vary across the legislative regimes of the Controlled Activities Regulations, the Pollution Prevention Control Regulations and the Waste Management licensing regulations. The role will focus on activities considered to be of medium risk and some more complex activities.

As a key role in a busy regulatory team, effective team working will be key to ensure performance targets are met. Post holders will be expected to influence and affect the work of the team/unit, based on advice given and decisions made internally. Decisions or actions taken will have implications for regulated industry, stakeholders and the environment.

Post holders will contribute to continuous improvement in their area of responsibility by raising problems when these are encountered through the nature of the work. This may be issues with guidance, working practices/procedures, application forms and systems, and will be raised with senior officers and line management

Post holders will be expected to be flexible and may be asked to rotate between functions within the portfolio. The section below describes the job purpose within those functions. EPOs based in one function will be asked to undertake duties to support colleagues in other functions based on business need.

There will be a regular need to travel and undertake site visits/compliance inspections when periods of standing and walking will be necessary. You will need to ensure compliance with Health and Safety procedures are followed as sites may sometimes be situated in hostile environments.

Environmental Performance

Assessing medium and high complexity sites for compliance with statutory requirement and permit conditions calling on additional support when necessary. Investigate and assess non-compliant activity and initiate enforcement action, within delegated authority of the post where decisions or actions taken by the post will have implications for the recipients of enforcement action externally.

Permitting

To assess applications for and produce environmental permits for all medium complexity activities and some high complexity activities with support when necessary. Permitting activity includes responses to planning consultation and pre-application advice.

Medium complexity activities includes - Bespoke assessment of activities of a medium level risk to the environment, may include activities that require routine financial scrutiny, some bespoke conditions or a consultation process, and also some low complexity permits that have failed screening assessment.

Complex Activity includes – higher environmental risk, or non-standard activities, such as activities that are contentious, require in-depth financial scrutiny, inclusion of bespoke permit conditions and consultation processes.

Enforcement

To resolve environmental harm caused by non-compliant activities, where decisions or actions taken by the post will have implications for the recipients of enforcement action externally. Participate in environmental campaigns to raise awareness and deter non-compliance and support colleagues with environmental incident management.

B. MAIN ACTIVITIES

Environmental Performance

Assess environmental performance against environmental legislation and advise permit holders on how they can protect the environment and human health from activities.

Assess whether regulated industry is compliant with environmental legislation and permit conditions through the analysis of technical information or complex concepts. You will resolve the majority of issues arising from the assessment of environmental performance and apply judgment to evaluate options and identify the most effective and appropriate solutions.

There will be a need to communicate decisions externally to those who may be opposed to SEPA view in a constructive manner, detailing the reasons behind the information or advice which will on occasion be related to complicated regulatory matters. This will include the preparation of a range of internal and external correspondence based on template documentation such as management briefs, content for OME's and investigation/compliance reports and statutory enforcement notices.

Prepare planning responses in relation to permitting to SEPA's Planning Unit on co-location of SEPA regulated sites.

You will contribute to SEPA's response to local authority planning consultations from a regulated site location perspective via SEPA's planning casework system, and formulate responses to proposals on whether a proposed planning application is suitably located and raise opportunities to further SEPA aims,

The provision of advice regarding environmental performance to drive continuous improvement.

The post holder will engage with and provide robust advice on regulatory compliance and new and innovative ways of working to knowledgeable regulated industry to help businesses maintain their statutory responsibilities and where possible go beyond compliance. You will also provide advice and guidance in response to enquiries from external stakeholders, permit holders, business, members of the public, other agencies and SEPA colleagues in relation to compliance with environmental regulation.

Responding to environmental events and undertake investigations.

You will investigate and autonomously resolve pollution events, including those of a more serious nature by applying detailed pollution control methodology in line with event and investigation procedures. This will involve leading on investigations into non-compliance matters and seek a solution to environmental offences, including recommending appropriate enforcement action in line with enforcement and governance principles. Wherever possible you will influence and negotiate with permit holder to complete remedial work within reasonable timeframes to resolve environmental harm without the need to initiate enforcement action.

Permitting

The assessment of applications for (or proposed changes to) environmental permits related to activities of medium and high-risk including preparation of environmental permits that assists the holder in understanding how they can protect the environment and human health from their activities.

You will undertake environmental assessments and have the ability to resolve the majority of situations arising from the application process by sound analysis, application of judgement in line with the relevant legal, procedural and policy framework to identify the most effective and appropriate solutions. This will include the preparation of standard and bespoke permits and other levels of authorisation and in line with statutory timescales and the relevant regulatory framework.

Engage in pre-application discussions and provide advice to potential applicants.

Provide advice and guidance to permit holders, businesses, members of the public, and others who have an understanding of the planning process. You will advise, influence and negotiate with applicants on the suitability of the proposals to achieve the best environmental outcome in relation to the permissions required for the proposed activities that will include small scale activities and major infrastructure projects. This will include seeking opportunities to encourage applicants to go beyond compliance.

Prepare planning responses in relation to permitting to SEPA's Planning Unit.

You will formulate responses to local authority planning consultations which consider whether a proposed activity has the potential to be authorised by considering the proposals description and all supporting documentation conveying the response.

Responding to environmental events

You will investigate and autonomously resolve pollution events, including those of a more serious nature by applying detailed pollution control methodology in line with event and investigation procedures.

Enforcement

Undertake investigations into medium and high risk non-compliant activities and initiate enforcement action.

Involves the gathering, collation and recording of evidence, in accordance with evidential requirements. There will be a need to take statements and conduct interviews under caution. Information obtained from statements and interviews will be peer reviewed by legal colleagues and may ultimately be used in prosecution cases. You will prepare statutory notices including civil notices such as fixed and variable monetary penalties (drafted with Legal assistance when required) and prepare a range of internal and external correspondence to evidential standards based on template documentation.

Responding to environmental events and undertake investigations

You will investigate and autonomously resolve pollution events, including those of a more serious nature by applying detailed pollution control methodology in line with event and investigation procedures. This will involve leading on investigations into non-compliance matters and seek a solution to environmental offences, including recommending appropriate enforcement action in line with enforcement and governance principles. Wherever possible you will influence and negotiate with permit holder to complete remedial work within reasonable timeframes to resolve environmental harm without the need to initiate enforcement action.

Participate in environmental campaigns to deter non-compliance and work with regulated industry to resolve environmental harm

You will work with colleagues within partner agencies (e.g. Police Scotland, HMRC, DVSA etc.) to target non-compliant sectors. There will be a need to participate in environmental campaigns including workshops liaising directly with trade bodies, regulated industry and suppliers; participating in sector compliance audits and other targeted campaigns such as roadside stops or sector audits. You may also work with SEPA communication department to raise awareness through social media, media releases and larger campaigns.

Resolution

When working within or alongside the Resolution function any of the skills and working knowledge as outlined in the generic job description may be required to undertake planned and reactive regulatory reviews. This may require involvement in customer complaint investigations, the review of legacy regulatory problems and the implementation of improvements to enforcement delivery where required.

The above list of responsibilities is not exhaustive and you may be required to undertake other responsibilities and training as requested by your line manager, appropriate to your grade.

C. PERSON SPECIFICATION

1) KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNICAL SKILLS

Indicates the type of knowledge and skills essential or desirable to do this job and the level required using the indicators below.

- (1) Significant expert knowledge
- (2) Specialist knowledge
- (3) Routine but detailed knowledge
- (4) Broad understanding
- Or not applicable (N/A)

Type of Knowledge/skills (please specify detail below under broad headings)	Essential	Level	Desirable	Level
SEPA Organisational Knowledge – SEPA’s governance, compliance and enforcement requirements, and of the charging, policy and procedural frameworks		3		2
Scientific/Technical – Multi-media expertise in a variety of areas		4		3
Managerial – Namely: Leadership, recruitment, mentorship, training, planning, budgeting, staff development				
Legislation –		3		2

Legislation and polices pertaining to the various regulatory regimes. Powers of entry and investigation under the relevant environmental legislation.		3		2
Other – Legislation governing general data protection and freedom of information including Public Register, National Security and Commercial Confidentially. Understanding of the external regulated environment		4 3		3

2) QUALIFICATIONS

Indicates the area and level of qualifications (if any) essential or desirable to do this job

Type of Qualification	Essential	Desirable
Relevant Degree or Equivalent Experience		

3) EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

Indicates the type and likely length of experience essential or desirable to do this job

Type of Experience	Essential	Length (yrs)	Desirable	Length (yrs)
Technical/scientific professional experience Relevant pollution control experience in a relevant regime		1yr		2 yr
People management experience				
Project team working Demonstrable ability to work in a team to deliver outcomes focused on one planet prosperity				1yr
Budgetary management experience				
Use of equipment and systems Standard Microsoft Office suite Key C&B programmes such as ELMS, CLAS and NEMS		1yr		1yr
Other (please specify):				

4) COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Type of Communication	Essential	Desirable
Written communication		

OFFICIAL – BUSINESS

<p>Namely: letters to Officers and Senior Officers externally and memos internally</p>	<p>Yes</p>	
<p>Report writing</p> <p>Namely: Technical reports on medium risk matters or updates on pollution events, etc. to SEPO or Unit Manager</p>	<p>Yes</p>	
<p>Oral communication</p> <p>Namely: Reports to senior peer review groups and various internal and external working groups and meetings</p>	<p>Yes</p>	
<p>Presentations</p> <p>Namely: Internal and external stakeholder meetings concerning specific work areas.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	