

**Candidate
Information
Booklet**

**IRC301432
Agriculture Inspector Group I
Department of Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs (DAERA)**

**Completed Application Forms
must be submitted to
HRConnect no later than 12
noon (UK time) on**

Friday 24th May 2024

**Please retain a copy of this
booklet for your reference
throughout the selection
process.**

**The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an
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Communication between HRConnect and you

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account, including junk mail folder, to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

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FOREWORD

The NICS comprises nine departments that support the Northern Ireland Executive and Ministers. We do this by developing and implementing government policies and legislation and delivering key public services in areas such as health public finances, social development, justice, education, regeneration, environment, culture, agriculture, economic development, employment and transport. In addition, the Public Prosecution Service is a non-Ministerial Department staffed by Civil Servants.

DAERA has a vision of “Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.” Our vision is the foundation of everything we do as we seek to enhance our environment; grow a sustainable, vibrant economy; and support the development of thriving rural communities. At the heart of our vision is a desire to make DAERA a great place to work, with engaged people delivering a twenty-first century agenda.

The successful candidates will work within the Agricultural Inspectorate profession which is a group of professional and technical staff that use their knowledge and expertise to support the agri-food industry.

If you have the professional and technical skills we need and share our commitment to public service, we would love to hear from you.

Thank you for your interest

Norman Fulton

Head of Agricultural Inspectorate Profession

BACKGROUND

OUR VISION: “Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.”

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has responsibility for food, farming, environmental, fisheries, forestry and sustainability policy and the development of the rural sector in Northern Ireland. The Department assists the sustainable development of the agri-food, environmental, fishing and forestry sectors of the Northern Ireland economy, having regard for the needs of the consumers, the protection of human, animal and plant health, the welfare of animals and the conservation and enhancement of the environment.

DAERA provides a business development service for farmers and growers and a veterinary service for administration of animal health and welfare. The Department’s College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) delivers training and further and higher education courses in the agri-food sector. DAERA is responsible to the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in Great Britain for the administration of schemes affecting the whole of the United Kingdom. The Department also oversees the application of European Union agricultural, environmental, fisheries and rural development policy to Northern Ireland.

DAERA’s Interim Priorities 2023-24

- Delivering our statutory obligations effectively;
- Addressing the Climate Emergency and reducing carbon emissions;
- Enhancing and protecting our natural environment through committed actions that can deliver real improvements;
- Improving the productivity, resilience and environmental sustainability of our agri-food sector;
- Protecting animal, plant and public health and food safety through delivery of an effective Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) regime; and
- Addressing rural need and helping our rural communities to be sustainable.

DAERA Top Management Group comprises:-

- Climate Change, Science and Innovation Group;
- Environment, Marine and Fisheries Group;
- Food, Farming and Rural Affairs Group;
- Veterinary Service and Animal Health Group; and
- Strategic Planning and Corporate Services Group.

DAERA has two Executive Agencies:

- Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
- Forest Service

The Department also sponsors a number of non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) including the Agri-food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI).

The Permanent Secretary of DAERA is Katrina Godfrey.

FOREST SERVICE

Forest Service delivers forestry and plant health functions on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). Forest Service operates as an Executive Agency under the leadership of the Chief Executive (CE), since 1 April 1998 and was further classified as a Non-Financial Public Corporation from 1 April 2020. The CE is subject to the overall direction of the Minister who determines the policy framework within which the Agency operates, the scope of its activities and the resources available for its work. The Minister approves the Forest Service Business Plan, sets the key performance targets and monitors the Agency's performance. Forest Service is the responsibility of the CE, who is also the Chief Forest Officer and Agency Accounting Officer.

Strategic Context

The Agency's forestry and plant health activities are set in the context of the Department's vision for 'Green Growth' and strategic outcomes set out in the DAERA Strategic Plan. Increasingly, Forest Service works with partners to deliver ecosystem services from forests that also align with their strategic objectives and provision of services. This allows Forest Service to focus on forest and plant health policies, regulation of forestry and plant health, strategic planning and the technical aspects of developing and managing forests.

Forest Service Plant Health Division (PHD)

Forest Service PHD is responsible for maintaining the plant health status of NI whilst facilitating trade in plants and plant products by applying a risk-based approach to Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) controls. This extends to the implementation of schemes introduced under the Windsor Framework requirements agreed between the UKG and the EU. The application of legislative based controls are critical to maintaining the plant health status of NI, protecting our natural environment, supporting NI's rural economy and contributing to the wellbeing of society. Forest Service collaborates across the UK Plant Health Service and with DAFM to horizon scan for new threats to plant health while managing risks from new and emerging pest threats moving in trade including through our points of entry,

The key function for plant health are to:

- Safeguard the plant health status of our land-based industries through implementation of an effective plant health regulatory regime.

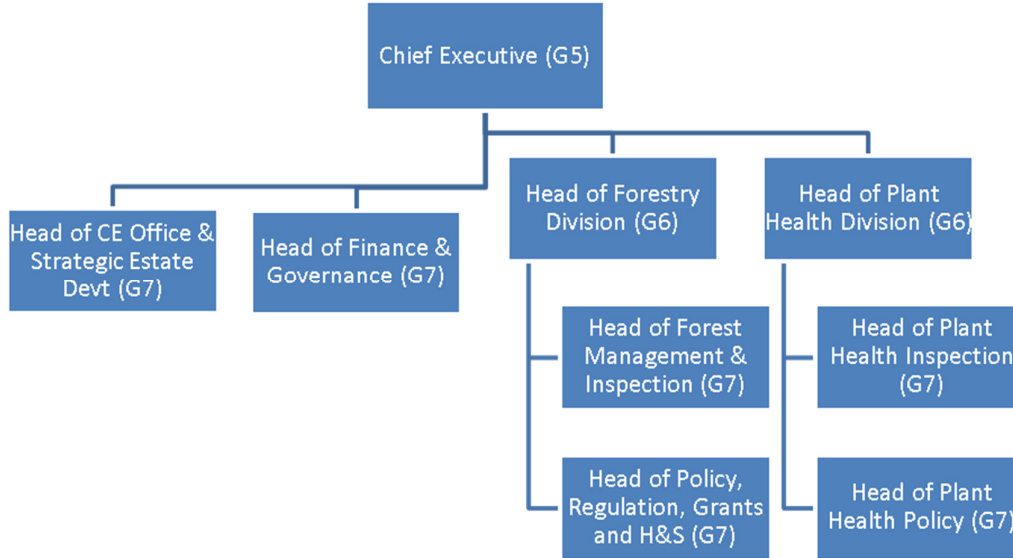
Forest Service Key Tasks

Forest Service fulfils DAERA's legal obligations in the areas of forestry, plant and bee health, plant reproductive material certification and horticulture marketing standards.

The key tasks required to deliver Ministerial policies are:

1. To expand forest cover in NI including taking forward the Forests for Our Future programme and the provision of grant aid;
2. To manage the Department's forests to:
 - Supply timber, regenerate and protect forests;
 - Ensure forests are managed taking account of carbon and climate implications and other ecosystem services they provide;
 - Promote public access by maintaining and improving facilities and visitor services through partnership working with local councils and others;
3. Verify sustainable management of DAERA forests through a process of independent audit against the UK Woodland Assurance Standard;
4. To provide a regulatory framework in line with the UK Plant Health Service and under applicable Windsor Framework legislation to promote the protection of forests and plants from harmful organisms;
5. Operate an inspection and compliance programme and enforce legislative controls to protect the plant health status of the forestry, horticulture and agriculture sectors and safeguard NI reputation as a source of officially certified plants and plant products.

The Agency is a multidisciplinary organisation whose staff are employees of DAERA and are drawn mainly from forestry, agriculture, industrial and administrative disciplines. The diagram below sets out the organisational structure of the Agency's Senior Management team.



VETERINARY SERVICE ANIMAL HEALTH GROUP (VSAHG)

VSAHG is responsible for the development of animal health and welfare policy for both farmed and non-farmed animals and the implementation of that policy in respect of farm animals. VSAHG is also responsible for policy development and implementation in respect of food animal identification, imports of livestock and products of animal origin into Northern Ireland, and work with Defra in the export of animals and animal products internationally.

VSAHG contributes to DAERA’s strategic goal to: “Develop sustainable agricultural, fisheries and industrial sectors” (Goal 1) by ensuring that the health standards of the farmed animal population are such that the NI producers have the maximum access to all markets, European and overseas, and that production costs associated with poor animal health and welfare are minimised.

VSAHG also supports DAERA and the Food Standards Agency through the implementation, delivery and the enforcement of veterinary public health controls, and agri-food legislation relating to feed and food safety, product certification, marketing standards, labelling, classification and price reporting.

The Departmental purpose is to support “Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone”. VSAHG contribute to this purpose, supporting the economy, the environment and the health of the public, local and global, through the assurance of high standards of animal health, animal welfare and food safety. Our living landscape encompasses farms, farmed and companion animals and their products and all those places where those animals and products pass through such as livestock markets, seaports and airports, meat and milk processing and storage premises, egg packaging stations, export assembly centres, licensed kennels, riding establishments, pet

shops and zoos, registered animal by-products, germ plasm and animal feed storage premises.

Through our work efforts and those of our partners and in the public interest we:

(i) Safeguard the welfare of all kept animals, farmed, companion and sporting, including where appropriate: on farm; during animal transport; and at point of export or slaughter.

(ii) Protect and improve the health of farmed animals through:

- Rigorous standards of animal identification, registration and movement controls based on an integrated animal health and public information system (APHIS) with approximately 25 years of recorded data;
- Surveillance for economically important diseases whilst implementing plans to eradicate those present and prevent establishment of those which pose a threat;
- Effective regulatory controls on the import of live animals and products of animal origin;
- Effective controls on animal waste products;
- Assisting the Industry to help itself;
- Enforcing non-compliance in line with the Department's enforcement policy.

(iii) Protect public health through:

- Delivering, on behalf of the Food Standards Agency, official control systems for primary meat and milk production;
- Promoting responsible use of anti-microbial products in animals;
- Investigating and controlling important zoonotic conditions.

(iv) Enable exports and imports of animals and agri-food products through:

- Delivery of official controls including export health certification
- Import controls;
- Developing access to new markets.

VSAHG VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Vision - “Healthy animals in sustainable communities.”

VSAHG PURPOSE AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

VSAHG’s purpose is to create value for our stakeholder communities and the environment by sustaining, protecting and enhancing public and animal health and welfare.

OBJECTIVES

1. Preparing for our Future

- a) We will be led and informed by science and utilise the best technology available;
- b) We will regularly benchmark against local, European and international examples of good practice to identify learning opportunities;
- c) We will conduct a strategic review of our delivery model and associated structures;
- d) We will establish and implement the best possible models for delivery including outsourcing, partnering and 3rd party agreements;
- e) We will build our capacity and be innovative in our delivery by exploring new ways of working, internally and externally with partners and stakeholders;
- f) We will develop a framework for change in preparation for future challenges (known and unknown to us);
- g) We will develop and manage a framework of guiding principles for the prioritisation of future challenges; and
- h) We will further develop the talent and flexibility of our people, their roles and competences - promoting transferable skills, adaptability and agility across the organisation.

2. Policy and Delivery

In response to Ministerial priorities, the Programme for Government, national and international obligations and emerging issues, we will develop policies/legislation which will support VSAHG to:

- a) Assure animal health and control animal disease;
- b) Promote a One Health agenda in respect of public health and zoonoses;
- c) Enhance sustainability and green growth by supporting improved animal productivity;
- d) Assure the industry’s supply lines and support its access to markets at home and abroad; and
- e) Protect the welfare of all animals “under our care”.

3. People

- a) We will recruit, develop and retain the very best people available to us
- b) We will upskill and redeploy our people in response to future business challenges

- c) We will ensure flexibility in our roles and duties as well as exploring and implementing new ways of working across the three strands (people, place, technology)
- d) We will nurture the talents and career aspirations of our people, supporting their performance through a clear awareness of their needs and abilities, and providing ongoing challenge mentoring and coaching as appropriate?
- e) We will endeavour to ensure that our people feel connected, fulfilled, recognised and rewarded
- f) We will provide our people with a safe, diverse and inclusive work place a positive, challenging, supportive environment, where people feel trusted and contribute their views
- g) We will make VSAHG a great place to work for all of our people

This will support and underpin the delivery of the Department's vision into the medium-term future.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

VSAHG is headed by a Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), Unified Grade 3. VSAHG comprises several groups of staff including professional, technical, policy and administrative staff. There are presently three permanent Deputy Chief Veterinary Officers (DCVO), Unified Grade 5 (numbers under review), two permanent Programme Director Grade 5s and one temporary Programme Director Grade 5, each reporting directly to the CVO

Each of the Grade 5s is responsible for a Division which includes a number of Programme Areas and Branches (headed by a Grade 6 / 7), in support of the delivery of the VSAHG's Purpose, Vision and objectives, and in ensuring consistent adherence to the Group's Values (below).

An exercise is about to commence to ensure the Group's structures and resources are appropriately configured to support its roles and responsibilities, particularly around the refreshed Purpose, Vision and Key Themes; and to ensure continued alignment with its Values.

As part of this exercise the number of posts at DCVO / Grade 5 level that will be required for the longer-term is expected to be reviewed, as will the allocation of programme and delivery responsibilities between their Divisions.

Head of VSAHG
Chief Veterinary

DCVO
Director of WF SPS
Delivery, Group Renewal
and Business Management

DCVO
Director of Epizootic
Disease Control & Public
Health Delivery Division

DCVO
Director of Enzootic
Control & Field Delivery
Division

Director of SPS Policy
Division

Director of Animal
Health & Welfare
Policy

Programme Delivery Manager
VSAHG Business Management Branch,
VSAAHG Renewal Project, ICT development and Implementation)

Programme Delivery Manager
Portal Controls and Imports Programme

Programme Delivery Manager
Markets, IRM, Trade and Exports Programme

Programme Delivery Manager
CPED & ICB, Epizootics, & TSE/ABPs, AMR & zoonoses

Programme Delivery Manager
Veterinary Public Health Programme, Agri Food Inspection

Programme Delivery Manager
VEU, Science & Surveillance

Welfare and Enforcement delivery, Regulatory & Compliance
(Future Farm Sustainability)

Programme Delivery Manager,
Management of Divisional Veterinary Offices and Delivery of Field Work Programmes

Programme Delivery Manager
TB Programme, Strategy, wildlife Unit and Contracts, BVD

EU Laboratory & Reporting Co-Ordination Branch

SPS & veterinary medicines/residues policy Branch

ADC and AHL

TB Strategy and Policy

Animal Welfare, IRM and EUTLB

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

DAERA Agriculture Inspectors Group 1 safeguard animal and plant health at a range of sites at specified locations across Northern Ireland and will receive training to deliver on their priority work areas. The location and business priorities across DAERA will determine the nature of your key responsibilities.

The successful candidates will be required to carry out duties, detailed below, to meet the objectives of the business areas. The duties, which are interesting and worthwhile, are also physically demanding and undertaken outdoors and in all weathers. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided.

Inspector Group 1 - Veterinary Service and Animal Health Group (VSAHG)

The main purpose of the Inspector Group 1 role in VSAHG is to assist in the enforcement of VSAHG's animal health and welfare and public health legislation and thereby serve and protect the agri-food industry and its trading potential. This is done, through the Inspector Group 1s using their technical expertise and knowledge of VSAHG policies in order to complete a range of inspection and sampling duties. Their duties will be in the areas listed below:

- **Public health;**
- **Animal health and welfare;**
- **Enzootic disease control;**
- **Epizootic disease control;**
- **Zoonotic disease control; and**
- **Facilitation of trade.**

The Inspector Group 1 provides a unique contribution to the:

- **Control and eradication of enzootic disease;**
- **Eradication of epizootic disease as required;**
- **Promotion and maintenance of acceptable animal welfare standards; Promote the control of zoonotic disease; and**
- **Support public health standards.**

There are a number of Inspector Group 1 posts within VSAHG. The initial allocation of posts will be based at Portal Branch as Portal Inspectors (PIs) however other posts may be based, for example, within the Field Operations structure in the Divisional Veterinary Offices (DVOs) as Animal Health and Welfare Inspectors (AHWI).

Main Activities

The Inspector Group 1 will support the delivery of VSAHG programmes by providing technical support across a number of work areas as detailed below;

Epizootics/Trade

- Monitoring the import and export of livestock, animal products, poultry, plants and timber. Ensuring compliance with import and export regulations, complete checks to detect and prevent illegal movements and illegal import of products of animal origin. Issuing rectification and detention notices for non-compliances.
- Assisting with the investigation of animal import and export discrepancies.
- Completing inspections at Ports and Airports to prevent the entry of Epizootic disease. They will also complete checks for trade purposes.
- Auditing Scrapie Monitored flocks annually. This is to ensure compliance with the scheme rules regarding animal identification, record keeping and that the premises meet the required standard. This enhances the marketability of high genetic merit animals to other EU member states.
- Ensuring they have the knowledge to assist in the event of an Epizootic disease outbreak. This could involve taking a lead role in the event of an outbreak e.g. Site Operation Controller or Team Leader of one of the other teams.

Problem Solving

- Responsibility for investigating queries passed from their line management, from Customer Service Branch or from the veterinary cadre within their work area.
- Investigating discrepancies relating to Identification, Registration and Movement (IRM) of livestock. This involves a physical inspection of an animal and possible re-identification. This ensures public confidence in our food animal information systems.
- Investigating discrepancies relating to imports and exports, often outside core hours and without direct access to line management.
- Having a key role in liaising with Private Veterinary Practitioners (PVP's), herd/flock keepers, landowners, livestock transporters and the general public.

Inspections/Compliance

- Providing the initial response to on-farm welfare complaints as directed by their line management and complete the inspection report form. The Inspector Group 1 will request a veterinarian to attend the farm in any case of unnecessary suffering.

- Inspecting applications for animal group numbers. They will confirm the identity of the applicants. They will check boundary fences, housing, isolation facilities and testing facilities and report on their suitability.
- Inspecting the cleansing and disinfection of premises and equipment during disease outbreaks.
- Responsibility for enforcing legislation relating to the welfare of animals during transport. They will issue notices for any non-compliances found.
- Investigating reports of livestock carcasses dumped or not disposed of. The post holder will issue disposal notices and complete a follow-up inspection to check for compliance.
- Completing Biosecurity Surveys, Dairy Herd Questionnaires and Medicine Record Inspections.
- Completing inspections at rendering plants.
- Ensuring that they have the equipment required for a task and ensure it is fit for purpose. The necessary PPE will be provided.
- Inspections of livestock and livestock vehicles moving through Northern Ireland ports.

Public Health

- Collecting blood samples from all species of farmed animals for disease detection and survey work.
- Collecting samples as part of the On-farm Residues National Plan and ensure they are stored and transported in accordance with requirements. All relevant sample submission and continuity forms will be completed.
- Collecting samples for salmonella testing from different categories of poultry flocks. This work requires high biosecurity standards and communication and coordination with poultry processing representatives.
- Detection and seizure of potentially harmful illegal imports which could pose a risk to both animal and public health.

Enforcement

- When a prosecution case is being taken the Inspector Group 1 will, when required, provide a witness statement and attend court to present evidence.

Enzootics

- The Inspector Group 1 may be involved in wildlife intervention work in relation to eradicating Bovine Tuberculosis (Tb).
- Gathering data by completing Tb Disease Investigation forms. This includes mapping farms and recommending to veterinary and group staff managers which neighbouring herds are at risk. The data gathered enables veterinary staff to make evidence based decisions when managing a disease outbreak in a herd/region.

Inspector Group 1 – Forest Service, Plant Health Division (FS PHD)

The main purpose of the FS PHD Agriculture Inspector Group 1 operating in portal locations is to validate compliance of goods with SPS requirements and to detect where regulated plants and plant products do not comply with DAERA Forest Service Sanitary & Phytosanitary Scheme (SPS) rules and to implement appropriate enforcement actions.

The post holders provide a unique contribution to assisting in providing assurance on the:

- Compliant movement of plants for planting, seed potatoes and used agriculture machinery into NI ;
- Assist in preventing imports of non-compliant material;
- Maintain NI plant health status through encouraging compliance and initiating enforcement actions where appropriate.

The duties will include:

- Support completion when required of pre-notified documentary checks on DAERA and EU digital systems at the Point Of Entry (POE) of plants for planting and seed potatoes and forward where set out in legislation for physical verification and validation checks.
- Undertake the delivery of POE SPS Scheme verification and validation checks on pre notified consignments of plants for planting, seed potatoes and used agricultural machinery and regulated goods at NI POE's to confirm by assessment that goods meet applicable regulatory requirements.
- Verification through a physical process including identity and physical checks, confirm that all regulated goods, including plants for planting, seed potatoes and used agriculture and forestry machinery bearing a NIPHL or goods supported by a Phytosanitary certificate , match details provided on pre-notified documentation (checked by a plant health AO documentary checkers).. Following satisfactory verification all pre-notified regulated goods described will be validated as meeting identity and physical checks on digital systems in place.
- Undertake as directed the collection of samples of plants and plant products at the POE or on occasions elsewhere inland of plants for planting and seed potatoes and dispatch for official analysis.. Where

necessary detain goods where the presence of a quarantine pest is suspected and seek support from line management to implement emergency actions if required.

The above list is not exhaustive but gives a good indication of the main duties of the role. The emphasis on particular duties may vary and develop over time according to business needs. Group Staff can be allocated to other duties, commensurate with their grade at any locations and in other environments.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

There are currently a number of permanent, full-time vacancies at the Inspector Group 1 grade. The current vacancies are for shift working posts based in portal locations within DAERA, Veterinary Services and Animal Health Group. However future vacancies within other DAERA business areas or with standard working patterns may be filled from this competition.

Further appointments may be made from this competition should NICS positions become vacant which require the same eligibility criteria and have similar duties and responsibilities.

Location

The current vacancies are based in Larne Port (Redlands Road), Belfast Port (Milewater Road), Belfast International Airport (Antrim) and Warrenpoint Port.

This is a mobile grade and the competition may also be used to fill any future vacancies that arise at a variety of locations throughout Northern Ireland, which could include: other ports; Field Delivery work within Divisional Veterinary Offices (co-located with DAERA Direct Offices), cold stores or other meat premises.

The decision on where any successful candidate will be posted will be based on business need.

Salary

Salary will be within the range £27,897 - £28,483 within which pay progression will be performance related.

Starting salary will be at the minimum of the scale. If the successful candidate is an existing civil servant, normal pay on promotion/re-grading arrangements will apply.

Allowances

In line with the terms and conditions of the NICS Handbook, staff appointed to portal locations will be paid a Shift Disturbance Allowance (SDA) of up to 20 per cent in addition to basic salary, depending on the location of the post and the shift pattern arrangements attached to the work area. Further details on SDAs can be found in Annex A.

Weekend and public / privilege holiday work will attract a premium in line with the NICS handbook.

Pensions

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pension package. You'll find further details on the Civil Service Pensions (Northern Ireland) website at www.finance-ni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni

Holidays

In addition to public and privilege holidays, currently 12 days, the annual leave allowance will be 25 days, rising to 30 days after 5 years' service.

Hours of Work

All staff appointed to ports and airports will work shifts. The normal conditioned hours of work for full-time portal posts are 37 hours net per week. The shifts will include weekends and public/privilege holiday working as part of normal conditioned hours.

Shift patterns are subject to change and staff are required to work all shifts included on the roster. Flexibility is critical to the shift working roles.

Time spent travelling to and from your post is not included as part of your shift.

Further details on portal shift patterns can be found in Annex A.

The normal conditioned hours of work for full-time, non-portal posts are 37 hours net per week, Monday-Friday.

Some posts will also require early morning starts e.g. those working in Field Operations in Wildlife intervention duties which will be on a rota basis.

In addition, the successful candidates working in non-portal posts may be required to participate in weekly on-call rotas during weekdays, weekends, and evenings.

Travel

The successful candidates must have a full valid driving licence that allows driving in NI. Some of the activities of the Group 1 require the driving of Departmental vehicles including 4x4 vehicles with a trailer.

The successful candidates must also have access to a form of transport to enable them to fulfil the responsibilities of the post and be prepared to travel throughout Northern Ireland and elsewhere, as required. This may include overnight stays.

Vetting

An appointment will be dependent on the individual satisfying the vetting requirements for the post. The level of vetting required for this post is Basic Access NI.

Medical

Candidates being offered posts in VSAHG will be required to undergo Tuberculosis and Brucellosis medical assessments to ensure suitability to undertake the full range of duties of the post.

Candidates appointed to portal-based posts are required to work shift arrangements that will include regular night duty. To ensure suitability to undertake the full range of duties of the post you will be asked to complete a health assessment for night workers. You may be called for an assessment by Occupational Health Service.

Training

DAERA recognises that the skills of our people are our greatest asset and we will continually seek to train and develop them in line with our business goals.

For posts based in VSAHG, animal handling training will be provided to all new Group 1s.

For posts based in Forest Service Plant Health Division, training in the SPS requirements for plants for planting, seed potatoes, used agricultural and forestry machinery, plant products and timber will be provided to all new Group 1 Inspectors.

Probation

Confirmation of appointment will be dependent upon the satisfactory completion of a probationary period of 1 year. If performance, conduct or attendance during this period is not satisfactory the appointment may be terminated.

Career Development

The NICS is committed to career development and offers attractive career prospects across a wide variety of roles and professions. Career development is an integral part of the performance management system. Personal Development Plans identify learning and development needs with a view to enhancing skills and capabilities. NI Civil Servants have access to a wide range of internal job opportunities, including secondments with external organisations and are encouraged and supported in proactively managing their career.

Agricultural Inspectors Group 1 working in Forest Service Plant Health Division will have opportunities to apply for membership of the RSB Plant Health professional register.

Conflict of Interest

It is a basic requirement of all Civil Servants that their private activities should not bring them in to conflict with their official duties.

Conflict of Interest is not limited to the individual's own private, financial or other interests, as family, friends and associates may also have dealings which affect the Department's business directly or indirectly. Therefore to avoid any conflict or potential conflict and to demonstrate impartiality to the public at all times, an officer must not, without prior approval, engage in any activity which could be considered to be in conflict with official business.

As such, to protect employees and the Department from public criticism, it will be mandatory for the successful candidate to complete a Conflict of Interest declaration on appointment.

Further Information

Applicants wishing to learn more about the following posts before deciding to apply may contact;

Belfast Port - Ann Healy– ann.healy@daera-ni.gov.uk - 07920 832427

Larne Port - Judith Graham– Judith.graham@daera-ni.gov.uk or
07825140215

Plant Health - Paul Clenaghan – paul.clenaghan@daera-ni.gov.uk or
07920186078

If you have any questions about the competition process, or require any documentation in an alternative format, you should contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330 or email: recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must have by the closing date for applications:

1. 2 GCSEs /GCE "O" levels or equivalent*, at Grade C or above in Maths and English

AND

2. (i) at least a Level 3 Diploma in Work-based Agriculture

OR

- (ii) Level 3 Extended Diploma in Agriculture

OR

- (iii) Level 3 Advanced Technical Extended Diploma in Agriculture

OR

- (iv) Equivalent**

AND

3. At least 3 months' relevant post qualification work experience in the agriculture industry.

AND

4. A full, current driving licence enabling the licence holder to drive in Northern Ireland and access to a form of transport which will permit them to meet the requirements of the post in full.

Applications will also be considered from applicants with relevant formal qualifications considered by the selection panel to be of an equivalent or higher standard to those stated.

Relevant or equivalent qualifications: give the type of qualification and date awarded (the date awarded is the date on which you were notified of your result by the official awarding body). If you believe your qualification is equivalent to the one required, the onus is on you to provide the panel with details of modules studied etc. so that a well-informed decision can be made.

* Examples of equivalent qualifications to English and Mathematics GCSE/GCE are "O" levels at Grade C or above or Essential Skills Level 2.

** Examples of equivalent qualifications:

- A National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at Level 3 in Livestock or Crop Production or Poultry
- A National Diploma in Agriculture
- A College Diploma in Agriculture
- Advanced Diploma in Agriculture
- A relevant NVQ Level 3 qualification

You will be required to provide documentary evidence of your qualifications at interview so please ensure you have these readily available.

Please note:

- **You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.**
- **It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.**
- **The selection panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.**
- **If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.**
- **The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be explored at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your unique role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.**
- **State clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. State "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.**
- **ONLY the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post. Please do not include your name in the employment history or eligibility criteria sections.**
- **No additional information or evidence provided in support of your experience will be considered at any time after the closing date for applications.**
- **The NICS Competency framework can be accessed via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk**

SELECTION PROCESS

There are two stages to the selection process, which will include:

1. An Eligibility Sift.
2. A competence-based interview.

ELIGIBILITY SIFT

This is an assessment of the evidence provided in your application form against the eligibility criteria. Successful candidates at sift will progress to the next stage of selection.

INTERVIEW

The interview will be used to assess the following four competences:

1. Making Effective Decisions

Effectiveness in this area is about being objective, using sound judgement, evidence and knowledge to provide accurate, expert and professional advice. For all staff, it means showing clarity of thought, setting priorities, analysing and using evidence to evaluate options before arriving at well reasoned, justifiable decisions.

Marks available: 30

2. Collaborating and Partnering

People skilled in this area create and maintain positive, professional and trusting working relationships with a wide range of people within and outside the NICS, to help to achieve business objectives and goals. At all levels, it requires working collaboratively, sharing information and building supportive, responsive relationships with colleagues and stakeholders, whilst having the confidence to challenge assumptions.

Marks available: 20

3. Changing and Improving

People who are effective in this area are responsive, innovative and seek out opportunities to create effective change. For all staff, it is about being open to change, suggesting ideas for improvements to the way things are done, and working in 'smarter', more focused ways.

Marks available: 20

4. Delivering at Pace

Effectiveness in this area means focusing on delivering timely performance with energy and taking responsibility and accountability for quality outcomes. For all staff, it is about working to agreed goals and activities and dealing with challenges in a responsive and constructive way.

Marks available: 20

Total Marks Available: 90

Overall Pass Mark: 54

COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEWS

Selection panels will design questions to test the applicant's knowledge and experience in each of the above areas and award marks accordingly.

No notes or personal documentation may be brought into the interview room.

INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in Greenmount Campus from week commencing 1st July 2024.

NICS COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The selection process will assess candidates against the NICS competency framework at level 2.

The NICS competency framework sets out how all NICS employees should work. It puts the Civil Service values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality at the heart of everything they do, and it aligns to the three high-level leadership behaviours that every civil servant needs to model as appropriate to their role and level of responsibility: Set Direction; Engage People and Deliver Results.

Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. The framework outlines ten competencies, which are grouped into three clusters. The competencies are intended to be discrete and cumulative, with each level building on the levels below i.e. a person demonstrating a competency at level 3 should be demonstrating levels 1 and 2 as a matter of course.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service competency framework can be accessed via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk

It is important that all candidates familiarise themselves with the competency framework as this forms the basis of selection process. Should you require assistance in accessing the competency framework please contact HRConnect.

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

APPLICATION FORM

You can apply online at www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk.

Please refer to the Candidate Information Booklet before making your application and retain a copy for your reference. The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria. **All** parts of the application form **must** be completed by the applicant before this application can be considered. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.

Please note:

- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms, unless it is specifically requested in the application form and candidate information booklet.
- All applications must be submitted by the advertised closing date and time.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline.
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. State for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- Only the employment history, eligibility and shortlisting sections will be made available to the panel.
- When completing the online application, your information is saved as you move through the pages. You may leave the application at any time, providing you have clicked on the 'Save & Continue' button. Once your application has been submitted the option to edit will no longer be available.
- The session timeout for the online application is 40 minutes, if you do not save or change page within this time you will automatically be logged out and any unsaved work will be lost.
- You must click SUBMIT once you have finished your online application. You will receive an acknowledgement email. Please contact HRConnect if you do not receive an acknowledgment email within 24 hrs.

Help with making your application

You can get advice or assistance with making an application from your local Jobs and Benefits Office - contact details are available on NIDirect: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/jobs-and-benefits-offices>

You can also get advice or assistance from local disability employment organisations. To find out more about local disability employment organisations contact Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment (NIUSE), an umbrella group for individuals and organisations promoting opportunities for people with disabilities to access and maintain employment, email info@niuse.org.uk, tel. 0044 (0)28 71 377709, text phone 0044 (0) 28 71 372077

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

If this is your first experience of a competence-based interview, bear in mind that it does not require you to:

- Talk through previous jobs or appointments from start to finish;
- Provide generalised information as to your background and experience; or
- Provide information that is not specifically relevant to the competence the question is designed to test.

A competence-based interview does however require you to:

- Focus exclusively, in your responses, on your ability to fulfill the competences required for effective performance in the role; and
- Provide specific examples of your experience in relation to the required competence areas.

In preparation for the interview you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, such as:

- Situation – briefly outline the situation;
- Task – what was your objective, what were you trying to achieve;
- Action – what did you actually do, what was your unique contribution;
- Result – what happened, what was the outcome, what did you learn.

The panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience to demonstrate the range of behaviours associated with the competences being assessed. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples which best illustrate your skills and abilities in each competence area. You may draw examples from any area of your work / life experiences.

For professional and technical posts, questions may be framed in the context of professional elements of the post.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Merit Principle

In accordance with the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code, appointments to the NICS are made under the 'merit principle', where the best person for any given post is selected in fair and open competition.

Further information on the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at www.nicscommissioners.org.

NICSHR Privacy Notice

NICSHR are committed to protecting your privacy. HRConnect manage job applications on behalf of NICSHR, in line with the NICSHR privacy notice available via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk

Offers of Employment

Candidates will only receive one offer of appointment which, if not accepted, will generally result in withdrawal from the competition.

Changes in personal circumstances and contact details

Please ensure HRConnect Recruitment Team is informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances. It is important that HRConnect Recruitment Team has up to date contact details for you. If your email address changes then it is your responsibility to inform the Recruitment Team at HRConnect.

(Note for existing NICS staff – An update to your employee records will not result in your applicant profile being updated. You must still inform HRConnect Recruitment Team of a change in contact details.)

Transgender Requirements

Should you currently be going through a phase of transition in respect of gender and wish this to be taken into consideration, in confidence, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process please contact HRConnect. Details of this will only be used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process.

Merit List

HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed. It is presently intended that the merit list for this competition should remain extant for a period of one year. However you should be aware that circumstances may arise in the future where it will be necessary to extend the currency of the merit list for a further period. The merit list will only be extended where cogent practical reasons for doing so arise.

Disability Requirements

We will ask on the application form if you require any reasonable adjustments, due to disability, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process. Details of any disability are only used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process. If you have indicated on your application that you have a disability and are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, you may be required to outline any adjustments you consider necessary in order for you to take up an appointment. If you wish to discuss your disability requirements further, please contact HRConnect.

Documentation

Identification documents to satisfy the Nationality and Security requirements of the post will be required. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for assessment.

You should ensure that the required documents are readily available. Failure to provide the appropriate documentation when requested will result in your application being rejected.

Right to Work and Nationality Requirements

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom and satisfy the Nationality requirements for appointment to the NICS. Please note **ALL** applicants for external recruitment will be subject to a Nationality validation check.

Applicants must be either:

- (i) UK national; or
- (ii) National of a Commonwealth country; or
- (iii) National of the Republic of Ireland; or
- (iv) EEA nationals with settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme; or
- (v) Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals working in the Civil Service; or
- (vi) Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals who have built up the right to work in the Civil Service; or
- (vii) Certain family members of the relevant EEA & Turkish nationals

ALL candidates are required to state their nationality in the Right to Work and Nationality Requirements response box in Part 1 of your application form.

For candidates applying under categories iv – vii you are required to provide the following information in the Right to Work and Nationality Requirements response box in Part 1 of your application form. Failure to provide the requested information **WILL** result in your application being rejected.

Category iv – Please provide your ‘Share code’ in the ‘Share code’ field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK. You can find further detail on obtaining your [‘share code’](#) here

Category v - Please provide your ‘Share code’ in the ‘Share code’ field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK. You can find further detail on obtaining your [‘share code’](#) here. You are also required to provide your payroll number in the nationality response box to demonstrate that you are working in the Northern Ireland Civil Service;

Category vi - Please provide your ‘Share code’ in the ‘Share code’ field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK. You can find further detail on obtaining your [‘share code’](#) here. Please provide confirmation in the nationality response box that you hold indefinite or limited leave to remain in the UK and that this was granted prior to 31st December 2020.

Category vii - Please provide your ‘Share code’ in the ‘Share code’ field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK. You can find further detail on obtaining your [‘share code’](#) here. In addition, please provide evidence in the nationality response box to support your application for applying as a family member of a relevant EEA and Turkish nation. Further documentary evidence may be request from HRConnect to support this;

‘Family member of the relevant EEA or Turkish nationals’ means:

- (i) That national’s spouse*; or
- (ii) A direct descendant (child, grandchild etc.) of that national or his/her spouse who is under 21 years of age or is their dependent; or
- (iii) A dependent relative in the ascending line (parent, grandparent etc.) of the EEA national or his/her spouse.

*Note: ‘Spouse’ does not include a party to a marriage of convenience and in the case of EEA national vocational students family members are restricted to spouses and dependent children only

Where a candidate has a right to work status which has a time limitation, ongoing checks will be in place to ensure the right to work is maintained.

Further guidance on Nationality requirements is available via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk.

Security

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For these posts in the NICS the level of vetting is a Baseline Standard. For this check you will be required to provide the following:

- a) Your passport OR
- b) A document verifying your permanent National Insurance number (e.g. P45, P60 or National Insurance card) AND your birth certificate which includes the names of your parents (long version).
- c) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

Further information regarding the Baseline Personnel Security Standard, including other acceptable documents is available via www.gov.uk.

We will organise a Criminal Record Check on all applicants to be carried out by AccessNI. The category of AccessNI check required for this post is;

Basic Disclosure Certificate

You should not put off applying for a post because you have a conviction. We deal with all criminal record information in a confidential manner, and information relating to convictions is destroyed after a decision is made. Further information regarding policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders and the vetting process is available at www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk in Recruitment Policy and Procedures manual.

Security Policy for AccessNI Disclosure Information is available at www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk under Useful Information.

The AccessNI code of practice can be accessed via www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni

Those applicants who are being considered for appointment will be contacted by HRConnect, normally after interview/test, and will be asked to complete the AccessNI application form. Please note that a request to complete this form should not be seen as a guarantee of an offer of appointment.

Failure to complete the application form and return it within the specified time will be regarded as 'no longer interested in the position' and your application will be withdrawn.

Criminal Record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form

Please note the Equal Opportunities monitoring section of the application form is mandatory in order to submit an application.

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to the DoF website www.finance-ni.gov.uk.

Applications from women, young people (people under the age of 35), people with a disability and people from minority ethnic communities are particularly welcomed for this post.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit

Feedback

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is committed to ensuring that the processes used to recruit and select staff are fair and in accordance with the principles of the Civil Service Commissioners Code. We are consequently committed to providing feedback in respect of decisions taken in determining eligibility/shortlisting as well as at interview. Feedback in respect of eligibility/shortlisting will be communicated automatically to those candidates who fail to satisfy any criteria. All requests for feedback are welcome.

**THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM PART OF
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

Larne and Belfast Ports Shift Patterns

The 37 hours are worked across Monday to Sunday as part of a shift arrangement.

Staff currently work a four-week rotational shift pattern providing coverage for three shifts every 24 hours i.e., early, late, and overnight shift with rest days.

Belfast Port current shift pattern:

- Early Shift: 06:00 – 14:24
- Late Shift: 14:00 - 22:24
- Night Shift: 22:00 – 06:24

Larne Port current shift pattern:

- Early Shift: 05.30 – 13:54
- Late Shift: 13:30 - 21:54
- Night Shift: 21.30 – 05:54

This pattern attracts 20% SDA.

Details are provided below in Table 1, with each 24-hour period broken in to three shifts.

Belfast City Airport and Belfast International Airports Shift Patterns

In these locations the 37 hours are worked across Monday to Sunday as part of a shift arrangement.

Staff currently work a 12- week rotational shift pattern providing coverage for two shifts every 24 hours i.e., early and late.

Belfast International and City Airport current shift pattern:

- Early shift: 07:00 -15:00
- Late shift: 14:00 - 22:00

There is a one hour handover and 36 minutes in work rest break.

Working early and late shifts attracts 11% SDA.

Details of the pattern are provided below in Table 2.

Other staff at the airports work their 37 hours as part of four weekly rotational airport and courier shift working pattern including night shift working. Staff attached to these working arrangements are paid 20% SDA.

Details of the pattern are provided below in Table 3.

As part of this arrangement staff are required to work at other locations.

Warrenpoint Port Shift Pattern

In this location the 37 hours are worked across Monday to Sunday as part of a shift arrangement.

Staff currently work a 12 week rotational shift pattern providing coverage for two shifts every 24 hours i.e., early and late.

Warrenpoint Port current shift pattern:

- Early Shift: 4.30 - 12.54
- Late Shift: 14.00 - 22.24

There is no handover but there is a one hour in work rest break

This pattern attracts 12.5% SDA

Details of the pattern are provided below in Table 2.

NB: Start and finish times are subject to change due to tidal variations and ferry time arrivals.

Table 1: **Larne and Belfast Ports Shift Patterns**

Week - Sun, Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat

Rota	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Total pw
Week 1	R	R	L	L	L	L	R	4
Week 2	E	E	E	E	R	R	L	5
Week 3	L	L	R	R	E	E	E	5
Week 4	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	6*

E = early shift , L = Late shift, N= night shift and R=rest day

*Staff are required to work 6 nights out of the 7 in Week 4 with either Sunday or Saturday night taken as a rest night.

Over the 4-week rolling shift pattern staff work 20 shifts of 7.4 hours net per shift.

Existing working arrangements include a 1 hour in work rest break on all shifts.

Table 2: **Belfast City Airport and Belfast International Airports and Warrenpoint Port Shift Patterns**

Rota	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total pw
Week 1	E	E	E	R	R	L	L	5
Week 2	L	L	L	R	R	E	E	5
Week 3	R	R	L	L	L	L	L	5
Week 4	R	R	E	E	E	E	R	4
Week 5	L	L	L	L	L	R	R	5
Week 6	E	E	E	E	E	R	L	6
Week 7	L	L	L	R	R	E	E	5
Week 8	E	E	E	R	R	L	L	5
Week 9	R	R	E	E	E	E	E	5
Week 10	R	R	L	L	L	L	R	4
Week 11	E	E	E	E	E	R	R	5
Week 12	L	L	L	L	L	R	E	6

Table 3: Four weekly rotational airport and courier shift working pattern including night shift working (SDA 20%)

Week	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total Shifts pw	Hrs. worked(net)
Week 1	RD	E	E 1/2	E	RD	E	NS 20:00 to 08:00	5	37
Week 2	RD	RD	NS 20:00 to 08:00	RD	L	L	NS 20:00 to 08:00	5	37
Week 3	RD	E	E	E	E 1/2	RD	NS 20:00 to 08:00	5	37
Week 4	RD	L	NS 20:00 to 08:00	RD	L	RD	NS 20:00 to 08:00	5	37

NB: Night shift (NS) = 12 hours including 54 minutes in work rest break (net 11.1 counted as 1.5 shifts

Early ½ shift is 3.7 hrs with 18 minute break

Early and Late Shifts 7.4 hrs net (7.4x 5 shifts = 37 hours per week)

