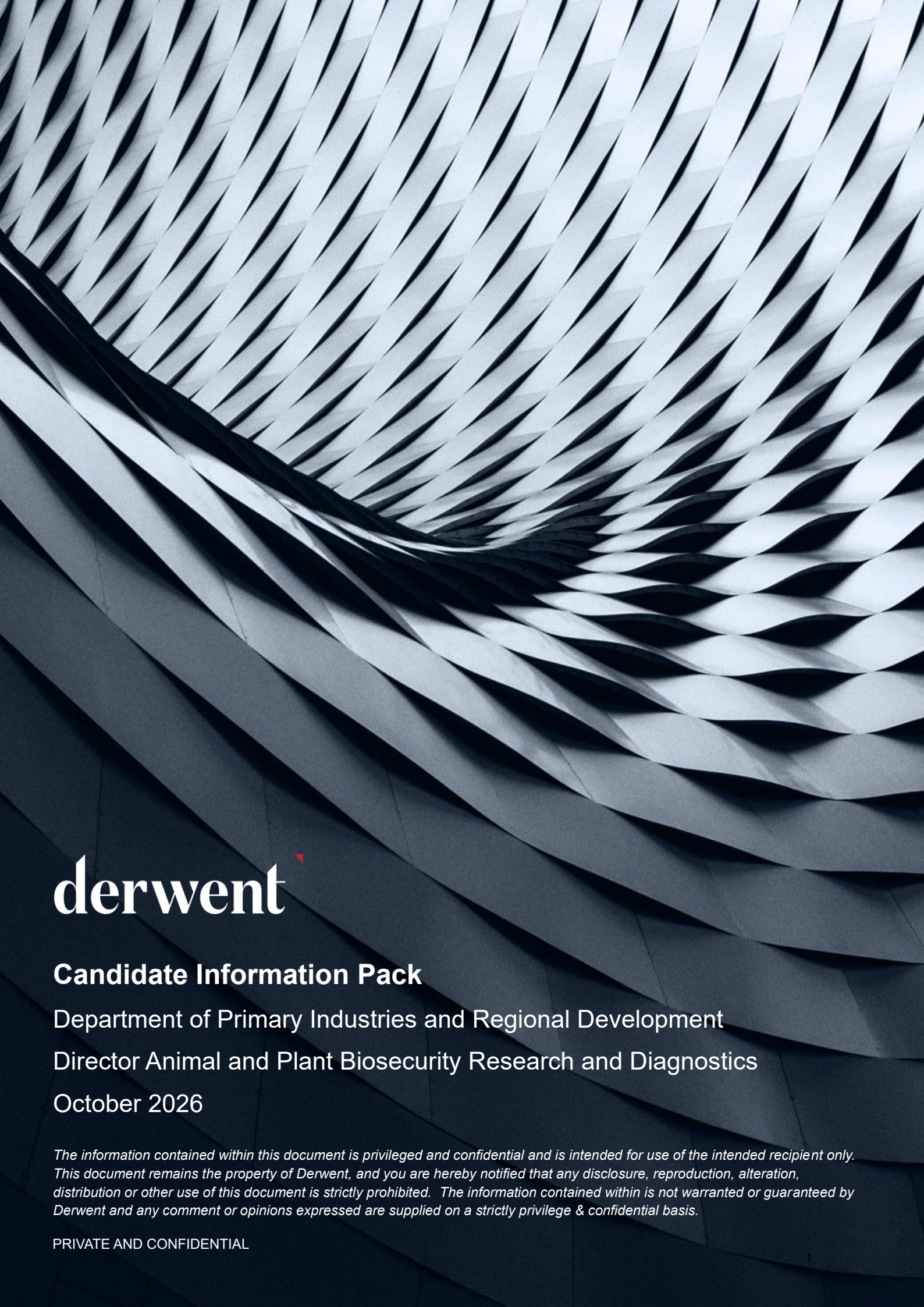




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Candidate Information Pack

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Director Animal and Plant Biosecurity Research and Diagnostics

October 2026

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Role Description

Director Animal and Plant Biosecurity Research and Diagnostics



Department of Primary Industries
and Regional Development

Role Description Fields	Details
Department/Agency	Primary Industries and Regional Development
Division/Branch/Unit	Agriculture & Biosecurity / Biosecurity & Food Safety
Classification/Grade/Band	PSSE Band 1
OSCA Code	149399
PCAT Code	1119192
Date of Approval	October 2026
Agency Website	www.dpird.nsw.gov.au

Agency overview

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) is the department dedicated to growing primary industries and supporting regional economic development to deliver long term benefits to the state. Our focus is to protect, support and develop our primary industries, mining sector, and regions.

DPIRD brings together Agriculture and Biosecurity; Fisheries and Forestry; Local Land Services; NSW Resources; Regional Development and Delivery; the Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation; NSW Public Works and Soil Conservation Service.

We have nearly 5,000 employees, with almost 80 per cent of us living and working in regional NSW.

The Agriculture and Biosecurity Group plays a key role in protecting, supporting, and developing sustainable, future-ready agricultural and biosecurity sectors across NSW. Through its work, the group shapes the future of agriculture and safeguards the state's biosecurity.

Comprising of five divisions: Agriculture, which leads industry development through science and research; Biosecurity and Food Safety, which manages biosecurity risks and food safety while responding to emergencies; Climate and Natural Resources, which drives policy on climate, drought, soil, and water to support resilience; Research Assurance, which ensures a commercially viable, high-quality research framework; and Strategy and Regulatory Policy, which delivers policy reform and oversees regulatory integrity.

Primary purpose of the role

Provide a trusted evidence base to protect the community and industry from biosecurity risks, support market access, and inform Government policies through diagnostics, innovation, and research.

Provide world class leadership in animal and plant biosecurity diagnostics and research, driving innovation and developing partnerships that maximise the NSW Government's return on investment in biosecurity research and diagnostic functions.

The role enhances and promotes the reputation of DPIRD's Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute (EMAI) as a centre of excellence for animal and plant biosecurity research and diagnostics. This role demands expert advice to DPIRD Executives and the Minister's Office, often requiring immediate availability, including outside of traditional work hours, to respond to urgent biosecurity issues.

Key accountabilities

- Drive the achievement of organisational goals for animal and plant biosecurity and food safety research through effective planning, the management of performance, and by inspiring and motivating diagnostic and research staff.
- Work closely with other Directors across DPIRD to develop and deliver a science and research strategy that underpins NSW animal and plant biosecurity objectives and aligns with national priorities and stakeholder needs.
- Identify and evaluate co-investment opportunities, devise business plans for scientific collaboration and drive the development of innovative and responsive diagnostic services for biosecurity clients.
- Build and maintain a wide knowledge and understanding of the scientific dimensions of biosecurity and food safety and provide national leadership in the development of diagnostic and research priorities for biosecurity.
- Provide advice to the Executive and Minister's office on biosecurity diagnostic and research matters and opportunities that inform government policy development and investment strategies. Liaise across DPIRD to ensure scientific collaborations are optimised and that consistent quality standards are implemented; serve as chair of EMAI's Biosafety Committee.
- Maintain executive level networks with government, industry and other research organisations, universities, and other partners to promote collaboration and information sharing on strategic biosecurity issues and programs.
- Provide full site leadership at EMAI driving a productive and harmonious culture, working with site managers and other senior staff to review resource allocation, negotiate colocation and optimal use of infrastructure.
- Assist the team to adjust to emerging trends, best practices, and ways of working for animal and plant biosecurity diagnostics and research, clarifying the purpose and benefits of continuous improvement for staff and provide coaching and leadership to translate organisational change initiatives into practical strategies.

Key challenges

- Developing strong partnerships with external organisations and agencies, enhancing the reputation of EMAI and secure funding in alignment with DPIRD investment strategies, while delivering innovative products and services in a value-driven, competitive, and constantly changing operating environment.
- Maintaining sufficient capacity and capability across DPIRD in order to support NSW biosecurity and food safety research and diagnostics needs on a day-to-day basis as well as during emergency responses.
- Developing strong links between diagnostic and research functions, between diagnostic and research staff and between scientific disciplines to ensure collaborative and productive partnerships are developed and the site works harmoniously. Ensure a seamless delivery of diagnostic services to external and internal clients.

Key relationships

Internal

Who	Why
Secretary DPIRD	• Promote shared values and alignment of purpose • Act as subject matter expert on biosecurity diagnostics and research, providing strategic advice and recommendations to support organisational decisions and initiatives
Deputy Secretary Agriculture & Biosecurity	• Promote shared values and alignment of purpose • Provide expert advice and contribute to decision making • Identify emerging issues/risks and their implications and propose solutions • Receive advice and report on progress towards business objectives and discuss future directions
Executive Director Biosecurity and Food Safety	• Ensure an integrated organisational approach to corporate strategy, cross-portfolio initiatives and issues

Who	Why
	- Contribute to the strategic direction of DPIRD policy and associated strategic reforms - Provide expert advice and liaise to formulate advice/policy - Receive advice and report on progress towards business objectives and discuss future directions - Advise of emerging and/ or contentious issues and solutions
Divisional Executives	- Collaborate on strategic development and business planning and to monitor Divisional performance - Provide strategic policy advice and liaise to formulate advice/policy - Advise on emerging social, environmental or economic issues and propose solutions
EMAI Site Managers	- Provide leadership for onsite issues - Lead a site management team group
Staff and work teams	- Inspire and motivate team, provide leadership and clear direction and build manager performance. - Provide information and advice about organisational objectives, policies and procedures and how best to apply these. - Drive effective and efficient service delivery and to meet research program objectives.

External

Who	Why
Other NSW government agencies	- Represent the Department in the business of government. - Develop whole of government approaches on key issues, negotiate consistent policies and promote the efficient utilisation of resources. - Mitigate risk of duplication and overlap of key services.
Other jurisdictions	- Represent NSW policies and interests and to promote, support and coordinate activities. - Negotiate high level agreements on harmonised operations and resource sharing between states.
Industry and other stakeholders	Maintain networks and partnerships; present and test policy proposals; build ownership and capacity; and to better understand different perspectives on investment issues.

Ministerial

Who	Why
Minister and Minister's office	Provide expert briefings on new and emerging issues, negotiate approaches and preferred outcomes and to report on the performance of government programs.

Role dimensions

Decision making

The role operates with a high level of autonomy to develop programs, drive the delivery of services and to change priorities within approved business plans. Human, financial, and physical resources under the control of the Director can be re-allocated without referral. Plans, leads, and organises the work of teams and manages resources through appropriate procurement processes.

Refers to the Executive Director only those decisions that involve a significant change to government policy, changes in the organisational structure of the Branch, or which require a higher delegation or approval.

Reporting line

Executive Director Biosecurity & Food Safety

Direct reports

Up to 8 staff

Indirect reports: up to 200 staff across DPIRD sites at Menangle, Yanco, Wagga, Orange, and Narrabri.

Budget/Expenditure

Includes an annual net cost of services budget and expenditure budget.

Key knowledge and experience

- A reputation and standing as a strong proven leader in a field related to biosecurity
- Significant experience in governance, management, and operations at an executive leadership level in research and diagnostics
- Proven track record of bringing together multiple disciplines to deliver exceptional levels of service and outcomes in a field related to biosecurity, and experience in leading diagnostic service provision or biosecurity research or both.

Essential requirements

- Tertiary qualifications in relevant sciences and/or substantial demonstrated equivalent experience.

Capabilities for the role

The [NSW public sector capability framework](#) describes the capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed to perform a role. There are four main groups of capabilities: personal attributes, relationships, results and business enablers, with a fifth people management group of capabilities for roles with managerial responsibilities. These groups, combined with capabilities drawn from occupation-specific capability sets where relevant, work together to provide an understanding of the capabilities needed for the role.

The capabilities are separated into **focus capabilities** and **complementary capabilities**.

Focus capabilities

Focus capabilities are the capabilities considered the most important for effective performance of the role. These capabilities will be assessed at recruitment.

The focus capabilities for this role are shown below with a brief explanation of what each capability covers and the indicators describing the types of behaviours expected at each level.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
	Display Resilience and Courage Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	• Create an organisational culture that encourages and supports openness, persistence and genuine debate about issues • Clearly explain and support agreed positions while staying open to valid suggestions for changes	Highly Advanced

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
Personal Attributes		• Raise critical issues, make difficult decisions with clarity and accountability • Respond to significant, complex and new challenges with a high level of resilience and persistence • Use a range of strategies to respond constructively and act as a stabilising influence even in the most challenging situations • Recognise the need for change and create an environment that welcomes continuous improvement and adaptability	
 Personal Attributes	Act with Integrity Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	• Model the highest standards of ethical and professional behaviour and encourage others to do the same • Set an example for others to follow by representing your organisation in an honest, ethical and professional way • Promote a culture of integrity and professionalism within your organisation and when dealing with external organisations • Reinforce and monitor the use of ethical practices, standards and systems • Promote practices and systems that create a workplace culture that values high ethical standards and behaviour	Advanced
 Relationships	Communicate Effectively Communicate clearly, pay attention to others and respond with understanding and respect	• Present with credibility, engage diverse audiences and test whether they understand you • Translate technical and complex information clearly and concisely for different audiences • Create opportunities for others to contribute to discussion and debate • Set an example by promoting information sharing across your organisation • Manage complex communications that involve understanding and responding to multiple and divergent viewpoints • Explore creative ways to share information and communicate with diverse audiences • Leverage insights from people with lived experience to shape communication and engagement strategies • Write clearly, concisely and persuasively in a range of styles and formats	Advanced
	Commit to Customer Service Provide customer-focused services in line with public	• Promote an inclusive, customer-focused culture in your organisation and consider new ways of working to improve customer experience	Advanced

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
Relationships	sector and organisational objectives	- Ensure that your organisation's systems, processes, policies and programs collect customer feedback and insights, and use these to inform your response to customer needs - Initiate and develop partnerships with customers to define and evaluate service performance outcomes - Promote and manage partnerships within your organisation and across the public, private and community sectors - Communicate with senior stakeholders about key issues and provide expert and influential advice - Consider customers' experience when designing business processes and improving services - Encourage new ideas and creative ways to involve customers in designing business processes and improving services	
 Relationships	Work Collaboratively Collaborate with others and value their contribution	- Create an organisational culture and supporting systems that help communicate and share information and learning across the sector - Publicly celebrate when collaboration leads to successful outcomes - Seek out and facilitate opportunities to collaborate with stakeholders across your organisation, government and other jurisdictions to develop solutions - Identify and address challenges to collaborating with internal and external stakeholders - Champion cultural capability and inclusivity as cornerstones of collaborative working	Highly Advanced
 Relationships	Influence and Negotiate Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	- Influence others with a fair and thoughtful approach and present persuasive counter arguments - Work towards mutually beneficial, win-win outcomes - Show sensitivity and understanding when resolving serious and complex conflicts and differences - Identify key stakeholders and gain their support in advance - Negotiate from a clear position, based on research, a firm grasp of key issues, likely arguments, points of difference and areas for compromise - Anticipate and minimise conflict within your organisation and with external stakeholders - Use evidence, including data insights, to create persuasive stories	Advanced

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Results	Demonstrate Accountability Be proactive and responsible for your actions, and follow legislation, policy and guidelines	• Design and develop systems to establish and measure accountabilities • Ensure accountabilities are exercised in line with government and organisational goals • Exercise due diligence to ensure work health and safety risks are addressed • Oversee quality assurance practices • Model the highest standards of financial probity, demonstrating respect for public money and other resources • Monitor and maintain the business unit's knowledge of and compliance with legislative and regulatory frameworks • Incorporate sound risk management principles and strategies into business planning • Make strategic and sustainable choices that balance meeting short-term goals with long-term success	Advanced
 Business Enablers	Project Management Understand and use effective ways to plan, coordinate and control projects	• Prepare and review project scope and business cases for projects with multiple interdependencies • Use key subject matter experts' knowledge to inform project plans and directions • Design and implement effective stakeholder communication strategies for all project stages • Monitor project completion and implement effective and rigorous project evaluation methodologies to inform future planning • Develop strategies to correct projects if they vary from their plans • Manage transitions between project stages and ensure any changes to projects are consistent with organisational goals • Participate in governance processes, such as project steering groups	Advanced
 People Management	Manage and Develop People Engage with and motivate staff, and develop their capability and potential	• Refine roles and responsibilities over time to achieve better business outcomes • Recognise talent, develop team capability and succession plan • Coach and mentor staff and encourage professional development and continuous learning • Prioritise dealing with team and individual performance issues and ensure your organisation uses a consistent approach • Implement performance development frameworks to align workforce capability with your organisation's current and future priorities and objectives	Advanced

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
		Develop systems to promote cultural capability as a means of ensuring the cultural safety of all colleagues	
 People Management	Inspire Direction and Purpose Communicate goals, priorities and vision, and recognise achievements	- Champion the organisational vision and strategy, and communicate the way forward to achieve the vision and strategy - Create a culture of confidence and trust in your organisation's future direction - Generate enthusiasm and commitment to goals and ensure all levels of the organisation understand the goals - Communicate the scope and expected outcomes of organisational strategies - Celebrate organisational success and high performance, and implement initiatives to maintain morale	Highly Advanced

Complementary capabilities

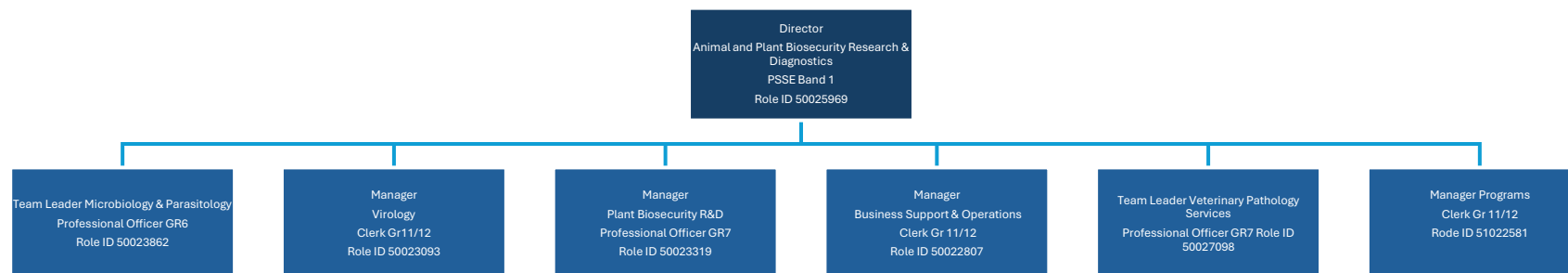
Complementary capabilities are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identify performance required for the role and development opportunities.

Note: capabilities listed as 'not essential' for this role are not relevant for recruitment purposes, however, may be relevant for future career development.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Personal Attributes	Manage Self	Be persistent, self-reflect and commit to learning	Advanced
 Personal Attributes	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Be inclusive and respect diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Adept
 Results	Deliver Results	Achieve results by using resources efficiently and committing to quality outcomes	Advanced

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Results	Plan and Prioritise	Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances	Advanced
 Results	Think and Solve Problems	Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions	Advanced
 Business Enablers	Finance	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Adept
 Business Enablers	Technology	Understand and use available technology to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness	Adept
 Business Enablers	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and use procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Adept
 People Management	Optimise Business Outcomes	Manage people and resources effectively to achieve public value	Adept
 People Management	Manage Reform and Change	Support and champion change, and help others to engage with change	Adept

Animal & Plant Biosecurity Research and Diagnostics Organisational Chart



The Application and Selection Process

Applications

Closing date: Sunday 8 November 2026.

Applications:

All applications are to be received by Derwent. To apply, please go to www.derwentsearch.com.au and “Search Jobs” where you will find links to submit your application.

Your application should include a resume and a cover letter highlighting your suitability.

Enquiries:

Please contact Derwent by email publicsector@derwentsearch.com.au and we will reply with appropriate information and/or arrange a convenient time to speak. You may also contact Andrew McEncroe, Managing Partner Derwent on 0416 018 860.

Merit based selection process

The selection panel will assess applicants against the selection criteria to select a short list of applicants to be invited to attend an interview with the section panel. Candidates may also be invited to attend a pre-screening interview with Derwent to support the panel’s decision making.

Candidates may be required to attend additional interviews and or complete additional assessments such as presentation task, or psychometric assessments.

Reference Checks

Candidates at an advanced stage of consideration will be requested to provide at least two referees who may be contacted before an offer is made. Any written references provided will also be checked.

Pre-employment verification and background checks

Before an offer of employment is made the following checks will be undertaken:

- Academic Qualification Check
- Professional Membership Check
- Criminal History Check
- Financial Regulatory Check
- Bankruptcy Check
- Media and public commentary searches.

Candidate Care

We are committed to ensuring that potential applicants and candidates are treated respectfully and fairly. Derwent consultants are available to field inquiries and ensure that applicants are informed about developments as they become available. Candidates who are shortlisted and complete assessments including interviews will be offered a feedback session to discuss their experience and the assessment results.

Candidates with a Disability

Derwent aims to ensure people with disability can access secure and sustainable employment opportunities and are respected for their skills and capabilities. If required, we will provide reasonable adjustments such as access, equipment or other practical support at relevant stages of the recruitment process. You can specify in the application if you have necessary adjustments, or please inform us at any stage, and we can arrange reasonable adjustments on your behalf. If you need to contact us about reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process, please contact publicsector@derwentsearch.com.au

Thank you for your interest in the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.