

HR Advisor – Candidate Briefing Information

About Southern Waters

Southern Waters is a jointly owned council-controlled organisation, established under the Government’s Local Water Done Well framework. Its shareholders are the Central Otago, Clutha, Gore and Waitaki District Councils.

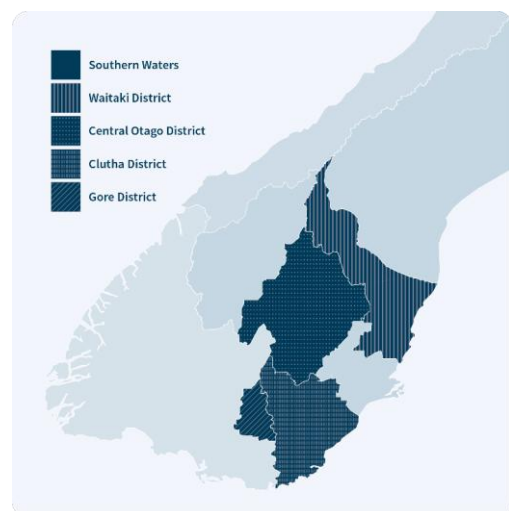
It is the largest joint water services entity in the South Island. From 1 July 2027, Southern Waters will manage the delivery of water, wastewater, and stormwater services for approximately 84,100 people across an area of 24,702 km².

Southern Waters has a \$810million capital works programme to 2034. Its asset will include:

- 4,787km of water pipeline
- 31 urban water supplies
- 68 water and wastewater treatment plants
- 17 rural water schemes

Our Promise

“To deliver safe, reliable, and sustainable water services that our communities trust and value.”



Our Foundation Pillars

Financial Sustainability

Create scale and capacity to fund and deliver significant long-term investment in water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure

Leading Workforce

A highly skilled, adaptable, and future-focused water workforce across Otago and Southland, ensuring expertise and capacity to deliver reliable services and drive continuous improvement.

Local Influence

Ensure iwi has a meaningful voice, and that local perspectives and priorities are represented so communities remain connected to how their water services are delivered.

Customer Focus

Use emerging technologies to enhance customer service responsiveness and increase public understanding of water systems and the importance of water for communities and future generations.

Protect Health & the Environment

Ensure that public health and the environment are protected by making water quality, service reliability, and regulatory compliance core to all investment and operational decisions.

Our Wai

Southern Waters has been created in response to significant challenges facing water services across Aotearoa. These include infrastructure condition, affordability, regulatory requirements, workforce capacity and environmental protection.

At its heart, Southern Waters is about looking after wai, now and for future generations.

We acknowledge that wai is a taonga, fundamental to the wellbeing of whenua and people.

Our purpose is to:

- deliver safe, reliable and sustainable water services
- protect public health and the environment
- build the scale and capability needed to invest wisely over the long term
- keep communities connected to how their water services are delivered

Southern Waters is being established gradually, with a focus on careful planning, strong governance, and a smooth transition for staff and customers.

Essential to its success as a high-performing, future-focused company are the existing knowledge, experience, and community relationships within the shareholding councils.

To learn more about Southern Waters please visit our website.

Position: HR Advisor

Reports to: People Workstream Lead – Southern Waters

Location: Central Otago, Clutha, Gore, Waitaki

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Purpose

The HR Advisor provides HR expertise and support to the Southern Waters HR/Transition Workstream Lead, playing a vital role in shaping and delivering the People Transition Programme's HR framework, policies and processes. The role combines hands-on HR practitioner work such as recruitment, employment documentation, and employee relations, with support to the Workstream Lead, ensuring the workstream operates with sound HR judgement, consistency across councils, and the pace needed for a complex multi-council transition.

Key Accountabilities

1. HR Policy and Framework Development

- Develop, draft and review HR policies and frameworks for Southern Waters, ensuring alignment with the Employment Relations Act 2000, Holidays Act 2003, and other applicable NZ employment legislation.
- Ensure policies are fit for purpose across a multi-council CCO context, harmonising practice from the four partner councils where appropriate.

2. Recruitment

- Contribute HR specialist input to the workstream's recruitment strategy, including design of position descriptions.
- Support workforce planning and critical-role/retention discussions to inform recruitment priorities and sequencing.
- Lead end-to-end recruitment for Southern Waters hires, from position description and role scoping through to advertising, arranging shortlisting and interview panels, offer documentation and onboarding.

3. Employment Documentation and Consultation Support

- Contribute to the review of employment agreement documentation and consultation documentation while ensuring legal and procedural soundness ahead of issue. This includes "proposed" and "confirmed" letter templates, Day 1 employment agreements, and consultation correspondence.
- Support the People Workstream Lead through the formal consultation process.
- Provide HR advice on individual employment matters arising through the transition, escalating complex or high-risk issues to the Workstream Lead.

- Handle sensitive and confidential information including critical talent and retention information with a high degree of discretion.

4. Stakeholder Engagement and Communication

- Build strong working relationships with council HR leads, union delegates, and other key stakeholders across the four councils.
- Support union engagement activities, including pre-consultation briefings and formal notification processes, alongside the Workstream Lead.
- Ensure clear, consistent HR-related communication to support the programmes comms cadence.

Position Requirements

1. Qualification in Human Resources, Employment Relations, or Business (or equivalent practical experience).
2. Demonstrated experience in a generalist HR or HR Advisor role.
3. Experience supporting employment relations processes, including consultation, restructuring, or organisational change.
4. Experience leading or contributing to end-to-end recruitment
5. Experience developing or reviewing HR policies and frameworks.
6. Sound working knowledge of the Employment Relations Act 2000, Holidays Act 2003, and other relevant NZ employment legislation, including genuine consultation and good faith obligations.
7. Strong written communication skills, with the ability to draft clear, accurate HR documentation under time pressure.
8. High attention to detail and sound judgement, particularly when handling sensitive or confidential information.
9. Strong relationship-building skills, with the ability to work credibly with council HR leads, union delegates, and senior stakeholders.
10. Highly organised, adaptable, and comfortable managing competing priorities in a fast-paced transition environment.