



South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands

Office of the Commissioner
Government House
Stanley
Falkland Islands

September 2025

Dear Candidate,

Director of Operations

Thank you for your interest in a role with the Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI).

South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands is a UK Overseas Territory situated in the South Atlantic, 800 nautical miles south east of the Falkland Islands. The Territory is uninhabited, with the only population being a small team of Government and British Antarctic Survey personnel located at an administrative station at King Edward Point, Cumberland Bay. The Territory remains one of the most remote locations on the planet, and is home to globally significant marine mammal and seabird populations. It also encompasses one of the world's largest and longest-standing Marine Protected Areas, established in 2012. The entire landmass was designated as Terrestrial Protected Area in 2022.

The Government's main office is located in Stanley, Falkland Islands with a small compliment of additional personnel in the UK. In 2021, we published a new 5-year values-driven framework that sets out stretching ambitions for governance, environment, fisheries, tourism and heritage. A copy can be found at www.gov.gs.

The administrative centre at King Edward Point, South Georgia consists of a small cadre of GSGSSI staff as well as a scientific research station operated by the British Antarctic Survey on the Government's behalf. The science conducted supports GSGSSI's world-class conservation, environmental management, and sustainable fisheries objectives.

Adjacent to King Edward Point lies the remains of Grytviken, a former whaling station which closed in the 1960s and which is now managed for its heritage value. Some of the buildings have been converted to house the South Georgia Post Office, the Government's workshops and hydroelectric facility, and the South Georgia Museum which is operated by a charity. Many thousands of visitors come South Georgia every year, primarily on cruise ships and yachts during the austral summer. In recent years, sustainable tourism has become an increasingly important part of Government operations, although tourism visits to the South Sandwich Islands are now prohibited by law. In the winter months, the main activity is the operation and management of Marine Stewardship Council certified and sustainable fisheries.

We are now recruiting a Director of Operations to take over from the current incumbent who is leaving in December 2025. This role is pivotal to the sound administration of this United Kingdom Overseas Territory and as such we are excited to receive applications from candidates who with strong people skills, high levels of resilience, and the desire to deliver continuous improvement for these globally significant islands.

The Director of Operations is a broad and dynamic role, with a wide-ranging portfolio both in the Falklands, on South Georgia, and at sea. A member of the Government's Senior Leadership Team, the incumbent works closely with the Chief Executive and other Directors to shape the direction and focus of Government, as well as providing oversight and monitoring of a number of on-island programmes and projects and line management for on-island teams. The incumbent is ultimately accountable for the Government's operational delivery, as well as managing certain day-to-day aspects of the organisation. They also play a pivotal role representing the Government externally, acting as the point of contact for a number of key partner organisations. This responsibility can involve local and international travel as well as participating in work outside of regular business hours to accommodate multiple time zones. The role also holds the portfolio for major incident management.

Whilst there are a range of set duties and responsibilities, the realities of a small government mean that staff members need to display significant flexibility to assist other team members across Government when required. Innovation and the streamlining existing practice is encouraged. This is an exciting time to join GSGSSI as we begin to draft out next 5-year strategy in the face of significant growth in visitor numbers, which need to be managed sympathetically to ensure environmental protection is balanced with precautionary use. The incumbent will also play a leading role in securing a replacement for the existing fisheries patrol vessel *Pharos SG* which has been on charter to the Government for the last 19 years.

The role is available on a 3-year contract, and whilst the position is based in Stanley, Falkland Islands, the successful candidate will be required to travel to South Georgia regularly in order to understand the operational and situational context. Due to the limited health services available on the island, the incumbent must participate in a medical screening process and comply with British Antarctic Survey (BASMU) medical and dental assessments. The Government will meet the costs of these assessments. A list of conditions that may preclude employment are available at the end of this letter.

About the terms

The job description accompanying this letter covers the duties of the role. The incumbent is ultimately accountable for operational delivery and so the responsibilities are significant. The nature of our small Government is such that they may be called upon to complete other duties as the needs of the organisation dictate.

The role attracts a salary of £63,500k per annum. Subject to satisfactory performance, the incumbent will also receive a taxable gratuity of up to 25% of gross annual salary at the end of each year of employment. There is no pension scheme available for GSGSSI employees.

For international applicants, flights to and from your country of recruitment, relocation expenses and subsidised accommodation in the Falkland Islands is available. The post holder will be subject to the Falkland Island taxation regime which requires submission of an annual tax return as a Falkland Island resident. Comprehensive state healthcare is also provided, as well as access to state education for any accompanying dependent children aged between 4 and 16 years, the maximum age for compulsory education in the Falklands. Holiday entitlement is 30 days per year in addition to Falkland Island Public and Government holidays.

Recruitment will be conducted in up to three phases. An initial paper sift, followed by a long-list interview panel, conducted remotely if appropriate, and a final interview. All interviews will be assessed around the person specification criteria below. Final offer of employment is based on the ability of the candidate to successfully pass the aforementioned medical and dental examinations, and receipt of satisfactory references and police checks.

Who can apply

GSGSSI is an international team where many nationalities and cultures are represented. Applications are open to individuals of any nationality with a strong command of written and spoken English, **excluding** those whose nationality preclude them from travelling on the South Atlantic Airbridge operated by the MoD. A list is appended to this letter.

Those applicants who do not hold Falkland Islands Status or a Permanent Residency Permit must be able to lawfully enter and leave the Falklands during the period of employment. This will require that they are in possession of a valid passport with at least 6 months validity beyond the projected end date of the contract.

What is the process

For more information about the position please read the attached job description and person specification. For an informal discussion, and to talk about living and working in the Falkland Islands please contact the current Director of Operations: mairi.macleod@gov.gs

If you would like to apply, please submit a CV and a covering letter, each of which should be no more than 2 A4 pages in length, outlining your motivation for applying and how you believe your skills and experience match the essential and desirable criteria to: recruitment@gov.gs.

The closing date for applications is 1200 Falkland Islands time (UTC-3) on 13th October 2025. Applications received after this time will not be considered. Due to the anticipated volume of applications, only those applicants selected for interview will receive feedback, upon request. A request must be made at the time of interview or in writing, no longer than 5 working days after the interview.

Candidates not selected for interview will be informed promptly and in any case, no longer than 21 working days after the published closing date.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,



Laura Sinclair Willis
Chief Executive Officer

Director of Operations (COO) – Falkland Islands - Job Description

Governance and Strategic Planning

Participate in development of and lead on the implementation of allocated strands of the successor to the Government's 5-year framework *Protect, Sustain, Inspire*, in alignment with the government's values of Environmental Protection, Evidence-based Decision Making, Sustainability and Openness.

Collaborating with colleagues in environment, fisheries, science and tourism to develop existing and emerging programme development and delivery, as agreed by the Senior Leadership Team.

Systematically monitor and evaluate programme performance, impact, and sustainability – working across Government and with contractors and partners to identify gaps and improve processes.

Contribute to iterative policy review, working with the Director of Strategy and Policy to improve the Government's policy and legislative frameworks.

Programme & Project Management

Ownership of the contract with the Government's fisheries patrol vessel provider. Responsible for patrol planning activity to include enforcement, science and logistics tasking as well as the movement of personnel and cargo. Maintaining close relationships with British Forces South Atlantic and the British Antarctic Survey to enable collaborative use of assets.

Ownership of the contract with the Government's rodent Detector Dog programme, ensuring a sufficient number of suitably trained dogs and handlers are available to be deployed to meet the projected needs of the Government.

Accountable for on-budget and on-time delivery of all South Georgia infrastructure programmes including those relating to: buildings, facilities, communications, power generation, waste disposal and maritime, in partnership with British Antarctic Survey.

Portfolio holder for the Government's heritage programmes, including the ongoing maintenance and conservation of heritage assets, the operation of the South Georgia Museum, and discreet projects to preserve or interpret specific sites.

Oversight of the Government's commercial operations on South Georgia, including the Post Office and Slop Chest shop.

Project Management

Delivery of a number of contracted-out site-specific projects during the contract tenure, including:

- Environmental remediation (asbestos contaminated wastes and legacy Falkland Islands waste removal)
- Renewable energy (micro hydroelectric turbine),
- Estates Survey
- Prion Island Boardwalk Removal;
- Heritage interpretation; and
- Major Incident Plan rewrite and implementation.

Line Management

Line and performance management of the Operations Manager, Visitor Manager and Marine Engineer/Technical Lead.

Second line management of Government Officers (x4) and Build Team (x4).

Incident & Emergency Response

Responsible for the Government's incident and emergency preparedness planning, including for arranging appropriate training for key team members and assuming Silver Command responsibility in multi-agency or multi-Government responses from our office in the Falkland Islands.

List of nationalities not authorised to travel on the Airbridge:

BELARUS
HONG KONG
MACUA
EGYPT
IRAN
LIBYA
NORTH KOREA
RUSSIA
SYRIA
TAIWAN
THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA (PRC)
TIBET
UKRAINE
VIETNAM

This list is subject to change without notice.

British Antarctic Survey Medical Unit – Guide to Conditions That May Cause Concern

Cardiac (Heart) and circulation problems

Angina & Heart Attacks. * Leaky Heart valves & Rheumatic Fever Previous Heart Surgery* Uncontrolled High Blood Pressure Heart Rhythm Abnormalities Treated abnormal rhythms*. Heart Failure Severe varicose veins Arterial Disease Previous Frostbite* Severe Reynaud's disease* Previous leg thrombosis*. Previous clot on the lung*.

Respiratory (chest) problems

Recurrent "burst" lung (pneumothorax)* Single episode of pneumothorax* History of moderate or severe Asthma* Cold induced asthma* Chronic Bronchitis or emphysema* Active Tuberculosis

Gastrointestinal problems

Active stomach / duodenal ulcer History of these ulcers* Liver Disease Pancreatitis Previous exploratory abdominal surgery* Hernia* Untreated) Severe piles* Recurrent (inflammatory) bowel disease*

Genito- urinary problems

Recurrent Kidney Stones Renal colic* Kidney failure Recurrent kidney infections*

Neurological Conditions

Epilepsy or fits (on treatment) Previous fits clear for > 3 years* Brain Haemorrhage in past* (non traumatic) Previous brain surgery* Unexplained episodes of loss of consciousness Severe ME* Degenerative N.M. conditions Significant Neuro Deficit secondary to Trauma

Metabolic Conditions

Most diabetes Mild type II diabetes if well controlled (exceptional)* Other "endocrine disorder"* Cushing's Disease Thyroid disease Addison's Disease Obesity (severe) BMI >30* Obesity (severe) BMI >35

Musculoskeletal conditions **

Untreated Slipped disc* Recurrent back pain* Lower Limb Amputation* Severe knee problems* Recurrent dislocations *(untreated) Unstable joint* - 6 - 6 Rheumatoid Arthritis* Frequent Gout* Ankylosing Spondylitis*

Cancer and Haematological Disorders

Most cancers Treated cancer with low risk of recurrence* Clotting or bleeding disorders Warfarin Medication Treated leukaemia* Bone marrow disease Treated Hodgkin's disease*

Gynaecological conditions

Current Pregnancy Pelvic inflammatory Disease* Ovarian disease.* Dermatological conditions Blistering Skin diseases Severe psoriasis*

Mental Health Problems

Current psychiatric illness Depression Previous severe mental illness Self harm Schizophrenia Previous drug / alcohol problems* Manic depression Personality Disorder Current Drug or alcohol abuse

* The decision will depend on many different factors and will be made on an individual basis.

** These conditions will be assessed in relation to the capacity to undertake activity/work in the anticipated environment.