



## **INFORMATION BOOKLET**

**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

**Open competition for the appointment to the position of**

**CORPORATE SERVICES ACCOUNTANT**

**National Oil Reserves Agency**

**Closing Date: 6<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

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The National Oil Reserves Agency is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

# **NATIONAL OIL RESERVES AGENCY (NORA)**

## **JOB SPECIFICATION**

### **CORPORATE SERVICES ACCOUNTANT**

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**Title of Position:** Corporate Services Accountant

**Agency:** National Oil Reserves Agency

**Location:** 7 Clanwilliam Square, Grand Canal Quay, Dublin 2, D02 CV48.

### **THE AGENCY**

The National Oil Reserves Agency (NORA) is a state-owned company responsible for ensuring that Ireland meets its obligations under EU Legislation and International Energy Agency (IEA) rules to maintain a minimum of 90 days stocks of oil for use in the event of a physical shortage of supplies. NORA is also responsible for administering Ireland's Biofuels Obligation Scheme (BOS) and is the designated authority for key elements of the administration of the Fuel Quality Directive (FQD).

NORA was created as a standalone limited company under the National Oil Reserves Agency Act 2007, under the auspices of the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE). [www.nora.ie](http://www.nora.ie)

### **JOB DESCRIPTION**

This position is an important position within the Finance function, reporting to the Financial Controller and Company Secretary. The successful candidate will manage all aspects of the Finance & Corporate Services function of the Agency's business. The role supports all aspects of the Agency's business, and is essential to the operation and management of the overall Finance function, with key focus on the following:

Corporate Governance, Procurement, Internal Audit and Risk Management, and liaison with the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. The Finance function deals with all aspects of transaction processing, financial planning and reporting (including Corporate Governance reporting) in relation to the operations of the Agency, with c. €130.0m in annual levy income, operating costs of c. €40.0 – €50.0m p.a. and current loan finance of c. €30.0m.

Key duties and responsibilities will include the following:

### **Corporate Governance**

1. Co-ordinate all aspects of corporate governance, including risk management, liaison with Government departments, and monitoring of compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.
2. Support the CEO in management of outsourced Internal Audit services and co-ordinate the Internal Audit Programme and assignments across the functions of the Agency.
3. Co-ordinate all 'Departmental Returns', including responses to Parliamentary Questions (PQs) to ensure reporting deadlines are met.
4. Conduct a comprehensive review of the Agency's Policies and Procedures, with a view to the development of an overall Procedures Manual.

### **Procurement**

1. Co-ordinate the public procurement activities of the Agency.
2. Develop policies and procedures in place that facilitate efficient tendering.
3. Liaise with procurement specialists to devise framework agreements to cover the majority of procurement needs for goods and services, and develop and implement corporate procurement plans as required by the Code of Practice.
4. Development and management of Framework Agreements for 3<sup>rd</sup> party services to support the Finance function.
5. Develop reporting systems for monitoring procurement compliance.

### **Strategic Planning**

1. Budgeting and forecasting to underpin the Agency's 5 Year Strategic Plan.
2. Development of financial models to support loan re-financing.
3. Provide support to CEO in maintenance and development of Strategic Planning financial models.
4. Develop systems to evaluate Project Management decision making.

### **Company Secretarial**

1. Provision of secretariat support to Financial Controller (FC) as NORA Company Secretary to ensure compliance with Companies Acts.
2. Provision of secretariat support to CEO as Company Secretary to Irish National Petroleum Corporation (INPC), (services provided to INPC under a Service Level Agreement with NORA) to ensure compliance with Companies Acts.
3. Co-ordinate management accounting, annual accounts, departmental reporting and audit for INPC.
4. Manage preparation and circulation of all papers for Board meetings of both NORA and INPC and meetings of sub-committees of the Boards.
5. Act as Secretary to:
  - (a) Risk & Audit Committee
  - (b) Management Team (for Management meetings)
  - (c) Pension Trustees

### **Finance Function Efficiencies**

1. Management of projects and initiatives to improve the day to day administration of the Finance and Administration Function.
2. Comprehensive review of processes, practices and procedures within the Finance function and liaison with Finance Team, with a view to recommending more efficient ways of completing essential tasks.
3. Analysis of NORA's key costs and development of reports that profile same to enable management review and close monitoring of performance.
4. Development of training framework for each finance position, including detailed induction programmes.

### **Provide Support to Financial Controller in management of:**

- Information Systems – including management of outsourced support services for I.T.
- Management, co-ordination, maintenance and development of the Agency's website.
- Human Resources management – including:
  - (a) Maintenance of personnel records
  - (b) Maintenance and development of policies and procedures
  - (c) Pension Administration and liaison with outsourced service provider
- Co-ordination of the provision of outsourced legal services.

### **Current Projects**

- Assist in the Implementation of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies and in maintaining compliance with same
- Assist in the Implementation of the General Data Protection Regulations
- Draw up and manage NORA's Disaster Recovery & Business Continuity Plan
- Prepare and manage a Request for Tender for Information and Computer Technology systems
- Assist in sourcing of a new Financial Accounting system

### **Other Duties**

- Other related duties as assigned by the FC, CEO and the Board from time to time.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

Due to the range of responsibilities, this is a specialised role, requiring someone with suitable qualifications, skills and experience gained from working in previous similar wide-ranging roles with a high degree of relevant commercial acumen.

### **Essential Requirements**

- A Professional Accounting qualification. Candidates are required to be a member of a recognised Accountancy body (e.g. ACA, ACCA, CIMA, CPA).
- A minimum of four years' post-qualification experience, demonstrating the capability of developing increasing responsibility.
- Experience of dealing with corporate services.
- High level of competency in report writing and presentational skills.
- A proven track record of working under pressure and to tight deadlines.
- Proven diligence with strong focus on attention to detail.
- Excellent IT skills, especially the use of accounting systems and the Microsoft Office suite of applications, with particular emphasis on Excel and Word.

### **Key Competencies**

- Ability to work on one's own initiative.
- Ability to provide leadership and to influence others.
- Excellent organisation and communication skills.
- Ability to make decisions based on sound judgement.
- Analytical thinking and concern for clarity and work quality, with strong attention to detail.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication (verbal and written) skills.
- Ability to work as part of a team.

### **Desirable Attributes**

- Additional relevant qualifications would be an advantage (e.g. qualifications in employment law, IT, company secretarial, etc.).
- Experience of strategic planning, budgeting and forecasting processes, as well as financial modelling.
- Experience of using the Sage 200 or similar accounting system.
- Experience of working in the oil industry would be a distinct advantage.
- Experience of working in the public sector.
- Familiarisation with Public Procurement, tendering and contract management for goods and services in the Public Sector.
- Ability to assist in the development of the skills and competencies of others in the team.
- Strong general business knowledge from relevant commercial experience.
- Strategic well motivated self-starter with ability to understand and see the bigger picture.
- Experience of working closely in a small team environment.

## **Principle Conditions of Service**

### **Part 1 (Conditions which particularly apply to this position)**

#### **1. Pay:**

The salary scale for this position is as follows:

**PPC (Personal Pension Contribution) Scale (for officers who are existing civil or public servants appointed on or after 6<sup>th</sup> April 1995 or who are new entrants to the civil or public service and who are making a compulsory personal pension contribution).**

The following is the revised payscale with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 for established employees appointed on or after 6<sup>th</sup> April 1995 paying the Class A rate of PRSI contribution and making an employee contribution in respect of personal superannuation benefits for certain grades common to two or more Departments.

#### **PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANT GRADE II**

€59,765; €61,132; €62,494; €63,862; €65,227; €65,295; €65,958; €66,630; €68,511\*; €70,645\*\*;

\* Long Service Increment payable after 3 years satisfactory service at the maximum

\*\* Long Service Increment payable after 6 years satisfactory service at the maximum

Increments may be awarded subject to satisfactory performance and to changes in the terms and conditions relating to salary increments in the Civil/Public Service generally.

The rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

**Different pay and conditions may apply if, immediately prior to appointment, the appointee is a serving civil or public servant.**

#### **2. Starting Salary:**

The provisions of NORA's Delegated Sanction on Employment as approved by DCCAE stipulates that,

"Where a post is to be filled, it is expected that NORA will:

- seek to fill the post at the lowest possible grade, and
- ensure all appointments are ordinarily filled at the minimum of the scale."

#### **3. Annual Leave:**

Annual Leave will be 27 working days. This leave is exclusive of public holidays. The Agency may stipulate certain days whereby the offices of the Agency will be closed which count as annual leave e.g. Christmas Eve, Good Friday.

#### **4. Hours of Attendance:**

Working hours will be in accordance with the standard arrangements for NORA. Core working hours are 8.30 am to 5.00pm Monday to Thursday, 9.00 am to 5.00 pm on Friday with a break for lunch of one hour unless otherwise stated.

No additional payment will be made for extra attendance as the rate of remuneration payable covers any exceptional extra attendance liability that may arise from time to time.

The company does not operate a flexitime system.

#### **5. Location:**

This position is currently based at 7 Clanwilliam Square, Grand Canal Quay, Dublin 2, D02 CV48.

### **Part II (Other conditions which apply generally to appointees to this position)**

**1. Tenure:** The appointment will be on a permanent basis. The appointee must serve a probationary period of six months. Should the appointee's services be satisfactory with regard to ability to fulfil the Agency's requirements for the job, attendance, health, conduct and efficiency generally during the probationary period, the appointee, on completion of the period will be appointed to the position on a permanent basis. Should the appointee's services be unsatisfactory, the appointment may be terminated at any time during the probationary period.

**2. Duties:** The appointee will be expected to perform all acts, duties and obligations as appropriate to this position (which may be revised from time to time).

**3. Outside Employment:** The position is full time and the appointee must avoid involvement in outside employment/business interests in conflict or in potential conflict with the business of NORA. Clarification must be sought from management where any doubt arises.

**4. Sick Leave:** Sick leave with full pay may be allowed at the discretion of the National Oil Reserves Agency in accordance with established procedures and conditions for the public service generally.

#### **5. Retirement and Superannuation:**

The appointee will be offered public service pension terms and retirement age conditions in accordance with pension arrangements in NORA depending on the status of the successful appointee:

- (a) In general, an individual who has no prior pensionable Public Service history in the 26 weeks prior to appointment will be a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (Single Scheme) which commenced from 1 January 2013 (Section 10 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 refers).

- (b) An individual who is on secondment will remain a member of the parent organisation's pension scheme and the pensionable remuneration will be based on his/her substantive grade i.e. the grade at which the individual is employed in his/her parent organisation.
- (c) An individual who was a member of a "pre-existing public service pension scheme" as construed by the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 and who does not qualify for membership of the Single Scheme will have standard public service pension terms reflecting new entrant or non-new entrant status for the purposes of the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004.
- (d) At the time of being offered an appointment, the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment in consultation with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform if necessary, will, in the light of the appointee's previous Public Service (and/or other) employment history, determine the appropriate pension terms and conditions to apply for the duration of the appointment. Appointees will be required to disclose their full public service history. Details of the appropriate superannuation provisions will be provided upon determination of appointee's status.
- (e) The following points should be noted:

- **Pension Accrual**

A 40-year limit on total service that can be counted towards pension where a person has been a member of more than one existing public service pension scheme will apply. This 40-year limit, which is provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012 came into effect on 28 July 2012. This may have implications for any appointee who has acquired pension rights in a previous public service employment.

- **Pension Abatement**

The Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 extended pension abatement so that a retiree's public service pension is liable to abatement on re-entering public service employment, even where the new employment is in a different area of the public service. However, if the appointee was previously employed in the Civil Service and awarded a pension under voluntary early retirement arrangements (other than the Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement (ISER) or the Health Service Executive VER/VRS which, as outlined below, render a person ineligible for the competition) the entitlement to payment of that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements will, however, be made for the reckoning of previous service given by the appointee for the purpose of any future superannuation award for which the appointee may be eligible.

- **Ill-Health Retirement**

Please note that where an individual has retired from a Civil/Public Service body on the grounds of ill-health his/her pension from that employment may be subject to review in accordance with the rules of ill-health retirement within the pension scheme of that employment.

- **Pension Related Deduction:**

This appointment is subject to the pension-related deduction in accordance with the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2009.

For further information in relation to public service superannuation issues please see the following website: <http://per.gov.ie/pensions>



**6. Eligibility to compete:**

Candidates should note that eligibility to compete is open to citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

**7. Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER):**

It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under that Scheme, are debarred from applying for another position in the same employment or the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.

**8. Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010):**

The Department of Health Circular 7/2010 dated 1 November 2010 introduced a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public health sector or in the wider public service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public moneys. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the VRS, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years, after which time any re-employment will require the approval of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. People who availed of either of these schemes are not eligible to compete in this competition.

## COMPETITION PROCESS

### **How to Apply**

Completed applications to be sent by email to: [cconnolly@graftonrecruitment.com](mailto:cconnolly@graftonrecruitment.com) or

Address for Postal Applications:

Ciara Connolly,  
Business Manager,  
Grafton Recruitment,  
Walkinstown Mall,  
78 Walkinstown Road,  
Dublin 12, D12 TP48.

### **Form of Application:**

In the Letter of Application (cover letter), in addition to the provision of an up to date Curriculum Vitae (CV), applicants should clearly outline how they fulfil the requirements of the Person Specification as set out in detail on page 5, together with further relevant details in support of their application.

### **Closing date**

Your application must be submitted not later than **5.00 pm, Friday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2017**. All applications will be acknowledged.

Applications will not be accepted after the closing date.

**Interviews are likely to be held towards the end of October 2017.**

### **Selection Methods**

The selection may include:

- Shortlisting of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application
- Detailed interview
- Any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate

### **Qualifications and Essential Requirements**

The minimum qualifications and essential requirements are set out in the section entitled "Essential Requirements" on Page 5 of this document. Candidates should ensure that they set out clearly how they meet and fulfil these requirements in their application. Applications that do not fulfil the essential requirements will not be considered.

### **References:**

References will be sought so it would be appreciated if you would start considering names of people who you feel would be suitable referees that we might consult (2 - 3 names and contact details).

### **Confidentiality**

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 and 2003 applications will be treated in strict confidence.

### **Security Clearance**

Police vetting may be sought in respect of individuals who come under consideration for appointment. The applicant will be required to complete and return a Garda Vetting form should they come under consideration for appointment. This form will be forwarded to An Garda Síochána for security checks on all Irish and Northern Irish addresses at which they resided. If unsuccessful this information will be destroyed by the Public Appointments Service. If the applicant subsequently comes under consideration for another position, they will be required to supply this information again.

### **Other important information**

The admission of a person to attend an interview is not to be taken as implying that NORA is satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the competition or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration.

It is important, therefore, for you to note that the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview.

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment to this position, NORA will make all such enquiries that are deemed necessary to determine the suitability of that candidate. Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed a final determination cannot be made nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made.

Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it or if an additional vacancy arises the Board may, at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

### **Candidates' Obligations**

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the process.

Candidates must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- canvass any person with or without inducements
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way

A third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process.

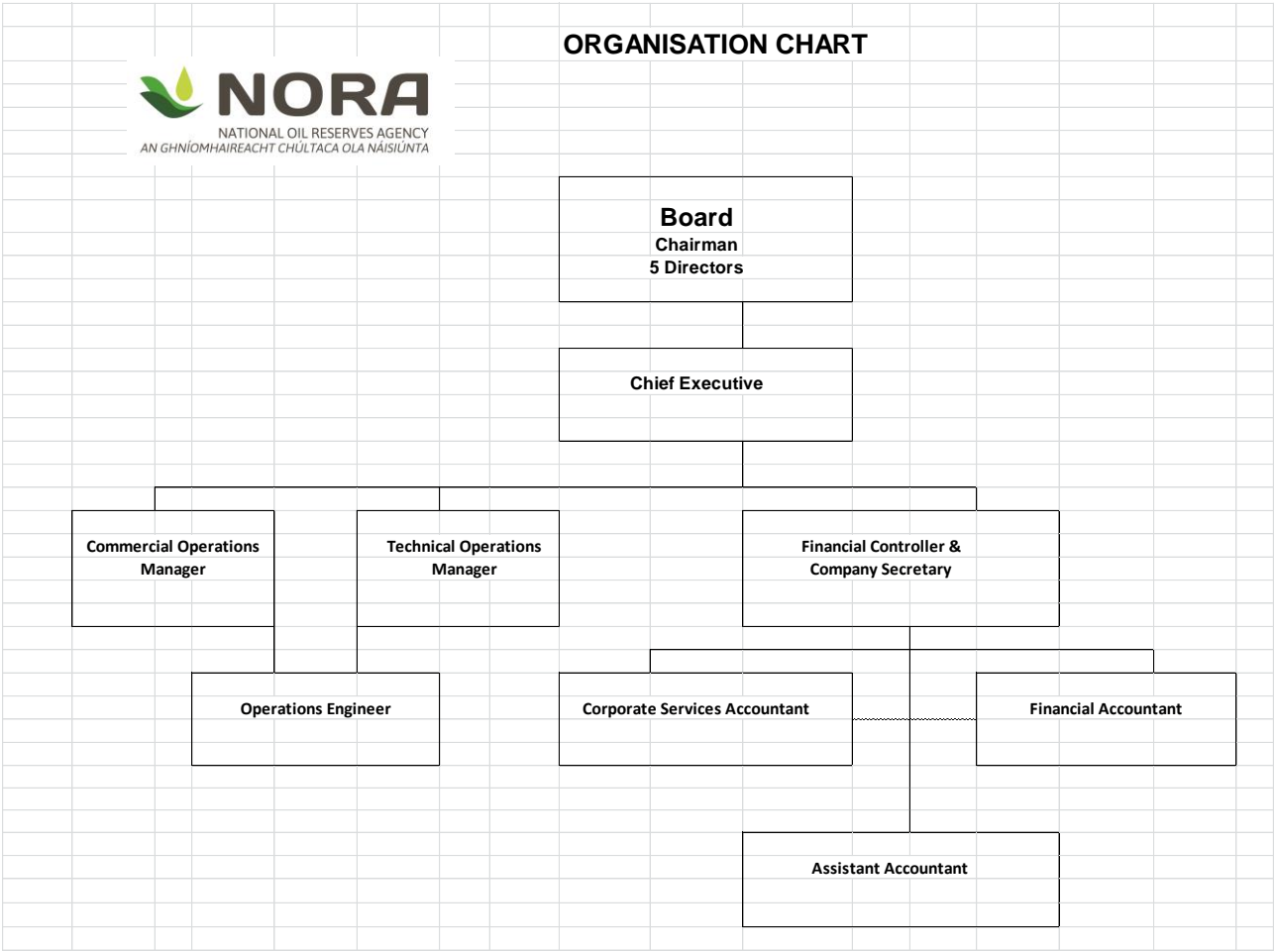
Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- where he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- where he/she has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.

### **Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn**

Candidates who do not attend for interview when and where required or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as NORA requires in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.



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