



St Helena Government

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Invasive Plant Specialist

1. Background

- 1.1 The island of St Helena is an internally self-governing Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom located in the South Atlantic approximately 4,000 miles from the UK. The Government comprises a Governor (who is appointed by the Crown) an Executive Council, which has the general control and direction of Government, and a Legislative Council. The Governor retains responsibility for internal security, external affairs, defence, the public service, finance and shipping.
- 1.2 The island's population is around 4,500 and it has a typical small island economy with a high import dependency, a narrow economic base, a large public sector (around 790 staff), and significant outward labour migration. St Helena receives UK Government financial assistance to support recurrent and capital expenditure as part of their obligation to ensure that the reasonable needs of the population are met.
- 1.3 The overall vision of the St Helena Government (SHG) is
"Strengthened community and family life through vibrant economic growth, with opportunities for all to participate, within a framework of effective government and law."
- 1.4 To support this vision there are three National Goals:
- A vibrant economy providing opportunities for all to participate
 - Strong community and family life
 - Effective management of the environment

A new vision and mission has been agreed for the Public Service, which will be incorporated in future plans and strategies:

Vision – A great place to work and serve the people of St Helena

Mission – Provide Services that are responsive to the needs and expectations of the people of St Helena, by taking account of their views in decisions on the design, delivery and performance of services, and by working with our colleagues to create an environment that encourages everyone to do their best.

- 1.5 In November 2011 Her Majesty's Government agreed to fund an airport. Construction is complete and the airport has been certified, but there has been a delay in terms of the airport becoming operational and regular flights are therefore not yet available. The major construction activity leading up to this will significantly enhance St Helena's economic prospects and have a dramatic impact on the island's community,

bringing a period of accelerated social and economic change. Achievement of the Goals and Strategic Objectives will require sound management and transformation of the public sector to make it a professional, modern, and flexible organisation able to initiate and respond to change.

- 1.6 SHG is embedding a change programme that will enable the Public Service to improve its delivery of the government's developmental objectives. Achievement of the Goals and Strategic Objectives will require sound management and transformation of the public sector to make it a professional, modern, and flexible organisation able to initiate and respond to change. Central to this programme has been the re-structuring of Government functions and directorates. There are currently five directorates reporting to the Chief Secretary who is the head of the Service; Education, Health, Safeguarding, Environment & Natural Resources and Corporate Services. The Police Service reports to the Governor.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Invasive plant species are one of the biggest challenges for the management of National Conservation Areas (NCAs) and the conservation of endangered endemic species in St Helena Island. St Helena has relatively high levels of plant and invertebrate endemism, holding around 30% of the total unique biodiversity of the UK and the Overseas Territories, and remnant populations are all threatened by the invasion of introduced weedy species. In addition, the sole remaining endemic bird species, the St Helena Wirebird (*Charadrius sanctaehelenae*), is also threatened by the invasion of invasive plants which transform its preferred habitat of short grassland and areas of low ground cover, reducing breeding success by loss of nesting sites.
- 2.2 Invasive plant species affect all sectors, not just conservation. Invasive plant management threatens food security, and is a big concern for agricultural production, forestry, infrastructure maintenance, and tourism. The funding of the newly constructed airport is based on an economic model of eventual self-sufficiency through increased tourism and local production, and this is threatened by the spread of invasive plant species. Invasive species dominate all vegetation zones on the island, encroaching on the remnant native vegetation. A number of non-native plant species are implicated. Climate change will exacerbate the problem, as new invasive plant species establish, existing species change range, and new species initiate population explosions.
- 2.3 Considerable resources are committed to invasive plant management, from both government and NGOs; SHG and the St Helena National Trust together currently spend around £250,000 a year on frequently inefficient weed management activities. Invasive plants are managed by conservation workers in the NCAs and network of Post Box walks, by landowners and farmers on grazing and arable lands, by forestry workers in plantations, by Roads section to maintain the islands highways clear, and by the general public in their gardens and private access roads. There is widespread use of herbicides for invasive plant control, typically glyphosate and triclopyr. In the sensitive endemic-rich areas there are increasing concerns of the risks to non-target species, and in both the upland NCAs and grazing lands, of the risk of contamination of the islands limited water resources. An overall lack of coordination of effort

between sectors also results in rapid reinvasion from untreated neighbouring areas and further use of herbicides and expenditure of resources.

- 2.4 Currently, five habitat transforming invasive plant species are of particular concern as populations have reach a critical mass and are rapidly expanding on the island, namely African fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*), creeping fuchsia (*Fuchsia coccinea*), pheasant tail fern (*Nephrolepis cordifolia*), whiteweed (*Austroeuatorium inulifolium*) and wild mango (*Schinus terebinthifolius*). All five are challenging to control due to the high rate of spread, lack of coordination between sectors, lack of resources, and lack of capacity (knowledge and resources). Labour and imports such as herbicides on St Helena are expensive, and the terrain is often steep and difficult of access resulting in pockets of invasive plants serving as seed sources for further infestation. Available knowledge on invasive plant control must be adapted to local conditions and an integrated pest management (IPM) approach adopted, whereby a range of tactics are employed in a strategic way, depending on the situation and the economic and environmental considerations.
- 2.5 In 2015 the Chamber of Commerce called for improved invasive plant management on the Island, a call picked up and supported by the elected Councilors. Following consultation with key stakeholders, ANRD developed a multi-sectoral Weed Management Action Plan (WMAP) as a response, based on improved invasive plant management through better coordination of activities and sharing of local control expertise. The WMAP focuses on coordination of actions and “quick wins”, noting that existing levels of capacity, knowledge and resources limit what can be achieved.
- 2.6 While it is expected that the WMAP will deliver some benefits in invasive plant management, it became clear that these are necessarily limited and a targeted project is required to fill existing knowledge gaps, trial new and adapted integrated invasive plant control techniques, and build capacity in the island, across all affected sectors. As many of the priority species are problems in other South Atlantic UKOTS, lessons learned can also be shared regionally, and wider.
- 2.7 Although there is considerable experience on the island in the management of invasive plants species, it is scattered and actions lack coordination across sectors, resulting in much wasted effort. There are also large knowledge gaps on control methodologies appropriate to different sectors, chain effects of the removal of key habitat transforming species, and impact of invasive plant removal on the recovery of endemic flora and fauna. The scale of the issue on an island just 10 by 5 miles also means that it is not feasible to focus invasive plant management within the NCAs or around the remnant stands of endemic plants. Species in the surrounding areas affect the problem in NCAs through both seed dispersal and vegetative spread. Invasive plants coming from the NCAs also cause problems to landowners in the surrounding areas. Further, the endemic Wirebird distribution is closely linked with that of pasture land, and invasive plant management is therefore of shared concern for conservationists and graziers.

- 2.8 An innovative ecosystem approach is therefore proposed, recognising that landscape scale management should form the basis of a national invasive plant management strategy.
- 2.9 In November 2016 ANRD was successful in securing a 2-year Darwin Plus project entitled project “Establishment of the national framework for invasive plant management” in partnership with the St Helena National Trust. The project will build local capacity among all stakeholders, fill knowledge gaps through adaptive management trials, and engage the local community in order to develop and implement this strategy. A national coordination framework will be established, and long term monitoring programme initiated. Lessons learned will be shared regionally, as many of the priority species are problems in other South Atlantic UKOTS.
- 2.10 The project team will consist of 4 persons, namely an Invasive Plant Specialist (IPS), a Weeds Officer as the local counterpart and reporting to the IPS, and 2 Weed Busters as local technicians reporting to the Weeds Officer.

3. Objectives

- 3.1 The key objective of the IPS role is to provide effective leadership and management of ANRD’s invasive plant programme under the Darwin Plus project, in pursuit of the strategic and policy requirements placed on ANRD in support of achieving the Vision for St Helena.

4. Main Tasks

- 4.1 The main tasks to be undertaken are as follows:
- Lead the delivery of the Darwin Plus project “Establishment of the national framework for invasive plant management” to ensure outputs are achieved on target and on time:

Project management

- Develop annual action plans and maintain the project budget.
- Source equipment and materials, so that they are procured on time and within budget.
- Liaise closely with the project partner, the St Helena National Trust, and coordinate actions among stakeholders.
- Recruit and supervise the work of the Weed Officer and Weed Busters, and ensure that on-the-job training and skill share takes place.

Project implementation

- Develop a national Invasive Plant Management Strategy, including the following activities:
 - Hold a stakeholder workshop to develop the strategic invasive plant management framework
 - Review existing invasive plant related legislation
 - Undertake a global review of all aspects of invasive plant management for significant species
 - Identify major pathways of spread of nationally significant invasive plant species and appropriate management actions for associated pathways
- Carry out trial area-wide annual whiteweed (*Austroeuatorium inulifolium*) control campaign, coordinated across all relevant sectors.
- Carry out targeted removal of African fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*) in the upper Sandy Bay area.
- Design and carry out trials for the cost-effective management of wild mango (*Schinus terebinthifolius*), pheasant tail fern (*Nephrolepis cordifolia*) and creeping fuchsia (*Fuchsia coccinea*).
- Design and cost restoration initiatives in appropriate areas where major invasive plant management intervention is recommended.
- Mainstream invasive plant management actions into stakeholder annual work plans.
- Coordinate landowners to carry out a trial of area-wide control of priority invasive plant species.

Communications and awareness

- Design and implement a public awareness and education programme about the project as well as general invasive plant issues.
- Produce and deliver communication, education and awareness materials, and maintain the project webpage up to date.
- Run an annual invasive plant awareness week. This will involve presenting invasive plant information and public awareness efforts to educate and inform the public so they may help prevent the introduction and spread of invasive plant species.

Training and capacity building

- Share skills and expertise in all aspects of invasive plant management with the Weed Officer, Weed Busters and other project partners.
- Deliver invasive plant workshops on identification and area wide management for conservationists, land managers, farmers and forestry workers, and the general public.
- Deliver training courses on the safe use of pesticides.
- Review and refine the Weed Control Manual for managing nationally significant invasive plants.
- Establish and implement best practice guidelines for minimising invasive plant spread.
- Develop and implement best practice guidelines for the safe disposal and processing of invasive plants, contaminated material and green waste.
- Share lessons learned across other SA UKOTs and the wider invasive plant management community.

Monitoring

- Develop simple and practical survey protocols to monitor priority invasive plant species.
- Establish a long-term monitoring programme for priority invasive plant species across key sectors.

5. Qualifications and Experience etc

The IPS will need to demonstrate the following qualifications, experience, and skills:

5.1 Essential

	<u>Assessed by</u>		
	Application form	Interview	Assessment
Criteria 1 Qualifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First degree in ecology, biology, botany or related field. • A valid driver's license. 	√		

	<u>Assessed by</u>		
	Application form	Interview	Assessment
Criteria 2: Experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrable success of delivering invasive plant projects. • A minimum of 5 years of professional-level knowledge and experience of invasive plant species and their implications for land management including: ecological impacts, hazard and risk assessment, and management options. 		√	√
	√	√	√

5.2 Skills and Abilities

	<u>Assessed by</u>		
	Application form	Interview	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong written and oral communication skills to effectively convey both technical and non-technical information in written and oral format to a variety of audiences. 		√	√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to clearly and effectively speak to individuals and small to medium sized groups to include farmers and landowners. 	√	√	√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of plant field survey techniques and plant specimen collection and preservation methods. 	√	√	√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of invasive plant management techniques along with the ability to plan, organise, implement, and evaluate control activities, including with others involved with invasive plant management. 	√	√	√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer knowledge to include proficiency with word-processing 	√	√	√

	<u>Assessed by</u>		
	Application form	Interview	Assessment
software; experience with database software; and a working knowledge of statistical analysis applications.			

5.3 Desirable

	<u>Assessed by</u>		
	Application form	Interview	Assessment
<p>Criteria 1 Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An internationally recognised post-graduate qualification in ecology, biology, botany or related field would be an advantage. • Extensive knowledge preferred of major damaging invasive plant species in small Island States and their implications for land and ecosystem management including: hazard and risk assessment, and management options. • Competency Certificate in the Safe Use of Pesticides. • Knowledge of GIS and GPS technologies. 	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>	<p></p> <p>√</p> <p></p> <p></p>	
<p>Criteria 1 Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in working overseas, ideally in small states or islands is desirable and/or knowledge of the UK Overseas Territories, and ideally of St Helena or others in the South Atlantic. 	<p>√</p>	<p>√</p>	

5.4 Skills and Abilities

	<u>Assessed by</u>		
	Application form	Interview	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong analytical capabilities and report writing skills.	√		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong organisational skills to effectively maintain and prioritise work streams while managing several invasive plant trials and investigations simultaneously.	√		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-confidence, adaptability and a sense of humour is important.		√	

6. Competencies

Under the SHG Competency framework, this post holder is required to have the competencies as outlined in the attached annex.

7. Outputs, Timing and Reporting

1. The IPS shall provide to the Head of Agriculture and Natural Resources Division, bi-monthly reports on progress. The outputs and key performance indicators to be agreed with the Head of ANRD not more than three months after arrival on Island.
2. The contract will commence in April 2017 and will be for a fixed term of two years. Performance will be measured with respect to the Directorate's overall performance in service delivery, increases in operational effectiveness and efficiency. A probationary report will be completed after 6 months.
3. The IPS will report directly to the Head of ANRD.

Annex 1

SHG Competency Framework Levels

Professional Development

- Requirements for Continuous Professional Development met and when necessary submitted to Professional Institute in order to continue recognition of professional status

Planning and delivery of work

- Structures business or service unit to deliver key objectives and obtain and allocate resources
- Defines a balanced set of targets and measures aligned with delivery plans

Analysis and use of information

- Identifies trends from complex or conflicting data
- Takes steps to address the root causes of highly complex problems
- Develops new policy and procedures

Decision making

- Shapes new policies and sets long-term objectives
- Understands the wider strategic environment to make appropriate resource decisions
- Strategically processes the impact of decisions
- Determines results which are aligned to strategic decisions
- Ensures decisions are evidence-based drawing on available knowledge and past experience

Working with others

- Manages relationships with key stakeholders by utilising a high level of understanding of own and other's behaviours
- Develops relationships with key stakeholders
- Influences key stakeholders on issues relevant to the organisation.
- Creates an environment which will enable delivery of shared policy outcomes

Communication

- Varies language and content to ensure understanding of audience
- Facilitates understanding by explanation and example
- Highlights key points for summary from detailed and complex documents

Influencing and persuading

- Ensures strategies to support a diverse workforce are implemented
- Recognises and anticipates the needs of senior managers and government officials
- Presents unpopular messages confidently
- Varies style of communication to have maximum impact on audience
- Influences to maintain a balance between individual motives and directorate/departmental requirements
- Integrates logic and emotion to construct and convey complex arguments in a face to face situation

Dealing with change

- Takes wide view of strategic needs
- Directs and drives organisational change
- Evaluates the impact of change on the organisation
- Initiates attitudinal change across the organisation

- Provides appropriate support mechanisms during a period of change

Continuous improvement

- Keeps up to date with developments that affect SHG and anticipates what may affect it in the future
- Creates an environment which allows people to improve the way they work
- Creates an environment where employees and colleagues work to improve the way things are done

Managing resources

- Ensures appropriate resources and levels of capability to deliver to plan
- Uses management information to monitor/control resources
- Supports initiatives for new and more efficient use of resources
- Gains respect and credibility from team members through effective delegation, coaching and development