

<b>Contract</b>	<b>General Hand</b>
<b>Position is accountable to</b>	<b>Runway Manager</b>

**FUNCTION OF THE POSITION**

The majority of staff at White Desert are employed as General Hands. These are fundamentally important positions and the breadth of the role reflects the diverse nature of the work undertaken by White Desert in Antarctica. General Hands are deployed to all operating locations, including client camps, field camps, and logistic depots.

General Hands perform a range of task, most of which are routine domestic functions that require no specific training while others may be more technical for which training is provided. You may also be asked to assist other specialists, like mechanics, cooks, plant operators, field guides etc and will work under their supervision.

Daily tasks include, erecting tents, snow clearing, repacking equipment, moving cargo and baggage, cleaning kitchen and ablution facilities, melting water, refuelling and servicing generators/equipment, disposing of waste including human wastes.

You will also deploy to field camps to maintain and operate skiways at remote locations independently. This requires the operation of oversnow machinery, the ability to follow procedures and to apply sound judgement. When flights are operating to the runway/skiway, you will also function as weather observer, aircraft ground handler and emergency first responder.

The Wolf’s Fang Runway and most skiways are isolated environments located some distance from White Deserts main base, Whichaway Camp. While regular contact is maintained with Whichaway, the Wolf’s Fang and skiway teams operate as independent communities. Living in an isolated team, at times under trying weather conditions, requires exceptional interpersonal skills, maturity and resilience.

The position involves a significant amount of manual work. Operating hours are dictated by suitable weather and flexible work routines are required. The work area is primarily outside and living accommodation is tent based.

The position may also undertake a ‘traverse’ to bring in equipment for the runway from the coast. This over snow journey of some 600 km will take approximately 10 days (depending upon the conditions) during which time the team will be living from the vehicles and in tents.

The candidate will be required to complete and pass a range of training courses before deployment to Antarctica.

**WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

White Desert Ltd is a South African-based tourism company providing small scale luxury tours of Antarctica. White Desert deploys to Antarctica from Cape Town and operates a luxury camp in Antarctica on the Schirmacher Oasis in Queen Maud Land

called Whichaway Camp. The Wolf's Fang Runway is located some 140km inland from Whichaway Camp at an altitude of 1000m. Temperatures will range from 0 to -25 degrees Celsius and winds are generally strong.

All accommodation will be in 'mountain' tents with team members sleeping on the insulated mats on the ground with sleeping bags. Showers, washing and ablution facilities are very limited (bucket based). The team will, at times, also be cooking and cleaning for themselves using predominantly non-perishable foods and pre-prepared dried meals. Telecommunications facilities are very limited.

Antarctica is a hazardous environment requiring professional and disciplined conduct at all times. In the event of an incident, despite significant resources being available, casualty evacuation to a tertiary care facility is likely to take 72 hours and possibly longer if the weather is inclement.

Key equipment in use includes the following:

- Crampons and glacier travel equipment
- Light wheeled vehicles
- Skidoos
- Radios
- Diesel fuel pumps
- Diesel and petrol generator

## **KEY ACTIVITIES/RESPONSIBILITIES**

The General Hand will:

- Understand and maintain constant awareness of plant and environmental Antarctic hazards (including blizzards, crevassing, white out, exposure and sun burn) and take steps to minimise exposure to the risks they present.
- Undertake domestic and camp maintenance duties, including manual snow removal, servicing of water melters and generators, tent erection, cleaning and waste handling, moving and repackaging of stores.
- Under direction of tradesmen, assist in the repair and servicing of equipment, food preparation, guest and hotel services, runway inspections and weather observations.
- After training, operate skiways, including performing inspections, undertaking surface maintenance, weather observations, and communicating with aircrew.
- Conduct ground support activities including passenger marshalling and cargo handling, aircraft marshalling, and the use of ground support equipment.
- Conduct fuel handling including the operation of pumps, filters, bonding leads, fuel drains, bulk storage containers (Iso tanks and IBCs), spill prevention procedures and spill remediation procedures.
- Participate as a First Response Team member to respond to on-site incidents including crevasse rescue, aircraft fires, and searches during blizzards for lost team members.
- Assist in the development of risk assessments and operational procedures.
- Hosting clients and visitors to camp.

## **REPORTING AND SUPERVISION**

The General Hand operates under direction of the Runway Manager. They are required to be independent and use initiative to identify requirements, to priorities their workload and plan out the best way to undertake a task.

They require self discipline, motivation and self confidence to be able to operate remotely at skiway sites for periods of up to 20 days.

## **CLIENTS AND BUSINESS CONTACTS**

All personnel may have exposure to White Desert clients visiting the site. Client exposure to large numbers of personnel is not desirable as it may detract from the sense of wilderness that clients have come to Antarctica to experience. All personnel must present and express themselves in professional manner befitting White Desert's reputation for hospitality.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

### **Mandatory**

1. Be certified as fit for Antarctic service by White Desert Ltd after tests conducted by a medical practitioner.
2. Demonstrate the range of personal qualities and interpersonal skills necessary to perform as a successful team member within an isolated field camp environment.

### **Job Specific Criteria**

3. Demonstrated ability to thrive in a working environment that is characterised by its isolation, dynamic tempo, or physical austerity.
4. Relevant working experience or qualifications that can be applied to environmentally sensitive operations, aerodrome or aviation operations, or high-end hospitality services.
5. A practical understanding of risk management and the ability to apply sound judgement, in a challenging and dynamic environment.
6. Demonstrated ability to work independently.
7. Ability to understand and follow technical directions, conduct testing and record data collection.
8. Ability to contribute to the development of procedures and techniques.
9. Possess a range of relevant field and medical skills (or the ability to rapidly acquire such skills) required to live and work in the remote Antarctic, such as radio communications, glacier travel, wilderness first aid and crevasse rescue.
10. Be physically fit enough to perform a self rescue from a crevasse (as a guide, be able to complete a minimum of 3 chin-ups and 10 push ups).
11. Willingness and ability to undertake training to acquire skills and qualifications related to the task.