



Candidate Information Pack

Reference:	EXT-2026-0023
Classification:	SES Band 2
Job Title:	First Assistant Secretary, Ministerial, Engagement & Communications
Opportunity Type:	Ongoing / Non-Ongoing
Division:	Ministerial, Engagement & Communications
Location:	Canberra, ACT
Closing Date:	Sunday 8 March 2026 - (11:30pm AEDT)
Contact Officer:	If, after reading the candidate information pack, you require further information please contact Tricia Searson or Karina Duffey at Executive Intelligence Group on (02) 6232 2200.

[ABOUT US](#)

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) exists to meet the nation's commitment to care for our veteran and defence service community—the men and women who have served Australia in times of war and conflict as well as peacetime. We do this through programs of care, compensation, commemoration, income support and Defence support services. Our aim is to ensure enhanced self-sufficiency, quality of life, financial wellbeing and community recognition for those we support.

DVA is both a policy and service delivery agency and we have strong relationships with Australian ex-service organisations, Defence, the international veteran community and international veterans' administrations.

DVA's vision is to be a responsive and flexible organisation, efficiently delivering high quality, connected services to all generations of veterans and the wider veteran community.

DVA embraces and fosters a culture that supports diversity, inclusion and respect, where people are empowered to fulfil their potential.

We welcome people with diverse skills, experiences, perspectives and backgrounds. We are dedicated and committed to attracting and recruiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and encourage applications from people with disability, people that identify as LGBTQIA+, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The Australian Public Service (APS) values the skills, perspectives, and experiences that veterans gain during their Australian Defence Force (ADF) employment and encourage veterans to apply.



Taking on a rewarding, varied, and broad career with an Australian Public Service department can bring balance and flexibility to your working life, while supporting you to stay connected to your community.

At DVA, we are committed to providing a flexible, diverse and inclusive workplace. We are open to a range of flexible work arrangements including part-time, job-sharing, and flexible work hours.

As a DVA employee, you will:

- be part of an inclusive and diverse work environment
- receive a generous starting salary and work conditions
- benefit from supportive learning and development.

To see further information regarding our support for our employees, please see our [workforce diversity page](#).

OUR OPPORTUNITY

This role leads on how the department works with the Minister, stakeholders and the public. It brings together ministerial liaison, engagement and communication, so advice, messaging and relationships are well coordinated and focused on outcomes.

You'll work closely with the Minister's Office and senior leaders across the portfolio, helping the department operate confidently in a complex, high-profile environment. The role plays a central part in managing sensitive issues, setting clear communication strategies, and building strong external partnerships.

As a member of the senior leadership team, you'll also contribute to department-wide priorities, reform and culture, while leading and developing high-performing teams.

OUR IDEAL CANDIDATE

You are a senior leader with strong experience working with ministers and navigating complex political and public environments. You bring sound judgment, political awareness and the confidence to lead on sensitive and fast-moving issues.

You have a proven track record in ministerial liaison, stakeholder engagement or communication leadership, and can bring these together into a clear, strategic approach. You write clearly, explain complex issues simply, and provide practical advice under pressure.

You lead with integrity, build trust quickly and create an inclusive, high-performance culture that delivers results.



DUTIES

As a First Assistant Secretary you will:

- lead and contribute to departmental strategic reform and operational business transformation, ensuring high-quality service delivery within allocated resources
- provide authoritative advice to the Secretary, Deputy Secretaries, and Minister, shaping policy and supporting informed decision-making
- drive organisational objectives and provide leadership across the department, fostering a culture of high performance and accountability
- determine and be accountable for objectives, priorities, and the effective allocation of resources and tasks
- lead and champion significant internal change programs, promoting innovation and adaptability
- build and maintain strong, mutually beneficial relationships with the ex-service community and other key stakeholders, and champion the department's work and policy direction
- contribute to governance processes and effectively manage assigned lines of business and departmental operations to achieve optimal results.

In accordance with APS statutory obligations, the Integrated Leadership System, SES Work Level Standards, and departmental policies and guidelines, you will be expected to demonstrate:

- professional authority and credibility
- the ability to direct and manage significant change agendas
- effectiveness in dynamic and rapidly changing environments
- the capacity to inspire confidence and lead both formally and informally
- keen intelligence, persuasiveness, and influence
- resilience, a results-driven mindset, and a constructive approach to resolving issues
- a proactive commitment to professional and organisational development, fostering enthusiasm and professionalism in others
- astute judgement and political awareness
- the ability to positively influence a health and safety culture within the department.

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- To apply you need to be an Australian citizen.
- You will need to pass our pre-employment screening process, which includes a pre-employment check.
- You will be required obtain and maintain a Negative Vetting 2 (AGSVA) security clearance.



THE SELECTION PROCESS

DVA uses a range of assessment processes to assist in selecting suitable applicants. We uphold the [APS Merit Principle](#) and our processes are designed to select the best available person for the job.

Submission	Complete and submit your resume, referees and statement of claims (up to 1000 words).
Shortlisting	Your written application will be assessed against the Work level Standards .
Interview	Candidates who progress past the shortlisting assessment may be invited to an interview either in person or virtually.
Referees	Referee/s may be contacted at any point in the process to help us determine if you are suitable for the role/s.
End of Process	When the process is finalised, we will let you know the outcome via email.

Ongoing positions may be offered as a result of this process. Non-ongoing position(s) may be offered for a specified term of up to 23 months.

HOW TO APPLY

Executive Intelligence Group accepts applications via our website.

When you apply, your details will be saved in your personal, confidential account. Should you apply for any future roles through us, you will not have to re-enter this information. If at any time your personal details change you can update this via your account. It is important to us that you find our website easy to use. If you have any feedback on how we can make the website more user friendly to assist you in completing an application or downloading candidate information, please let us know.

At **Executive Intelligence Group**, we respect the confidentiality of the personal information you provide to us and understand that your privacy is critical.

To review our Privacy Policy please click here: <https://executiveintelligencegroup.com.au/privacy-policy/>

IMPORTANT THINGS TO NOTE:

- When you apply for the first time, please create an account and make a note of your username and password.
- For subsequent applications, you will need to log in to your account and submit your application along with your CV and statement of claims/pitch. I.e. you will need to submit an application for **EVERY** vacancy you are interested in - submitting one application does **NOT** mean you will automatically be considered for other vacancies with **Executive Intelligence Group**.
- You will be required to include the details your statement of claims / pitch directly into the online application form. You do not need to upload your statement of claims / pitch as a separate



document / file. Make sure you take account of the requirements of the position and the selection criteria (if required) against which you will be assessed.

- Please have your current CV ready to upload in a single document. In your CV, it is useful for you to provide a quick snapshot of the key responsibilities you have had in each role over the last 5 years.
- You will have an opportunity to review, edit and print your application before you submit. However, once your application is submitted you will not be able to make any changes.
- Once you have submitted your application, you will receive an automated email. In the event that you do not receive an automated email confirming your application has been submitted please ensure you contact us as there may be an issue with your application lodgement;
- If you do not hear from us about the progress of your application within 3 weeks from the close date, please contact us for an update; and
- If at any time, you wish to withdraw from this process you will need to send an email to admin@execintell.com.au to let us know. You are unable to withdraw your application directly from the website.

We can be contacted on 02 6232 2200 or admin@execintell.com.au.

Please note: our office hours are Monday – Friday between 9.00am and 5.00pm. If you have any queries on the advertised position/s or how to apply, please contact us during these times and before applications close.

HOW TO APPLY ONLINE:

1. Go to the Executive Intelligence Group website and navigate to the Vacancies page (<http://www.executiveintelligencegroup.com.au/vacancies/>);
2. Find the vacancy you are interested in applying for and click 'More Info'. This will enable you to download the candidate information pack. This will assist you on how approach your application;
3. When you are ready to apply, find the vacancy you are interested in applying for and click 'Apply';
4. Read the information about applying and press 'Start';
5. This is where you will create your account if you are applying for the first time. If you have used our system previously you can log in with your user name and password;
6. From here you will be guided through an online application form;
7. At the end of the form you will be prompted upload your CV. You **MUST** have your name referenced within the document/s you upload. Please note you should have this already saved in a single document it is preferable to keep the file name of the document short and without symbols for example: **Surname First Name Ref No Job**. Where possible please upload your CV in PDF format, we are also able to accept documents in Word format.
8. If you wish to change any of the sections before you submit you can click on the 'Summary' table on the right-hand side which will take you to the specific page;
9. Submit your application; and
10. You will receive an automatic email with a copy of your application.



ELIGIBILITY

- Under section 22(8) of the Public Service Act 1999, employees must be Australian citizens to be employed in the Australian Public Service (APS).
- All applicants external to DVA offered employment, will be required to successfully undergo a pre-engagement screening check, even if they have a security clearance. The screening check is conducted in accordance with the Australian Government Protective Security Policy Framework requirements.
- The successful candidate will be required to obtain and maintain a Negative Vetting 2 (AGSVA) security clearance.

RECRUITABILITY

[RecruitAbility](#) applies to this role. You will be invited to participate in further assessment activity for the vacancy if you choose to apply under the RecruitAbility scheme.

If you choose to apply under RecruitAbility, you will need to:

- declare you are living with disability
- meet the minimum requirements for the position.



As your application progresses, you can speak with the contact Advisor about reasonable adjustments for any stage of the assessment process.

MERIT POOL

This recruitment process is being used to fill immediate and anticipated ongoing and non-ongoing vacancies. A merit pool of suitable candidates will be created. Those candidates found suitable will be advised of their placement in the pool. Placement in the pool is not an offer of employment, and not all candidates selected for inclusion may ultimately receive an offer of employment.

Non-ongoing vacancies may be offered for a period of up to 23 months with the possibility of extension. Should a position become ongoing, the merit pool established through this selection process may be used to fill the vacancy on an ongoing basis.

The merit pool may be used to fill similar roles in the event positions become vacant. This merit pool may be used to fill other vacancies anywhere in Australia.

For more information about DVA please visit the [DVA website](#).