

Ground Staff Job Description

A comprehensive job description template
for Australian airport and aviation ground handling businesses

Business Name: _____

Location: _____

Employment Type: _____

Reports To: _____

Date: _____

DISCLAIMER

This template is provided for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. It is designed to reflect Australian workplace standards and aviation industry practices at the time of publication. You should review and tailor this template to suit your business, airport type, applicable modern award and specific requirements. For complex situations, independent legal or HR advice should be sought. RosterElf Pty Ltd accepts no liability for any loss arising from reliance on this document.

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1. Position Overview

1.1 Position Title

Ground Staff / Ramp Agent / Aircraft Ground Handler

1.2 Position Summary

The Ground Staff member is responsible for aircraft ground handling operations including marshalling aircraft, loading and unloading baggage and cargo, operating ground support equipment and supporting aircraft turnarounds. This physically demanding role is critical to safe, efficient airport operations and ensuring on-time departures for all flights.

The position requires physical fitness, strong safety awareness, ability to operate specialised equipment, teamwork skills and the capacity to work in all weather conditions. Ground Staff work on the airport ramp (tarmac) and must follow strict aviation safety procedures at all times while coordinating with flight crews, maintenance teams and operations staff.

1.3 Reporting Structure

This position reports to:

- Ramp Supervisor / Ground Operations Supervisor
- Shift Coordinator
- Ground Handling Manager

1.4 Employment Type

This position is available as:

- Casual (on-call basis for varied flight schedules)
- Part-time (regular rostered shifts)
- Full-time (38 hours per week)

2. Key Responsibilities

2.1 Aircraft Marshalling

- Guide arriving aircraft to parking positions using standard marshalling signals
- Position aircraft safely on designated parking bays
- Place chocks, safety cones and ground equipment around aircraft
- Connect ground power units and air conditioning to aircraft
- Communicate with flight crew via headset and hand signals
- Ensure safe clearances between aircraft and ground equipment
- Monitor aircraft parking area for hazards and safety concerns

2.2 Baggage Handling

- Load and unload baggage, cargo and mail from aircraft holds
- Operate baggage belt loaders, cargo loaders and tugs
- Load baggage according to weight distribution and aircraft requirements
- Secure cargo and baggage properly within aircraft holds
- Handle special baggage (wheelchairs, sports equipment, fragile items)
- Transport baggage between aircraft and terminal using baggage carts
- Ensure accurate sorting and delivery of baggage to correct flights

2.3 Refuelling Support

- Assist with aircraft refuelling operations under supervision
- Position refuelling trucks safely near aircraft
- Monitor refuelling area for fire and safety hazards
- Ensure all safety procedures and fire regulations are followed
- Maintain fire watch during refuelling operations
- Report any fuel spills or safety concerns immediately

2.4 Equipment Operation

- Operate ground support equipment including tugs, belt loaders and pushback tractors
- Perform pushback operations to move aircraft away from gates
- Drive baggage tractors and cargo carts on the ramp
- Operate scissor lifts, high loaders and catering trucks
- Conduct pre-operation checks on all equipment
- Report equipment faults and maintenance requirements
- Maintain equipment in clean and serviceable condition

2.5 Safety Compliance

- Follow all aviation safety regulations and company procedures
- Wear personal protective equipment (PPE) at all times on the ramp
- Maintain awareness of aircraft engines, propellers and jet blast zones
- Follow foreign object debris (FOD) prevention procedures
- Conduct safety checks before and during aircraft turnarounds
- Report all incidents, hazards and near-misses immediately
- Participate in safety briefings and emergency response drills

2.6 Turnaround Coordination

- Work as part of turnaround team to meet scheduled departure times

- Coordinate with cabin crew, flight crew and operations staff
- Complete turnaround tasks efficiently within tight timeframes
- Monitor aircraft servicing progress and report delays
- Ensure all ground equipment is removed before aircraft departure
- Verify aircraft is safe for pushback and departure
- Complete load sheets and turnaround documentation

2.7 General Ramp Duties

- Maintain cleanliness and organisation of ramp areas
- Monitor and report foreign object debris (FOD) on ramp surfaces
- Assist with aircraft towing and repositioning
- Support de-icing operations during winter conditions
- Respond to operational changes and urgent requests
- Maintain radio communication with operations and team members

3. Required Skills and Attributes

3.1 Essential Skills

Physical Fitness

Excellent physical condition for heavy lifting and manual work. Ability to lift and carry baggage up to 32kg repeatedly. Stamina to work entire shifts in physically demanding conditions. Upper body strength for pushing, pulling and carrying loads.

Safety Awareness

Strong understanding of aviation safety requirements. Vigilance in hazardous environment around aircraft. Ability to identify and respond to safety risks. Commitment to following safety procedures at all times. Alert and focused mindset.

Teamwork

Ability to work effectively as part of a coordinated team. Cooperative approach to shared workload. Clear communication with team members. Support for colleagues during turnarounds. Collaborative problem-solving.

Communication

Clear verbal communication, especially in noisy environments. Ability to use aviation radio correctly. Understanding of standard hand signals and procedures. Confident speaking to supervisors and flight crews. Active listening skills.

Reliability

Punctual attendance for rostered shifts (critical for flight operations). Dependable work performance. Commitment to completing assigned duties. Responsible approach to equipment and safety. Trustworthy and accountable.

Outdoor Work Ability

Capacity to work in all weather conditions including extreme heat, cold, rain and wind. Tolerance for noise from aircraft engines. Ability to work on concrete surfaces for extended periods. Adaptability to changing

weather conditions.

3.2 Personal Attributes

- Physically strong and fit
- Safety-conscious and alert at all times
- Reliable and punctual
- Team player with positive attitude
- Able to work under time pressure
- Adaptable to changing conditions
- Resilient in challenging weather conditions
- Professional and responsible
- Willing to follow directions and procedures
- Committed to quality and safety

4. Qualifications and Requirements

4.1 Mandatory Requirements

- Eligibility to work in Australia (citizenship, permanent residency or valid work visa)
- Aviation Security Identification Card (ASIC) clearance capability
- Police check / criminal history check with satisfactory outcome
- Ability to work a 24/7 rotating roster including nights, weekends and public holidays
- Physical fitness to perform heavy manual work
- Current driver licence (minimum class C)

4.2 Desirable Qualifications

- Certificate III in Aviation (Ground Operations and Service)
- Previous ramp or ground handling experience
- Forklift licence or experience operating ground support equipment
- Dangerous goods awareness training
- First aid certificate
- Aviation radio operator certificate
- Manual handling training

4.3 Experience

Previous experience in ground handling, logistics, warehousing or physically demanding roles is valued. Experience operating vehicles or equipment is desirable. Entry-level candidates with strong physical fitness, safety awareness and willingness to learn will be considered. Full training in aircraft handling, equipment operation and safety procedures will be provided. All Ground Staff must complete company induction and on-the-job training before working independently on the ramp.

5. Working Conditions

5.1 Hours of Work

- 24/7 rotating roster including day, evening and overnight shifts
- Early morning shifts from 3:00-4:00am for first departures
- Late shifts finishing after midnight
- Weekend and public holiday roster requirements
- Shift lengths typically 8-10 hours
- Overtime may be required during operational disruptions

5.2 Physical Requirements

- Heavy lifting of baggage and cargo (up to 32kg repeatedly)
- Loading and unloading aircraft holds in confined spaces
- Working at heights on belt loaders and platforms
- Walking and standing for entire shift duration
- Pushing, pulling and manoeuvring heavy equipment
- Working in awkward positions within aircraft holds

5.3 Work Environment

- Outdoor work on airport ramp in all weather conditions
- Exposure to extreme heat, cold, rain, wind and sun
- Very high noise levels from aircraft engines and equipment
- Jet fuel fumes and exhaust emissions
- Fast-paced, time-sensitive operations
- Hazardous environment requiring constant vigilance

5.4 Uniform and Personal Protective Equipment

- High-visibility safety vest or uniform provided
- Steel-capped safety boots required (must meet AS/NZS standards)
- Hearing protection (ear plugs or ear muffs)
- Safety glasses or goggles
- Weather-appropriate protective clothing
- ASIC and employee identification must be displayed at all times

6. Award Information

6.1 Modern Award Coverage

This position is typically covered by the Airport Employees Award 2020 (MA000048). The award sets minimum pay rates, penalty rates, allowances and conditions for employees working at airports including ground staff, ramp agents, baggage handlers and ground operations roles.

6.2 Classification Level

Ground Staff are generally classified under the award as:

- Level 1: Entry-level ground staff member with basic duties
- Level 2: Experienced ground staff with equipment operation competency
- Level 3: Senior ground staff with advanced skills, equipment licences or team coordination

The specific classification level will be determined based on qualifications, equipment licences, experience and the scope of duties performed.

6.3 Penalty Rates and Allowances

Employees are entitled to penalty rates for work performed:

- Saturday: Higher rates apply (varies by employment type)
- Sunday: Premium rate applies
- Public holidays: Premium rate applies
- Night shift: Additional penalties for overnight work
- Early morning: Additional penalties for early starts

Casual employees receive a 25% casual loading instead of paid leave entitlements. Refer to the Airport Employees Award for current rates and conditions.

7. Expected Behaviours

7.1 Professional Conduct

- Maintain professional conduct and positive attitude at all times
- Follow all company policies and aviation regulations
- Treat colleagues, supervisors and flight crews with respect
- Report for duty punctually and ready to work
- Maintain fitness for duty (no alcohol or drugs)
- Report absences or lateness as soon as possible

7.2 Safety Standards

- Prioritise safety above all other considerations
- Follow all safety procedures and regulations without exception
- Wear all required PPE at all times on the ramp
- Report all hazards, incidents and near-misses immediately
- Never take shortcuts that compromise safety
- Maintain constant awareness of aircraft and moving equipment

7.3 Quality and Efficiency

- Work efficiently to meet scheduled aircraft turnaround times
- Handle baggage and cargo carefully to prevent damage
- Maintain high standards of work quality
- Take pride in safe, efficient operations
- Support on-time performance for all flights
- Adapt quickly to changing operational requirements

7.4 Teamwork and Communication

- Work cooperatively as part of the ramp team
- Communicate clearly, especially in noisy environments
- Support colleagues during turnarounds and busy periods
- Share information about hazards, equipment issues or concerns
- Accept feedback and coaching positively
- Participate actively in safety briefings and training

8. Application Process

8.1 How to Apply

Interested candidates should submit:

- Current resume/CV outlining relevant experience
- Cover letter describing physical fitness, availability and suitability
- Copy of current driver licence
- Copies of relevant certificates (forklift, first aid, etc.)
- Contact details for two professional referees

8.2 Selection Process

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to:

- Initial interview to assess suitability and safety awareness
- Physical fitness assessment
- Pre-employment medical assessment
- Police check and ASIC application processing
- Reference checks with previous employers

8.3 Equal Opportunity

We are an equal opportunity employer and welcome applications from all qualified candidates regardless of age, gender, cultural background, disability or other characteristics protected by law.

Position Acknowledgement

I have read and understood this job description. I understand that my duties may be varied from time to time to meet the operational needs of the business.

Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

For Manager Use Only

Manager Name: _____

Manager Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____