

# Roustabout Job Description

A free job description template for the Maritime industry

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Reports To: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## DISCLAIMER

This roustabout job description template is designed to reflect Australian workplace standards and offshore oil and gas industry practices at the time of publication. Confirm the applicable modern award for your business and ensure compliance with all relevant employment laws.

## 1. Position overview

---

A roustabout is an entry-level offshore hand who carries out general labouring on a rig or platform — moving and slinging equipment and supplies, assisting the drilling crew, cleaning and painting, maintaining the pipe deck and helping load and unload supply vessels. The role is the main entry point into offshore drilling and combines physical fieldwork with strict adherence to permit-to-work and safety systems.

In Australia, roustabouts on the rig or production side are typically covered by the Hydrocarbons Industry (Upstream) Award 2020 (MA000062), usually around Entry level to Level 2 in the offshore drilling stream, progressing with experience and the range of duties performed.

This template provides a foundation for creating clear, compliant job descriptions that attract reliable offshore crew while setting appropriate expectations for the role. Once hired, manage your swing rosters efficiently with rostering software.

## 2. Key responsibilities

---

### General labouring

Carrying out general manual labour across the rig or platform, including keeping decks and work areas clear, tidy and safe throughout the shift.

### Moving and slinging equipment

Moving, rigging and slinging equipment, tools and supplies safely, and assisting with crane lifts using correct rigging and signalling procedures.

### Assisting the drilling crew

Supporting the driller and roughnecks on the drill floor, handling pipe and tools and helping with routine drilling and tripping operations.

### Cleaning and painting

Cleaning, chipping, painting and preserving equipment and structures to control corrosion and maintain the rig or platform in good order.

### Pipe deck maintenance

Maintaining the pipe deck, sorting and stacking tubulars and casing, and keeping storage and laydown areas organised and secure.

### Loading and unloading vessels

Loading and unloading supply vessels, handling backloads and cargo, and following permit-to-work and safety systems at all times.

### 3. Skills and attributes

---

- Physical fitness: Strong physical fitness and stamina for heavy manual work in a demanding offshore environment across long shifts.
- Safety awareness: Strict adherence to permit-to-work systems, hazard awareness and consistent compliance with safety procedures on the rig or platform.
- Teamwork: Ability to work closely within a tight-knit crew, follow instructions and support the drilling team during operations.
- Practical aptitude: Hands-on ability with tools, rigging, slinging and equipment handling, and willingness to learn on the job.
- Reliability: Dependability across swing rosters and rotations, turning up ready to work and completing tasks to schedule.
- Communication: Clear communication and hand signalling during lifts and operations, plus accurate reporting of hazards and issues.

### 4. Qualifications and requirements

---

The qualifications for roustabout positions are entry-level friendly, but offshore work carries mandatory safety and medical requirements. Some are essential, while others are preferred or desirable.

- Offshore survival training (required) — Current BOSIET or HUET offshore survival and helicopter escape training is required to work offshore
- Offshore medical (required) — A valid offshore medical certificate confirming fitness for the role and environment
- Working rights (required) — Eligibility to work in Australia
- Physical fitness (required) — Ability to perform heavy manual labour and work long shifts in a demanding offshore environment
- Formal trade qualification — No trade qualification needed — roustabout is an entry-level pathway with on-the-job training
- Previous offshore or labouring experience — Experience in offshore, construction or heavy labouring roles is advantageous but not essential

### 5. Working conditions

---

- Offshore work on rigs and platforms in remote marine environments
- Swing rosters and rotations with extended periods away from home
- Long 12-hour shifts, often including day and night rotations
- Heavy manual labour in all weather conditions
- Strict compliance with permit-to-work and safety systems

- Mandatory use of personal protective equipment at all times

## 6. Award information

---

### Hydrocarbons industry (upstream) award 2020

Roustabouts on the rig or production side are typically covered by the Hydrocarbons Industry (Upstream) Award 2020 (MA000062). This modern award sets minimum pay rates, penalty rates, allowances and conditions for employees in upstream oil and gas operations. View current Hydrocarbons (Upstream) Award pay rates.

For FY2026/27, ordinary hourly rates run from around \$28.20 at Entry level up to \$38.29 at Level 7, with roustabouts usually classified around Entry level to Level 2 in the offshore drilling stream and progressing with experience. Casual employees receive a 25% loading — for example, an Entry level casual is paid around \$35.25 per hour. Use award interpretation software to calculate pay accurately.

Note that vessel crew such as deckhands, engineers and masters are instead covered by the Maritime Offshore Oil and Gas Award 2020 (MA000086), not MA000062.

### Swing rosters and offshore requirements

Offshore roustabouts generally work swing rosters — set rotations of days on the rig followed by days off, often across day and night shifts. Penalty rates, shift loadings and offshore allowances apply and vary between the award and any enterprise agreement, so confirm the rates that apply to your operation.

Before starting, roustabouts must hold current offshore survival training (BOSIET or HUET) and a valid offshore medical. Confirm the current rates, allowances and certifications that apply to your business, and check whether an enterprise agreement applies in place of the award.

## 7. Frequently asked questions

---

### About the role

Q: What does a roustabout do?

A roustabout is an entry-level offshore hand who carries out general labouring on a rig or platform. They move and sling equipment and supplies, assist the drilling crew, clean and paint, maintain the pipe deck, and load and unload supply vessels, all while following permit-to-work and safety systems. It is the main entry point into offshore drilling and combines physical fieldwork with strict safety compliance.

Q: What award covers roustabouts in Australia?

Roustabouts on the rig or production side are typically covered by the Hydrocarbons Industry (Upstream) Award 2020 (MA000062), which sets minimum pay, penalty rates and conditions for upstream oil and gas operations. Vessel crew such as deckhands, engineers and masters are instead covered by the Maritime Offshore Oil and Gas Award (MA000086). Some businesses may be covered by an enterprise agreement — always confirm which instrument applies.

Q: What classification level should I use for a roustabout?

Under the Hydrocarbons Industry (Upstream) Award, roustabouts are typically classified around Entry level to Level 2 in the offshore drilling stream, progressing with experience and the range of duties performed. For FY2026/27, ordinary hourly rates run from around \$28.20 at Entry level up to \$38.29 at Level 7. See our Hydrocarbons (Upstream) Award pay rates guide for current rates at each level.

Q: Do I need to include pay rates in a job description?

It's not legally required, but including indicative pay rates can attract more applicants and set clear expectations. You can reference the applicable award rate or use phrases like 'Award rates plus penalties' or 'Competitive rate based on experience.' Check the current Hydrocarbons (Upstream) Award rates for guidance.

## Qualifications

Q: Do roustabouts need a trade qualification?

No formal trade qualification is required to work as a roustabout — it is an entry-level pathway with on-the-job training. However, offshore work requires mandatory safety and medical clearances, including current offshore survival training (BOSIET or HUET) and a valid offshore medical, plus working rights in Australia. Prior offshore, construction or heavy labouring experience is advantageous but not essential.

Q: What offshore certifications do roustabouts need?

Roustabouts must hold current offshore survival training — typically BOSIET (Basic Offshore Safety Induction and Emergency Training) or HUET (Helicopter Underwater Escape Training) — and a valid offshore medical confirming fitness for the environment. Confirm the specific certifications and their currency required for your rig or platform before a candidate mobilises offshore.

Q: What qualifications should I require vs prefer for a roustabout?

Mandatory requirements usually include current offshore survival training (BOSIET or HUET), a valid offshore medical, working rights in Australia and strong physical fitness. Preferred qualifications include previous offshore, construction or heavy labouring experience. Avoid over-qualifying entry-level positions, as it narrows your candidate pool unnecessarily.

Q: Can I hire roustabouts without experience?

Yes. Roustabout is an entry-level role and many operators hire and train staff without prior offshore experience, provided they hold the mandatory survival training and offshore medical. Focus on physical fitness, reliability, safety awareness and teamwork. Clear job descriptions help candidates understand the demands of offshore swing rosters and self-select appropriately.

## Employment

Q: Should I hire casual or permanent roustabouts?

This depends on your workload. Casual roustabouts offer flexibility for short campaigns or variable operations but attract a 25% casual loading under the Hydrocarbons (Upstream) Award — for example, around \$35.25 per hour at Entry level for FY2026/27. Permanent part-time or full-time crew provide continuity and stronger retention across swing rosters. Many operators use a mix of both.

Q: What penalty rates apply to roustabouts?

Offshore roustabouts generally work swing rosters with day and night rotations, and penalty rates, shift loadings and offshore allowances apply under the Hydrocarbons (Upstream) Award (MA000062) or any enterprise agreement. The exact rates vary, so confirm those that apply to your operation. Use award interpretation software to calculate rates accurately.

Q: What is a swing roster for offshore roustabouts?

A swing roster is a set rotation of days worked on the rig or platform followed by days off — for example, two weeks on and two weeks off — often across day and night shifts. It reflects the remote nature of offshore work, where crew live on the installation during their rotation. Confirm the roster pattern, shift lengths and travel arrangements that apply to your operation.

Q: What should I include in a roustabout employment contract?

Key elements include: position title and classification level, employment type (casual, part-time or full-time), hourly rate, applicable award, reporting structure, main duties, swing roster pattern and required certifications such as BOSIET or HUET and an offshore medical. For casuals, include the 25% casual loading. Use our HR software to simplify this process.

## Rostering

Q: How far in advance should I provide rosters to roustabouts?

Award and agreement rosters rules vary, so confirm the notice period that applies to your business. Because offshore work runs on fixed swing rosters, crew usually have long-term visibility of their rotations. Using rosters software helps you plan swings, manage crew changes and reduce last-minute disruption.

Q: How do I roster roustabouts across swing rotations?

Plan rotations around your operation's on and off cycles, crew change logistics and each worker's availability and certifications. Use rosters tools to track hours, monitor certification currency and adjust crew allocations when staff are unavailable. This keeps the installation fully crewed and avoids gaps between swings.

Q: What breaks are roustabouts entitled to?

Break entitlements are set by the applicable award or agreement and generally include meal breaks within long offshore shifts. Because roustabouts work demanding 12-hour shifts, set clear break policies and ensure crew record their time accurately. Use time and attendance tools to support compliance.

Q: How do I manage roustabout availability for rosters?

Collect availability and certification details during onboarding and keep them current. Use HR software and rosters tools to track when each worker can mobilise offshore and when their survival training or medical is due to expire. Clear policies about minimum availability and how to request changes simplify swing planning and reduce crewing gaps.