

# Operations Team Leader



<b>Department:</b>	<b>Operations &amp; Maintenance</b>
<b>Reports to:</b>	<b>Operations Manager</b>
<b>Direct Reports:</b>	<b>Scheme Operators</b>
<b>Key Relationships:</b>	<b>MHV Operations Manager, Scheme Operators, Shareholders, Stakeholders</b>
<b>Work Type:</b>	<b>Permanent, Full Time</b>
<b>Place of Work:</b>	<b>MHV Water Ltd irrigation scheme area, MHV offices (Lismore &amp; Ashburton), plus other areas as required.</b>

## **MHV Water Ltd Mission:**

**Sustainable solutions for our community, now and into the future**

### **Purpose of position:**

The Operations Team Leader is responsible for leading the Scheme Operator team and ensuring the safe, reliable, and effective day-to-day delivery of water across the scheme. This is first and foremost a front-line people leadership role, carried out in a practical rural water delivery environment. The role sets clear expectations, coordinates field activity, supports operator development, and ensures work is completed safely and consistently.

The role leads through practical judgement, strong knowledge of the scheme, and a clear understanding of the capability and needs of the team; coordinating the right response, communicating clearly, making timely decisions within agreed settings, and escalating early when issues sit outside operational authority.

The Operations Team Leader operates within established operational, asset, and maintenance frameworks. System performance optimisation, asset strategy, and infrastructure decision-making sit outside this role and are escalated to the Operations Manager and Infrastructure Manager as appropriate. The role is expected to strengthen team discipline, field execution, and practical operational standards across the scheme. The Operations Team Leader will be fully competent in the operation of the schemes and actively participate in the operational roster system.

## Performance Expectations

### Team Leadership & Development

- Provide clear day-to-day leadership, supervision, and coaching to Scheme Operators.
- Set the tone for the operations team through presence, consistency, accountability, and practical support.
- Ensure operators understand daily priorities, expected standards, safety requirements, and escalation points.
- Build a positive, disciplined, and high-performing team culture where issues are raised early and dealt with directly.
- Identify training needs, support operator development, and help lift capability across the team.
- Support recruitment, induction, performance conversations, and succession planning in conjunction with the Operations Manager.

### Operational Responsibilities

- Lead the day-to-day operation of the water delivery network to meet the requirements of irrigators and stakeholders.
- Coordinate field work, fault response, and daily operational priorities across a geographically dispersed scheme.
- Operate the water delivery system efficiently in response to water demand and availability, within agreed operational settings.
- Maintain a practical working understanding of scheme assets and telemetry systems to support effective day-to-day operations.
- Use operational systems, field observations, and operator feedback to make sound daily decisions.
- Manage and actively participate in all operational rosters to ensure reliability of water delivery and asset availability.

### Maintenance & Asset Management

- Lead the practical execution of scheduled and reactive maintenance across scheme infrastructure.
- Allocate people, plant, contractors, and materials so that field work is completed safely and efficiently.
- Lead the development and delivery of weed control and spraying programmes.
- Oversee asset inspections, ensuring preventative maintenance and accurate record keeping.
- Identify asset condition issues early and ensure these are communicated clearly to the Operations Manager and Infrastructure Manager.

### Health, Safety & Compliance

- Champion health and safety within the operations team and across all field activities.
- Ensure safe work expectations are clear before work starts, particularly during fault response, lone work, working around water, and contractor activity.
- Ensure compliance with company H&S systems, shareholder access protocols, environmental requirements, and biosecurity requirements.
- Support the development of, and adherence to, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
- Intervene promptly where work standards, safety behaviours, or operational discipline are not acceptable.

### Stakeholder & Contractor Engagement

- Build strong working relationships with shareholders, farm teams, contractors, suppliers, and council/industry representatives.
- Represent MHV Water professionally in the field and ensure operator interactions with shareholders are clear, respectful, and consistent.
- Supervise contractor activity and ensure safety and service quality standards are met.
- Respond to stakeholder queries and feedback with professionalism and efficiency.
- Ensure operational messaging to stakeholders aligns with guidance from the Operations Manager.

### **Communication & Reporting**

- Run clear communication with operators so work priorities, risks, and expectations are understood.
- Actively contribute to internal team meetings and external communications such as shareholder newsletters and shed meetings.
- Ensure relevant information is communicated clearly to team members, management, and external parties.
- Maintain accurate work records, incident information, and operational updates with discipline and timeliness.

### **Professional Development**

- Stay current with irrigation industry trends, technologies, and best practices.
- Participate in relevant training and development with manager approval.

## **Success Indicators**

- Scheme Operators are clear on expectations, priorities, and work standards.
- The operations team works as a coordinated, disciplined, and safe field team.
- People issues, safety issues, and performance concerns are identified early and addressed directly.
- Water is delivered safely and reliably on a day-to-day basis.
- Operational faults and incidents are responded to promptly and effectively.
- Field work is completed safely, efficiently, and to agreed standards.
- Avoidable repeat faults and reactive callouts reduce over time.
- Operators develop capability and confidence through coaching, training, and practical support.
- Accurate, timely operational information is provided to management.
- Escalation occurs early when issues exceed operational authority.

## Competencies, Experience and Skills

### Competencies

- Demonstrates strong front-line people leadership in a field-based operational environment.
- Leads through presence, clarity, consistency, and direct communication.
- Can get the best out of a small operational team, including experienced field staff.
- Sets standards, follows up, and deals with issues rather than allowing drift or informal workarounds.
- Exercises sound operational judgement in real time, particularly during faults, incidents, and changing conditions.
- Maintains a safety-first mindset and is prepared to stop work when conditions are unsafe.
- Prioritises service continuity while operating within approved operational settings and procedures.
- Knows the limits of operational authority and escalates issues appropriately.
- Operates with discipline and consistency rather than ad-hoc decision-making.

### Experience

- Experience leading or supervising teams in operational, field-based, rural, or asset-intensive environments.
- Proven ability to coordinate a small team, allocate work, maintain standards, and support people development.
- Experience responding to faults, outages, or incidents in live operational systems.
- Background in irrigation, utilities, infrastructure, transport, energy, farming operations, contracting, or similar sectors.
- Experience working in geographically dispersed or rural operations.
- Familiarity with farming environments and rural water delivery preferred.
- Physically fit and confident operating in a hands-on, outdoor role.
- Full NZ driver's licence required; 4WD experience advantageous.

### Skills

- Coaching, directing, and supporting operators in practical field situations.
- Coordinating people, plant, contractors, and work activities.
- Communicating clearly in operational and high-pressure situations.
- Applying operational procedures and safety controls in the field.
- Using telemetry, operational systems, and work records to inform decisions.
- Identifying asset condition issues and communicating them clearly.
- Basic reporting and documentation with discipline and accuracy.
- High level of computer literacy and comfort using asset or telemetry systems.
- Commitment to confidentiality, professionalism, and customer service.

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*The intent of this position description is to provide a representative summary of the key functions and responsibilities performed by the individual in this role. It does not provide an exhaustive list of responsibilities. Staff members are expected to perform any duties reasonably requested by the employer. Position Descriptions are subject to review and amendment to reflect changing circumstances from time to time.*