

PIMS CODE: 10531662

Distribution & Renewable Energy Technician

Majuro, Marshall Islands

This assignment is part of the Australian Volunteers for International Development program, an Australian Government, AusAID initiative.

AVI has negotiated this assignment in good faith with the Host Organisation, and the information contained was correct at the time of acceptance of the request for an Australian Volunteer. However, while AVI takes responsibility for matters under our direct control, all assignments and arrangements are subject to change due to the inherent low levels of predictability in developing country environments. This assignment may be amended or withdrawn to reflect changes in circumstances.

HOST ORGANISATION DETAILS

ORGANISATION:	Marshalls Energy Company (MEC)
WEB ADDRESS:	www.mecrmi.net

ORGANISATION PURPOSE, HISTORY AND ACTIVITIES

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT:	MEC's core purpose is to generate and distribute electricity to the population of Majuro Atoll. Over the years, MEC has grown and added subdivisions, and the organization now also supplies the atoll with water and sanitation (through MWSC) as well as energy to some outer islands and Ebeye. Recently, MEC has begun to seriously look into renewable energy options as well.
HISTORY:	MEC was started in 1982 and originally run almost entirely by foreigners. In the '90s, the staff became increasingly local as the scope of responsibility and customer size grew dramatically. Today, MEC operates in the urban centres as well as an increasing number of outer islands. MEC remains the only electricity supplier in the RMI and is owned by the government.
MAIN ACTIVITIES:	<p>Power generation and distribution.</p> <p>Fuel storage, bunkering and sales.</p> <p>Support to the water and sewer companies.</p> <p>Increasing renewable energy systems.</p>
SIZE OF ORGANISATION:	There are approximately 175 personnel in MEC alone and close to 350 including the outer atolls and Ebeye. There is a board of directors compromised largely by government title- seven in total. The GM of MEC is in charge of all three utilities- MEC, MWSC, and KAJUR on Ebeye. The two main offices on the outer islands are Wotje and Jaluit, the northern and southern hubs.

ASSIGNMENT DETAILS

CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF ROLE:	<p>CONTEXT: The distribution staff are locally trained on the job and have no formal training. MEC desires to improve the skills of the staff and ensure they are performing their duties to a standard of high safety. Unfortunately, there is no one local with the required skills, and we are in great need of someone with distribution electrical skills to pass on the necessary knowledge.</p>
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The Australian Government is working in partnership to send Australian volunteers overseas through the Australian Volunteers for International Development Program.
www.ausaid.gov.au/volunteer

	<p>The position would be housed at MEC's field distribution in the main population center of Majuro, next to the power plant. There are no previous volunteers in this position, though a PACTAM often works with MEC- not directly in the organization though. There are also a few trainers from the US who provide occasionally training, so this volunteer would have some resources for the staff, and could really help to fill in the substantial gaps to the training.</p> <p>ALIGNMENT WITH COUNTRY STRATEGY: Aligns with the focus on increasing energy efficiency in the RMI as per partnership agreement.</p>
ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVE/S:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To improve the standard of distribution line work and maintenance via on the job training while also improving distribution system efficiency. 2. To improve standards for renewable and electric energy on the grid.

WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

LINE MANAGER:	Volunteer will report to the General Manager through the Chief Technical Officer and the Field Operations Manager. Volunteer will be working with the distribution Superintendent and his supervisors.
STAFF SUPERVISION:	As vol will be working with distribution staff, there will be no supervision, except when a particular project dictates for a specific duty. Then, the volunteer's manger would also be supervising.
OTHER STAFF:	There is a requirement to work with our sister companies at various locations around Majuro and also liaise with the RMI Energy Planning Division (EPD) on renewable energy, energy efficiency and grid connected systems.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VOLUNTEER

Volunteers complete a work-plan in the first three months of their assignment, in consultation with their line-manager and relevant stake-holders. The duties listed below are an indication of the type of work that may be involved in meeting the Assignment Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Train local staff on processes of distribution capacity (wiring, protection systems, transformers) throughout the distribution system. ▪ Improve the technical and safety skills of MEC's locally trained workforce. ▪ Develop (with a group) the local standards and procedures of grid connected power systems and assist in installing, managing and inspecting systems. ▪ Plan quality control and maintenance procedures and checklists for the distribution systems.

START DATE:	<p>Start: Within 4 to 6 months of the close of applications</p> <p>There are approximately 4 group start dates into each country each year. New volunteers will arrive as a group, be met by the Country manager and participate in important compulsory in-country orientation, including security training and cultural appropriate behaviour.</p> <p>Please note that assignment start dates may vary due to delays in the processing of visa applications or changes in the partner employers circumstances.</p>
DURATION:	12 months

SELECTION CRITERIA

For instructions on preparing your application - refer to the Application Information section

CITIZENSHIP:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Australian citizens, Australian permanent residents or New Zealand Citizens resident in Australia are eligible to apply for this assignment
QUALIFICATIONS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Relevant tertiary, professional or technical qualifications and/or certification; or equivalent work experience.Record of continuous professional developmentElectrical degree/certificate or equivalent hands-on experience in the field
ESSENTIAL SKILLS & EXPERIENCE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Demonstrated success in building the skills of others through formal and/or informal training and coachingDemonstrated success in consulting with stakeholders and facilitating the work of others to achieve an agreed outcomeSuccessful results in maintaining overhead lines on poles and underground cables up to 15,000 volts.Applied knowledge of cable splicing, terminations, metering, data logging, infrared detection.Successful results of renewable energy systems (PV and wind) connected to the power grid system.Applied knowledge of energy auditing and energy efficiency possibilities for distribution system and customers.
DESIRABLE SKILLS & EXPERIENCE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Knowledge of protection of equipment in a humid, corrosive, marine environment.Reputation for excellence in developing operational procedures, policies, administration controls and records.
ESSENTIAL PERSONAL QUALITIES FOR SUCCESSFUL VOLUNTEERS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Self awareness, self reliance and resilienceA reputation for and commitment to integrityCommitment to team work, coaching, mentoring and developing othersAwareness and sensitivity of cross-cultural settingsPatience, tolerance and flexibilityRespect for the rights of children and commitment to child protection practicesCommitment to taking responsibility for own behaviour, particularly in compliance with security guidelines and social, ethical and organisational norms.Ability to cope with cultural isolation and a different standard of livingA preparedness to work with limited resources within a challenging environmentFriendly, outgoing and placid nature with a very long tolerance fuse.Can not have any felony convictions for visa purposes. <p>Please refer to detailed definitions of personal competencies</p> <p>http://www.australianvolunteers.com/volunteer/what-we-look-for.aspx</p>

WORKPLACE DETAILS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT	
WORKPLACE DESCRIPTION:	Position would be housed at the field distribution office beside the power plant in downtown Majuro, and much work would be done in the field.
TELECOMMUNICATIONS & COMPUTERS:	<p>Access to the office computers, along with reasonably high speed internet at no cost.</p> <p>Your host organisation is counting on your flexibility. If there is no computer in your department, you are doing your host organisation a disservice by using your own laptop for your work. Flexibility means being able to come up with creative solutions to problems at work. If there is no computer, maybe you can help get one purchased for your work place. People also continue to do fantastic work without the aid of computers.</p>
HOURS/DAYS OF EMPLOYMENT:	From 8 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday, plus call for outages if required.
LEAVE:	<p>Same conditions and terms as local colleagues apply, including national holidays.</p> <p>A minimum of 1 week leave for each 3 months of work will be made available to Volunteers, if the workplace conditions are less than this.</p>
OTHER CONDITIONS:	<p>Out of hours work may be required: When necessitated by power outages.</p> <p>Travel required: Possible trips to Ebeye or outer island power plants, but to be determined with volunteer.</p>
LANGUAGE AT WORK:	<p>Language/s spoken in the workplace: Marshallese and English.</p> <p>An English speaker will carry out their work by:</p> <p>Everyone speaks English enough to do their jobs in the language. If needed for training purposes, a translator (from work) can be used.</p> <p>The level of language competency in Marshallese that a Volunteer will need to carry out this assignment is Low: Polite social interaction & demonstrated attempt to learn</p> <p>Language skills from AVI language support & their own effort while on assignment</p>
LANGUAGE SUPPORT:	Language training can be provided, however Marshallese will not be necessary to learn for working or living in Majuro.

LIVING AS A VOLUNTEER:	
LOCATION	The Marshall Islands consists of 29 atolls and five single islands in the central Pacific Ocean, between 4 and 14 degrees north of the equator. There are approximately 1225 islands and islets spread throughout the country, spanning across 750,000 square miles of ocean. The total land area is about 181 sq. km and the mean height of the land is about 2 metres above sea level. Majuro is the capital atoll and about half of the population lives there.
NEAREST MAJOR CITY:	<p>Majuro is the urban centre and national capital of the atoll nation. Most of the atoll is comprised of one road, which is 30 miles (48 km) long and quite narrow. In many places, the lagoon and ocean are visible at the same time. Most of the population is centred in the downtown business area, which includes Delap, Uliga and Rita towns, located at the eastern end of the atoll. Anchoring the far end of the road is Laura town, also populated but a more rural setting. Travel from one end to the other by car is approximately 1.5 hours.</p> <p>There is one large, Western supermarket which stocks most familiar Western foods, though at a higher price than you may be accustomed to. A growing number of smaller, specialty grocery stores are also popping throughout town.</p>

	There are a number of restaurants to choose from, though options are mostly limited to Western or Chinese cuisine.
LOCAL CONTEXT:	<p>Despite increasing Westernisation, Marshallese society remains highly influenced by kinship. The concept of family and community is inextricably tied in Marshallese society. The strong family ties contribute to close-knit communities with a focus on caring, kindness, and respect. The society is matrilineal, and therefore, land is passed down from generation to generation through the mother. Chiefs continue to wield a great deal of power over land ownership and usage, and many of these chiefs are also political leaders in the country.</p> <p>The Marshall Islands is almost 100% Christian, and the church often plays a central role in the local social dynamics. Sundays are set aside for rest, relaxation, and attending church services, and many of the wealthier families picnic on small islands and partake in water sports.</p>
LANGUAGES:	Same as workplace
SOCIAL, RECREATIONAL & SHOPPING OPTIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS:	<p>Water sports are common recreational activities in Majuro. There is an active yacht club with members from around the world. The Club holds monthly meetings and races, and members can join a boat for the races. The Marshall Islands Billfish Club is one of the most popular organizations in the Marshalls, with monthly fishing tournaments and weigh-ins.</p> <p>The coral reefs make for amazing scuba and snorkelling opportunities, both on the small "picnic" islands in Majuro Atoll, as well as the pristine outer islands of the Marshalls.</p>
CULTURAL & SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS FOR LIVING WITHIN THE COMMUNITY	Marshallese are known for their hospitality, and they will do all they can to make you feel welcome upon your arrival. You may end up with a "host" family who will take you under their wing and invite you to family parties and celebrations- an integral part of Marshallese cultural. As a visitor though, it is important to follow local customs. Women should dress conservatively, with skirts below the knee and no tank tops. Men should expect to wear pants and a collared shirt to work, as shorts are too casual. It is also important to note that men and women do not hang out socially, and doing so will likely cause problems.
MOBILITY	<p>Getting around in downtown Majuro is quite easy. Taxis are plentiful and cheap, and they will take you most places in town for \$.50-.75. For ventures out of downtown to the other end of the island, taxis can be negotiated, or it is also easy to rent a car (or golf cart!) for the day.</p> <p>While some people find buying a car useful for their time in Majuro, it is not a necessity. And, with extremely high gas prices and continual vehicle maintenance needed due to salt build-up, it is often much easier to simply use the taxi system.</p>

ASSIGNMENT FUNDING

LIVING ALLOWANCE*:		ACCOMMODATION ALLOWANCE*:	
AVI:	AUD 1000.00 per month	AVI:	AUD 0.00 per quarter
EMPLOYER	AUD 0.00 per month/quarter	EMPLOYER:	AUD 0.00 per month/quarter
* These allowance levels are based on the Cost of Living in country. They will be reviewed periodically and may increase or decrease. Volunteers will be given notice of any change to the allowance level.			

Accommodation:	MEC has a housing complex in a secure location behind the facility and provides housing to several of the staff there. This would also be adequate housing for the volunteer. MEC would also cover power and water, but cable, telephone and internet are up to the volunteer.
OTHER INFORMATION:	MEC will make a vehicle available to the volunteer at no cost to be used as needed. Cost of fuel, oil, and maintenance is included with the vehicle.

OTHER ALLOWANCES & SUPPORT

SETTLING-IN:	AUD 1,000 paid prior to start date #
RE-SETTLEMENT:	AUD 1,200 paid at conclusion of placement # <i>#Payable only on volunteer assignments longer than six (6) months.</i>
SUPPORT:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pre-departure Briefing in Melbourne & In-country Orientation on arrival ▪ Pre-departure vaccination expenses ▪ Visa expenses ▪ Airfares at the commencement and conclusion of the assignment, to and from Australian base. ▪ Pastoral care, assignment monitoring and security guidance from AVI Country Office ▪ Psychosocial and medical advice & support services ▪ Medical and emergency insurance and evacuation coverage. ▪ Some funding is available for approved accompanying dependants subject to safety risks- ask your recruiter for more information. ▪ Re-entry support services ▪ See the AVI Volunteer Guide Book for full details

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Application Support and Enquiries

If you are interested in applying to become a volunteer, AVI Recruitment Consultants will work with you to provide context and information for self-assessment and research, guidance on the formal assessment and clearance steps, and opportunities for learning and networking to prepare for a successful assignment. You can contact and discuss your interest with a Recruitment Consultant at any time:

Toll Free: 1800 331 292

Email: recruit@australianvolunteers.com

Assignment Information, Selection Criteria and Recruitment Steps

Candidates for Australian Volunteers assignments are selected based on their likelihood to successfully meet the objectives of the assignment, in the context, culture and location of the host organisation and community.

Each assignment available for application will have a detailed Assignment Description available to down-load from the Advertisement page on the AVI web-site. We recommend that you research further relevant information from links and guidance within the assignment description, and through your own networks and information sources.

Full details of selection criteria used for assessing likelihood of success are included in each Volunteer Assignment Description, and on our website: <http://www.australianvolunteers.com/volunteer/what-we-look-for>

You can find an overview of the steps and time-lines involved in becoming a volunteer on this page of our website:

<http://www.australianvolunteers.com/volunteer/steps-to-becoming-a-volunteer>

Application Instructions

The first step is a written application.

We use the application information to assess if there is a sufficient match between the requirements of the host organisation and the applicant's skills, experience, qualifications and understanding of the unique role of an Australian Volunteer. If there are many applications that are sufficiently matched, we will rank the applications, and progress to screening and interview those candidates who have demonstrated the closest match.

Background: The decision to undertake an assignment with Australian Volunteers International entails making a substantial commitment both in terms of the significant period of time that you are prepared to be separated from your family, friends and familiar surroundings as well as a willingness to accept the challenges that living, working and learning in a demanding cross-cultural environment involves.

The making of such a decision therefore needs to be done in a considered and reflective way. We suggest that it should be based not only on a desire to 'give something back' or 'to make a difference' for example, but also on a realistic assessment as to whether the timing is actually right, for you, reflecting on what you anticipate gaining from the volunteering experience and what personal attributes you feel would be required to ensure that such an experience was a satisfying and effective one for yourself and for the host organisation and host community.

Written Application

1. **Response to Selection Criteria:** Please begin by writing your responses to the following three questions, in a document headed - Response to Selection Criteria:
 - a. **Why do I feel that volunteering overseas is the right thing for me to do at this time in my life?** (up to half a page)
 - b. **What are the biggest personal adjustments I'm likely to have to make to be accepted as a useful colleague and engaged community member in this assignment?** (up to half a page)
 - c. **How I match the Essential Skills & Experience:** Write a brief summary of your most relevant experiences, results and achievements against each criteria in the Essential Skills & Experience section of the Assignment Description.
 - o *Use examples, particularly those that you think would be the most relevant to the assignment objectives, the duties, the host organisation context and the AVI personal competencies – the unique skills necessary for successful volunteering.*
 - o *Do not respond to the other Selection Criteria sections in the Assignment Description – Qualifications, Desirable Skills & Experience or Essential Personal Qualities – these areas will be covered during interviews and reference checks.*
2. **Resume:** Prepare a comprehensive and up-to-date Resume which includes the key dates of your professional history.

Lodge your application

- Log in or Register on the AVI Web-site.
- Open the Advertisement page of the assignment.
- Click on the Apply Now link at the bottom of the page. This link will only appear if you are logged in.
- Complete a few on-line questions and upload your two pre-prepared documents: Response to Selection Criteria and Resume
- You will receive an automatic email acknowledgement of your application. Please contact the Recruitment team if you do NOT receive this email or if you have any difficulties – recruit@australianvolunteers.com

Response to your application

You will receive advice on the progress of your application within three weeks from the Close of Applications date. Please contact the Recruitment team if you do NOT receive advice - recruit@australianvolunteers.com

Recruitment Principles

The needs of the Host Organisation drive our recruitment and selection practice. AVI is seeking the best available and most suitable volunteer to meet the needs of the Host Organisation.

AVI will assess applicants using merit based and transparent processes to select the best available candidate who has a reasonable chance of achieving the assignment objectives within the cultural and environmental context of the host organisation, in a manner consistent with the AVI Personal Competencies, and whose personal circumstances allow them to realistically commit to the full term of the assignment.

AVI respects the rights of the children in the communities in which we serve. Volunteer candidates will be asked to demonstrate their commitment to child protection practices and undergo police and background checks.

Flexibility is essential – there are low levels of predictability in all aspects of international volunteering.

If no candidate is able to demonstrate a reasonable likelihood of achieving the assignment objectives, or meeting the Selection Criteria, the assignment will be re-advertised or withdrawn.

There are significant potential health risks and other hazards - both foreseeable and unforeseeable - associated with participating in international volunteering. Volunteers, host organisations and AVI share responsibility for the management of risks associated with international volunteering. Throughout the recruitment process, candidates will be informed of likely risks associated with volunteering, and provided with the opportunity to explore how these risks will affect their ability to commit. Volunteers accept that there is a shared responsibility for identifying, planning for and managing risks.

Volunteer candidates demonstrate their ownership of this responsibility by providing full disclosure of personal and health challenges that they may face in managing the risks of a Volunteer assignment so that appropriate support, risk management and insurance coverage can be arranged.

Starting your research

Australian Volunteers for International Development program:

www.ausaid.gov.au/volunteer

Travel Safety information:

<http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/>

AVI Approach to Development:

www.australianvolunteers.com/about-us-/how-we-work

Australian Volunteers Code of Conduct:

<http://www.australianvolunteers.com/media/128555/avi-code-of-conduct.pdf>

AVI Child Protection Policy and Procedures

<http://www.australianvolunteers.com/media/128561/avi-child-protection-policy-v2.1.pdf>

<http://www.australianvolunteers.com/media/128558/avi-child-protection-procedures-dec10.pdf>

AVI Recruitment:

<http://www.australianvolunteers.com/volunteer/what-we-look-for.aspx>

<http://www.australianvolunteers.com/volunteer/steps-to-becoming-a-volunteer.aspx>

AVI Fact Sheets for Couples and Families Exploring Volunteering

<http://www.australianvolunteers.com/volunteer/faq.aspx#Can%20I%20take%20my%20partner>