



Candidate Information Pack

General Manager, Operations



About A W Bell

AW Bell is a family-owned, Victoria-based advanced manufacturer that has notably transformed since its founding as a pattern-making shop in 1952. Over the past five years, the company has achieved significant growth—particularly by expanding its presence in defence, aerospace, biomedical, mining, and international markets.

Renowned for its expertise in high-specification engineering and advanced manufacturing, AW Bell has established itself as a trusted partner to leading global defence and aerospace programs. Its capabilities are sought after worldwide, with a proven track record in delivering complex, mission-critical components to exacting international standards—cementing its reputation as a world-class supplier and positioning it for continued international growth.

As AW Bell prepares to scale over the next eight years, including establishing Australia's first titanium investment casting facility, it boasts a strong pipeline of international projects and continues to be recognised for its innovation and export excellence. The company is built on innovation, vertical integration, world-class quality standards, and an unwavering focus on customer partnerships.

A W Bell CEO



Sam Bell, the CEO of AW Bell, is the third generation of his family to spearhead the company. He was heavily involved in the business from an early age learning the basic concepts of investment casting, sand casting and production machining before proceeding to university. Sam completed his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and business administration, with a major in business management from Swinburne University of Technology.

After university Sam moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin where he undertook a 12 month graduate program with Wisconsin Precision Casting Corporation. Since returning to Australia and AW Bell Sam has held the roles of production manager and process improvement manager at the company before stepping into the CEO position in 2014. Sam, in partnership with Dr Roger Lumley, has played a key role in developing AW Bells Aluminium Billet Equivalent casting process and was a recipient of the Australian Industry Research Group medal in 2015 for the commercialisation on the process. Sam, like his predecessors, is passionate about industry innovation and collaboration.

Position summary for General Manager, Operations

Location	Dandenong, Victoria
Reports to	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Position Overview

The General Manager – Operations is one of the most significant leadership roles within AW Bell, overseeing the company's largest division and a team of approximately 60–70 people. This includes direct responsibility for Quality, Advanced Manufacturing, Project Management, Foundry Operations, Logistics, Non-Destructive Testing, and Precision Manufacturing.

As the operational leader, the General Manager will ensure that A W Bell's systems, processes, and resources are optimised to deliver against long-term production targets while supporting scalable growth. This role is pivotal to maintaining operational excellence, enabling expansion into new markets, and upholding the company's reputation for quality and precision.

The position engages directly with key clients, requiring a confident communicator with strong customer engagement skills. The successful candidate will bring proven experience in leading sizeable operational teams, delivering transformation and change, and operating within advanced manufacturing, machining, or casting environments.

Key Responsibilities

- Lead all aspects of production operations across foundry and machining facilities.
- Oversee quality and compliance, ensuring adherence to stringent industry and customer standards.
- Manage and mentor cross-functional teams including engineering, customer service, and project management.
- Drive resource management initiatives such as staff development, training, performance reviews, goal setting, and skills-matrix analysis.
- Lead process optimisation and continuous improvement across manufacturing operations.
- Collaborate closely with the CEO on strategic planning and business execution.
- Own planning and scheduling activities to meet demanding production timelines and delivery expectations.
- Foster cross-department collaboration to align operations with customer service, engineering, and project management functions.
- Engage directly with key clients, building strong relationships and ensuring exceptional customer satisfaction.

Qualifications & Experience

- Engineering Degree (Mechanical, Manufacturing, Aerospace)
- APQP / Quality & Lean Tools – Proficiency in APQP elements (FAI, 8D, PFMEA, PFD, MSA, Process Capability, Control Plan), Six Sigma, Lean Manufacturing, SPC, OEE.
- Management Training – Demonstrated leadership development through formal programs.
- Project Management – Proven skills in planning, executing, and delivering projects on time and within budget.
- OH&S Training – Certification or training in occupational health & safety practices.
- Proven ability to lead large operational teams in complex manufacturing environments, ideally advanced manufacturing, machining, or casting.
- Strong technical background in manufacturing or engineering disciplines.
- Track record in driving transformation and change to support scalable growth.
- Deep technical knowledge of machining and casting processes.
- Strong skills in budgeting, recruitment, training, and performance development.
- Effective customer engagement in high-specification, precision manufacturing contexts.
- Demonstrated experience in change management—driving operational improvement and transformation.

Performance Metrics

- Delivery Performance: Consistency in meeting or exceeding on-time delivery targets.
- Quality Performance: Reduction in scrap and rework rates through enhanced production quality.
- Production Productivity: Maximising equipment uptime, throughput, and overall efficiency.
- Cost to Budget: Managing production costs within approved budgets.
- Customer Satisfaction: Maintaining high levels of satisfaction and positive feedback from defence and international clients.
- Staff Engagement & Collaboration: Fostering a collaborative, motivated, and high-performing workforce.

Why This Role Matters

This is a pivotal leadership opportunity within AW Bell—critical to maintaining operational excellence while enabling the business to meet its growth ambitions. The General Manager, Operations will be central to ensuring that the largest division of the company operates with maximum efficiency, delivers exceptional quality, and remains positioned to scale into new markets over the coming decade.

Recruitment Process

Initial interview

Each candidate's application is reviewed by Lauren Gruescu at u&u Recruitment Partners who will lead this assignment. Lauren is a 15-year experienced manufacturing recruiter and was recently awarded the Manufacturing Recruiter of the Year for 2025 by Sourcr/Seek. Candidates whose skills and experience match the role will be contacted for an initial conversation. From there if you are successful in being shortlisted for an initial interview, you will be invited to meet with u&u Recruitment Partner's in person or virtually via Teams. This is typically a 60 to 90 minute meeting where they will discuss your work experience and explore your relevance and motivation for the role.

Reference and compliance checks

Candidates who progress to the reference checking stage will be required to undergo several compliance checks. These can vary from client to client and individual processes may vary. Typical compliance checks are:

- **Australian National Police Checks:** You will need to provide identification and personal details for this process. Police checks are processed through our provider;
- **Qualifications Checks:** You will need to provide your qualification documentations (such as academic transcript or degree document) and personal details;
- **References Checks:** With your consent, we will contact your nominated referees. Depending on the role this will more than likely be someone who you reported directly to, a peer and someone who reported directly to you. You should ensure that you have first consulted with your referees and availed them of the process you're involved in, that they have the time to provide a reference and that their contact details are correct; and
- **Assessment:** The final candidate(s) will be required to complete the Hogan Leadership Suite, which includes four comprehensive leadership and personality reports.

Process Milestones	Date
Assignment Commencement	18 th of August
Public Advertising Campaign	26 th of August
Short List Interviews	W/C 15 th of September
Second Round Interviews	W/C 22 nd of September
Ideal Start Date	Mid November

AW Bell Organisational Management Chart

