

ATTACHMENT B - OVERVIEW OF DEFENCE INTERACTION WITH CHILDREN

1. Whilst acknowledging that the Royal Commission refers to under 18 year olds as children, historically Defence has used various terminology when referring to this group depending on context, such as 'minors' and 'youth', and 'boys'. The term 'youth' continues to be used for under 18 year olds who are enlisted to serve in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and recognises that it would be demeaning to refer to them as children when their role is to defend Australia and its interests. By contrast, ADF Cadets under the age of 18 are referred to by Defence as children.

Australian Defence Force Academy

2. The Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) is an education and training institution which offers young men and women the opportunity to pursue a degree through the University of New South Wales, and begin a career in the ADF. The three year Academic and Military Education and Training Program is designed to provide Midshipmen and Officer Cadets with the fundamental knowledge, skills and attitudes required by junior Officers in the ADF. The minimum age for Army and Air Force officer cadet entry to ADFA is 17 upon completion of Year 12, although the majority of entrants will have reached 18 prior to entry. Navy Midshipmen undertake single service training at HMAS *Creswell* prior to joining ADFA in their second year. A minority of them may be 17 when they start their training at *Creswell* but will have reached 18 prior to moving to ADFA.

Enlistment of sailors, soldiers and airmen/airwomen

3. The minimum enlistment age for Army recruits at Kapooka, and staff cadets at RMC Duntroon is 17. Air Force airmen/airwomen enlistment at 17 and Navy sailor enlistment at HMAS *Cerberus* is also open to 17 year olds. The minimum recruitment age for Reserve entry into Navy, Army and Air Force is 17. Typically, there are 157 personnel under the age of 18 serving in the ADF. 38 in the Royal Australian Navy, 104 in the Australian Army, 15 in the Royal Australian Air Force with approximately 40 joining through the ADFA each year.

Australian Defence Force Gap Year

4. In addition to the specific recruitment pathways for the Navy, Army and Air Force outlined above, under 18 year olds may also participate in the Australian Defence Force Gap Year program. This program offers 17 to 24 year old school leavers an experience in military training and employment in each service of the ADF through a program of up to 12 months service. Gap year participants are enlisted or appointed as Defence members in the Navy, Army or Air Force for the duration of the program. They are generally in recruit and trade training for four to six months before completing another five months of work on Navy ships, Army units or Air Force squadrons or units. They serve for one year in total, with paid leave, prior to re-entering the civilian community, most to commence tertiary or other study. A number choose to join permanently, complete officer training or join the Reserve force.

Army Reserve Traineeship and Apprenticeship Program

5. The Army Reserve Traineeship and Apprenticeship Program provides a specialised training and recruitment pathway into the Army Reserve. Those suitable enlist into the Army Reserve to undertake military training and, under a partnership agreement with a Group Training Organisation, trade or technical training in a civilian apprenticeship or traineeship.

Australian Public Service employment with the Department of Defence

6. The Department of Defence currently has one Australian Public Service employee under the age of 18 (currently aged 17) involved in a traineeship. The employment of Australian Public Service staff under the age of 18 is carried out in accordance with the requirements of the relevant State or Territory.

Young Endeavour Youth Scheme

7. The Young Endeavour Youth Scheme is a not for profit organisation which provides young Australians with a unique, challenging and inspirational experience at sea as part of the crew on board the sail training ship STS Young Endeavour. Training voyages are focused on increasing self awareness, developing teamwork and leadership skills. The Scheme is run in partnership with the Navy, with a Navy crew, and is open to young Australians from the age of 16. The Young Endeavour Youth Scheme involves significant direct adult-youth contact and overnight stays. About 20 voyages usually over 11 nights are undertaken per year, with up to 24 under 18 year olds participating.

Australian Defence Force Cadets

8. The ADF Cadets is a community-based youth development organisation focused military customs, traditions and values. Cadets learn leadership, team building and survival skills. It is open to children who must turn 13 in the calendar year they are accepted into the ADF Cadets. The minimum age of an Officer of Cadets is 19, and the minimum age of an Instructor of Cadets is 18. As at 30 June 2015 there are 25,886 Cadets and 2,536 Officers or Instructors of Cadets in 544 units, flotillas and wings throughout Australia.

Defence Work Experience and Engagement Program

9. The Defence Work Experience Program offers unpaid work experience in bases and establishments across all States and Territories for students residing in Australia, in support of an understanding of possible future employment opportunities with Defence. The Defence Work Experience Program can involve direct or indirect contact between adults and students, through individual and/or group activities. Activities can be of a single day, multiple single days over time or camp style overnight stays. The Defence Work Experience Program activity is informed and sometimes regulated by the State and Territory education authorities.

Visitors

10. Children may be present on Defence establishments and ships during open days, recruiting and community engagement events such as ANZAC Day, battle commemorations, memorial events and Remembrance Day activities.

Defence families

11. A number of families live on Defence establishments or use Defence facilities (such as on-site child care).

Defence Community Organisation

12. The Defence Community Organisation engages with Defence families through a broad range of programs and services that help Defence families manage the military way of life, including support from a social worker, assistance for partner's education and employment, help with childcare, assistance for dependants with special needs, support for Defence community groups, help for families during crisis and emergency, education support for children, and assistance for members leaving the ADF. Defence Community Organisation Programs are essentially family group participation activities versus youth activities per se in which young people are generally in the care of their parent or identified carer.
13. The exception is the KidSMART suite of programs which parents do not typically attend. The KidSMART programs consist of four short day sessions that involve direct adult/youth contact. Where the delivery of Defence Community Organisation programs includes the offer of childcare or other children's activities such as face painting accredited providers are contracted to deliver the service. The Defence Community Organisation conducts on average 22 Welcome Expos and National Families Week activities annually. Other activities are conducted on an ad hoc basis dependant on request and need. This varies across the Defence Community Organisation's thirteen regional locations and comprise between five and 20 activities annually. The number of KidSMART programs also varies across locations from one to five annually.

Defence Families Association

14. The Defence Families Association is a ministerially appointed group that represents the views of Defence families and may be contacted by Defence families to represent them regarding an individual situation or to advocate an issue concerning many families.

Defence Force Recruiting Career Promotion Teams

15. Military personnel deliver Australian Defence Force career information to potential candidates, with activities including school or university visits, career expositions and regional events.

The Defence Technical Scholarships program

16. Scholarships under this program are awarded to Year 11 and Year 12 students meeting specific selection criteria with an emphasis on ADF technical trade entry, with some Year 11 recipients also attending a five day program of visits to Defence bases focusing on recruit and technical trade schools.

Indigenous Traineeships in the Australian Public Service

17. A range of 12 and 15 month support programs are offered at the APS 2 and 3 level to combine full-time work with study.

The Royal Australian Air Force Indigenous Youth Program

18. This program encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island youth (16 to 19 years of age) towards career opportunities associated with Air Force aviation, through camps at operational Air Bases.

The Defence Signals Directorate Information Security Hub (DISH)

19. DISH is an outreach program with schools, universities and TAFE Colleges which provides opportunities for students to undertake visits, work, experience, vacation programs and internships in information and communication technology. The program involves both direct and indirect contact between Defence personnel and under 18 year olds and are non-residential. The DISH Work Experience Program is with higher school students in Years 11 and 12 with contact of five days during business hours and comprises about 20 students over five events per year. The short duration Canberra Girls Programming Network launched in May 2016 provides an 8 hour program for young women from years 8, 9 and 10, with female Industry mentors to be run four times a year for about 15 students.

The Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Program

20. The STEM program fosters the pursuit of science, technology, engineering and mathematics in schools through staff at the Defence Science and Technology Group engaging in national outreach programs in a volunteer capacity.

Industry Skilling Program Enhancement Strategy

21. Funded through Defence's Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group, the Industry Skilling Program Enhancement runs several youth related programs that aim to increase the skills base of Defence industry.

Long Tan Leadership and Teamwork Awards

22. The Long Tan awards are available to selected Year 10 and Year 12 students across Australia. They recognise demonstrated leadership and teamwork within both the school and the broader local community. ADF members involvement with the program is limited to presentation of the awards.

Air Force Balloon

23. Visits by the Air Force Balloon provide an opportunity for members of the community to meet Air Force personnel and also serve to promote the professionalism of the Air Force, introduce young people to aviation and inspire an interest in the Air Force.

Operations

24. ADF personnel may come into contact with families while interacting with local communities during deployed operations.