

Understanding the ADF

To appreciate the value that veteran and reservist employees can bring to the workplace, it can assist employers to understand their Australian Defence Force (ADF) experience.

What is the ADF?

The ADF is Australia's military organisation whose mission is to defend Australia and its national interests in order to advance Australia's security and prosperity.

The ADF sits within the federal Defence portfolio, alongside the Department of Defence. Defence bases are located all around Australia. The ADF conducts operations domestically and overseas.

The ADF consists of three member arms:

- The Australian Army, Australia's military land force
- The Royal Australian Navy, Australia's maritime military force
- The Royal Australian Air Force, Australia's air and space military force

How many people serve in the ADF?

The ADF is one of Australia's largest employers. As of June 2023, the ADF reported over 58,000 permanent members and more than 32,000 reservists.

While permanent ADF members typically perform continuous full-time service, being an active ADF reservist involves a part-time commitment from 20 to 200 days per year for the Air Force and Navy, or 20 to 100 days for the Army.

Find out more about the Australian Defence Force at: www.defence.gov.au

What roles exist within the ADF?

ADF members perform roles in a variety of areas, including:

- Administration
- Aviation
- Business and finance
- Chaplaincy
- Combat and security
- Communications and IT
- Education
- Engineering
- Healthcare
- Hospitality
- Human resources
- Legal
- Logistics
- Management
- Science
- Trades





What is ADF culture?

ADF membership fosters a sense of belonging and identity, developed from a collective sense of duty and service. The ADF is underpinned by core values of:

- service
- courage
- respect
- integrity
- excellence.

ADF members are expected to:

- act with purpose for Defence and the nation
- be adaptable, innovative and agile
- collaborate and be team-focused
- be accountable and trustworthy
- reflect, learn and improve
- be inclusive and value others.

This training by RSL Queensland provides further information about military culture - Military culture and the workplace www.rslqld.org/find-help/employment/veterans-onboard-module-2



What are ADF ranks?

The ADF rank system gives the Navy, Army and Air Force their hierarchical structure. Ranks define each ADF member's role and responsibilities. ADF members can progress through ranks as they gain education, training and experience.

There are commissioned ranks and non-commissioned ranks. New ADF members will generally enter into a non-commissioned rank. Some members with non-commissioned ranks can also hold leadership and supervisory roles within their units.

Meanwhile, an ADF member with a commissioned rank receives a formal government commission which grants them authority and command to take on high-ranking management roles.

You can find out more about ADF rank structures and roles via the links below:

- www.army.gov.au/about-us/ranks
- www.navy.gov.au/about/organisation/ranks
- www.airforce.gov.au/about-us/ranks

To find out more about how veteran skills translate to the civilian workplace you can use the Core Skills Identifier www.veteranemployment.gov.au/veterans/identify-your-skills to help translate military skills into language understood by the civilian workplace.

