

TONI NEGRIESKI – ARMY EX-SERVICE PERSON

Toni Negrieski, 61, grew up in former Yugoslavia, in the small town of Struga in Macedonia. After completing school, and his national service in Lika, Croatia, Toni returned to his home town and to a job as a driver where he continued serving in border protection in the Army Reserves.

In 1989, just prior to the war that saw the breakup of Yugoslavia, Toni was able to migrate to Australia with his wife and eventually settled in Perth.

He subsequently enlisted in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in 1992, joining the ADF Active Reserve in the 11/ 28 Battalion Royal Australian Regiment. Despite the language barrier, he was confident he would be able to navigate the system due to his previous military experience.

“Serving in the 11 / 28 Battalion Royal Australian Regiment assisted me to broaden my military skills to be competitive in the civilian workforce.”

Despite the support and training he received in the Army, Toni was eager to find a full-time job to support his growing family. His Regimental Sergeant Major referred Toni to the blasting course at Bentley TAFE Department of Mineralogy, where he completed a shot-firer course to satisfy the huge demand from the mining industry.

Two weeks later, Toni found himself on a plane headed for the town of Loenora WA, to start work as a shotfirer “blasting my way through goldfields and the iron of the Pilbara”.

By 2004, Toni had had enough of mining and rejoined the ADF’s Pilbara Regiment, completing several deployments as an active Reservist, supporting operations along the littoral border on Australia’s north. This included providing security and logistics for medical teams deployed to remote indigenous communities as part of Operation Outreach in 2010.

Looking back, Toni says his Army training and deployments set him up for a lifetime of experience operating in the most remote parts of Australia.



Toni retired from the ADF in 2023.

“What I liked most about serving in the Army was applying what I learnt to my civilian job.

“While working in my most recent job at Ventia as a care-in-custody officer for the Western Australia Department of Justice, what I took from my Army days is that people should be treated with empathy and respect, no matter their failures.

Toni is moving to a new security role as an armed guard.

“The Army drills into you good working ethics and discipline. The learning structure is second to none.

“I would recommend to anyone who has difficulties with education to join the Army. It’s a great developer.”

If you are planning your move from ADF or are an ex-service person looking for civilian opportunities, visit the Veteran employment website. Use the search function to find over 400 organisations that have joined the Veteran Employment Commitment. These organisations demonstrate their commitment to employing veterans and creating an environment where they can perform at their best.

Explore further at veteranemployment.gov.au

If you speak a language other than English, you can use the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS).

TIS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, anywhere in Australia for the cost of a local call on 131 450.



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