Australian Defence Force

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) is the military organisation responsible for the defence of Australia . It consists of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) , Australian Army , Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) and a number of ' tri @-@ service ' units . The ADF has a strength of just over 80 @,@ 000 full @-@ time personnel and active reservists , and is supported by the Department of Defence and several other civilian agencies .

During the first decades of the 20th century , the Australian Government established the armed services as separate organisations . Each service had an independent chain of command . In 1976 , the government made a strategic change and established the ADF to place the services under a single headquarters . Over time , the degree of integration has increased and tri @-@ service headquarters , logistics and training institutions have supplanted many single @-@ service establishments .

The ADF is technologically sophisticated but relatively small . Although the ADF 's 57 @,@ 982 full @-@ time active @-@ duty personnel , 23 @,@ 232 active reserves and 22 @,@ 166 standby reserves make it the largest military in Oceania , it is still smaller than most Asian militaries . Nonetheless , the ADF is supported by a significant budget by worldwide standards and is able to deploy forces in multiple locations outside Australia .

Role

Legal standing

The ADF 's legal standing draws on the executive government sections of the Australian Constitution . Section 51 (vi) gives the Commonwealth Government the power to make laws regarding Australia 's defence and defence forces . Section 114 of the Constitution prevents the States from raising armed forces without the permission of the Commonwealth and Section 119 gives the Commonwealth responsibility for defending Australia from invasion and sets out the conditions under which the government can deploy the defence force domestically .

Section 68 of the Constitution sets out the ADF 's command arrangements . The Section states that " the command in chief of the naval and military forces of the Commonwealth is vested in the Governor @-@ General as the Queen 's representative " . In practice , the Governor @-@ General does not play an active part in the ADF 's command structure , and the elected government controls the ADF . The Minister for Defence and several subordinate ministers exercise this control . The Minister acts on most matters alone , though the National Security Committee of Cabinet considers important matters . The Minister then advises the Governor @-@ General who acts as advised in the normal form of executive government . The Commonwealth Government has never been required by the Constitution or legislation to seek parliamentary approval for decisions to deploy military forces overseas or go to war .

Current priorities

The ADF 's current priorities are set out in the 2016 Defence White Paper , which identifies three main areas of focus . The first of these is to defend Australia from direct attack or coercion . The second priority is to contribute to the security of South East Asia and the South Pacific . The third priority is to contribute to stability across the Indo @-@ Pacific region and a " rules @-@ based global order which supports our interests " . The white paper states that the government will place equal weight on the three priorities when developing the ADF 's capabilities .

History

Formation

Australia has maintained military forces since federation as a nation in January 1901 . Shortly after Federation , the Australian Government established the Australian Army and Commonwealth Naval Force by amalgamating the forces each of the states had maintained . In 1911 , the Government established the Royal Australian Navy , which absorbed the Commonwealth Naval Force . The Army established the Australian Flying Corps in 1912 although this separated to form the Royal Australian Air Force in 1921 . The services were not linked by a single chain of command , as they each reported to their own separate Minister and had separate administrative arrangements . The three services saw action around the world during World War I and World War II , and took part in conflicts in Asia during the Cold War .

The importance of ' joint ' warfare was made clear to the Australian military during World War II when Australian naval , ground and air units frequently served as part of single commands . Following the war , several senior officers lobbied for the appointment of a commander in chief of the three services . The government rejected this proposal and the three services remained fully independent . The absence of a central authority resulted in poor co @-@ ordination between the services , with each service organising and operating on the basis of a different military doctrine .

The need for an integrated command structure received more emphasis as a result of the inefficient arrangements which at times hindered the military 's efforts during the Vietnam War . In 1973 , the Secretary of the Department of Defence , Arthur Tange , submitted a report to the Government that recommended the unification of the separate departments supporting each service into a single Department of Defence and the creation of the post of Chief of the Defence Force Staff . The government accepted these recommendations and the Australian Defence Force was established on 9 February 1976 .

Defence of Australia era

Until the 1970s , Australia 's military strategy centred on the concept of ' forward defence ' , in which the role of the Australian military was to co @-@ operate with allied forces to counter threats in Australia 's region . In 1969 , when the United States began the Guam Doctrine and the British withdrew ' east of Suez ' , Australia developed a defence policy emphasising self @-@ reliance of the Australian continent . This was known as the Defence of Australia Policy . Under this policy , the focus of Australian defence planning was to protect Australia 's northern maritime approaches (the sea @-@ air gap) against enemy attack . In line with this goal , the ADF was restructured to increase its ability to strike at enemy forces from Australian bases and to counter raids on continental Australia . The ADF achieved this by increasing the capabilities of the RAN and RAAF and relocating regular Army units to northern Australia .

At this time , the ADF had no military units on operational deployment outside Australia . In 1987 , the ADF made its first operational deployment as part of Operation Morris Dance , in which several warships and a rifle company deployed to the waters off Fiji in response to the 1987 Fijian coups d 'état . While broadly successful , this deployment highlighted the need for the ADF to improve its capability to rapidly respond to unforeseen events .

Since the late 1980s , the Government has increasingly called upon the ADF to contribute forces to peacekeeping missions around the world . While most of these deployments involved only small numbers of specialists , several led to the deployment of hundreds of personnel . Large peacekeeping deployments were made to Namibia in early 1989 , Cambodia between 1992 and 1993 , Somalia in 1993 , Rwanda between 1994 and 1995 and Bougainville in 1994 and from 1997 onwards .

The Australian contribution to the 1991 Gulf War was the first time Australian personnel were deployed to an active war zone since the establishment of the ADF . Although the warships and clearance diving team deployed to the Persian Gulf did not see combat , the deployment tested the ADF 's capabilities and command structure . Following the war the Navy regularly deployed a frigate to the Persian Gulf or Red Sea to enforce the trade sanctions imposed on Iraq .

East Timor and after

In 1996 , John Howard led the Liberal Party 's election campaign and became Prime Minister . Subsequently , there were significant reforms to the ADF 's force structure and role . The new government 's defence strategy placed less emphasis on defending Australia from direct attack and greater emphasis on working in co @-@ operation with regional states and Australia 's allies to manage potential security threats . From 1997 the Government also implemented a series of changes to the ADF 's force structure in an attempt to increase the proportion of combat units to support units and improve the ADF 's combat effectiveness .

The ADF 's experiences during the deployment to East Timor in 1999 led to significant changes in Australia 's defence policies and to an enhancement of the ADF 's ability to conduct operations outside Australia . This successful deployment was the first time a large Australian military force had operated outside of Australia since the Vietnam War and revealed shortcomings in the ADF 's ability to mount and sustain such operations .

In 2000 , the Government released a new Defence White Paper , Defence 2000 ? Our Future Defence Force that placed a greater emphasis on preparing the ADF for overseas deployments . The Government committed to improve the ADF 's capabilities by improving the readiness and equipment of ADF units , expanding the ADF and increasing real Defence expenditure by 3 % per year ; in the event , expenditure increased by 2 @.@ 3 % per annum in real terms in the period to 2012 ? 13 . In 2003 and 2005 , the Defence Updates emphasised this focus on expeditionary operations and led to an expansion and modernisation of the ADF .

Since 2000 , the ADF 's expanded force structure and deployment capabilities have been put to the test on several occasions . Following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States , Australia committed a special forces task group and an air @-@ to @-@ air refuelling aircraft to operations in Afghanistan , and naval warships to the Persian Gulf as Operation Slipper . In 2003 , approximately 2 @,@ 000 ADF personnel , including a special forces task group , three warships and 14 F / A @-@ 18 Hornet aircraft , took part in the invasion of Iraq .

Later in 2003 , elements of all three services deployed to the Solomon Islands as part of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands . In late 2004 , over 1 @,@ 000 ADF personnel deployed to Indonesia in Operation Sumatra Assist following the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake . In May 2006 , approximately 2 @,@ 000 ADF personnel deployed to East Timor in Operation Astute following unrest between elements of the Timor Leste Defence Force .

Current operations

In September 2015 , 2 @,@ 241 ADF personnel were deployed on operations in Australian territory and overseas .

The ADF currently has several forces deployed to the Middle East . The ADF 's contribution to the Military intervention against ISIL makes up the largest overseas commitment with 780 personnel deployed as part of Operation Okra . As of November 2015 , six F / A @-@ 18A Hornets , one E @-@ 7A Wedgetail and one KC @-@ 30A tanker were deployed to strike Islamic State targets in Iraq and Syria . Approximately 380 personnel were deployed to Iraq as part of an international effort to provide training and other forms of assistance to the Iraqi military . Deployments in Afghanistan number 250 personnel in Operation Highroad , a non @-@ combat training mission supporting the Afghan National Army . A frigate is also deployed to the Middle East in maritime security operations in and around the Gulf of Aden as part of the Combined Maritime Forces . Australian personnel also form part of peacekeeping missions in Israel , Jordan , Egypt and Sudan . The ADF has a further 400 personnel based in the Middle East to support operations in the region .

Australian military units are also deployed on operations in Australia 's immediate region . As of September 2015 , 500 personnel were deployed on Australia 's northern approaches in maritime security operations , forming Operation Resolute . ADF units undertake periodic deployments in the South China Sea and South West Pacific .

Future trends

Australia 's changing security environment will lead to new demands being placed on the Australian Defence Force . Although it is not expected that Australia will face any threat of direct attack from another country , terrorist groups and tensions between nations in East Asia pose threats to Australian security . More broadly , the Australian Government believes that it needs to make a contribution to maintaining the rules based order globally . There is also a risk that climate change , weak economic growth and social factors could cause instability in South Pacific countries .

Australian demographic trends will put pressure on the ADF in the future . Excluding other factors , the ageing of the Australian population will result in smaller numbers of potential recruits entering the Australian labour market each year . Some predictions are that population ageing will result in slower economic growth and increased government expenditure on pensions and health programs . As a result of these trends , the ageing of Australia 's population may worsen the ADF 's manpower situation and may force the Government to reallocate some of the Defence budget . Relatively few young Australians consider joining the military and the ADF has to compete for recruits against private sector firms which are able to offer higher salaries .

The ADF has developed strategies to respond to Australia 's changing strategic environment . The 2016 Defence White Paper states that " the Government will ensure Australia maintains a regionally superior ADF with the highest levels of military capability and scientific and technological sophistication " . To this end , the government intends to improve the ADF 's combat power and expand the number of military personnel . This will include introducing new technologies and capabilities . The ADF is also seeking to improve its intelligence capabilities and co @-@ operation between the services .

Current structure

The Australian Defence Force , Department of Defence and Defence Materiel Organisation (DMO) make up the Australian Defence Organisation (ADO) , which is often referred to as ' Defence ' . A diarchy of the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF) and the Secretary of the Department of Defence administers the ADO . The ADF is the military component of the ADO and consists of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) , the Australian Army and the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) .

The Department of Defence is staffed by both civilian and military personnel and includes agencies such as the DMO , Defence Intelligence Organisation (DIO) and Defence Science and Technology Group (DST Group) . The DMO purchases and maintains defence equipment . The DSTO provides science and technology support to the defence forces .

Command arrangements

The ADF 's command arrangements are specified in the Defence Act (1903) and subordinate legislation . This act states that the Minister of Defence " shall have the general control and administration of the Defence Force " and that the CDF , the Secretary of the Department of Defence and the chiefs of the three services must act " in accordance with any directions of the Minister " . The leaders of the ADO are also responsible to the junior ministers who are appointed to manage specific elements of the defence portfolio . The position of Minister for Defence is held by Senator Marise Payne who is also currently serving in the capacity of Acting Minister for Defence Materiel and Science and Darren Chester is the Assistant Minister for Defence .

The CDF is the most senior appointment in the ADF . The CDF commands the ADF , and is notionally the equal of the Secretary of Defence , the most senior public servant in the Department of Defence . The CDF is the only four @-@ star officer in the ADF and is a general , admiral or air chief marshal . As well as having command responsibilities , the CDF is the Minister of Defence 's principal military adviser . Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin is the current CDF , and assumed this position on 30 June 2014 . Hugh White , a prominent academic and former Deputy Secretary in the

Department of Defence , has criticised the ADF 's current command structure . White argues that the Minister plays too large a role in military decision @-@ making and does not provide the CDF and Secretary of Defence with necessary and sufficient authority to manage the ADO effectively .

Under the current ADF command structure the day @-@ to @-@ day management of the ADF is distinct from the command of military operations . The services are administered through the ADO , with the head of each service (the Chief of Navy , Chief of Army and Chief of Air Force) and the service headquarters being responsible for raising , training and sustaining combat forces . The Chiefs are also the CDF 's principal advisor on matters concerning the responsibilities of their service .

While the individual members of each service ultimately report to their service 's Chief , the Chiefs do not control military operations . Control of ADF operations is exercised through a formal command chain headed by the Chief of Joint Operations (CJOPS) , who reports directly to the CDF . The CJOPS commands the Headquarters Joint Operations Command (HQJOC) as well as temporary joint task forces . These joint task forces comprise units assigned from their service to participate in operations or training exercises .

Joint combat forces

Operational command of the ADF is exercised by HQJOC , which is located at a purpose @-@ built facility near Bungendore , New South Wales . This is a ' joint ' headquarters comprising personnel from the three services and includes a continuously manned Joint Control Centre . HQJOC 's main role is to " plan , monitor and control " ADF operations and exercises , and it is organised around groups of plans , operations and support staff . HQJOC also monitors the readiness of the ADF units which are not assigned to operations and contributes to developing Australia 's military doctrine .

As well as HQJOC , the ADF has permanent joint operational commands responsible to the CJOPS . Joint Operations Command (JOC) includes the two headquarters responsible for patrolling Australia 's maritime borders on a day @-@ to @-@ day basis , Northern Command and Border Protection Command . Other JOC units include the Joint Movements Group and the Air and Space Operations Centre . Individual ADF units and Joint Task Groups are assigned to JOC during operations , and HQJOC includes officers responsible for submarine and special operations forces .

Royal Australian Navy

The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) is the naval branch of the Australian Defence Force . The RAN operates just under 50 commissioned warships , including frigates , submarines , patrol boats and auxiliary ships , as well as a number of non @-@ commissioned vessels . In addition , the RAN maintains a force of combat , logistics and training helicopters . The RAN is one of the most modern navies in the Pacific and is responsible for defending Australian waters and undertaking operations in distant locations .

There are two parts to the RAN 's structure . One is an operational command , Fleet Command , and the other is a support command , Navy Strategic Command . The Navy 's assets are administered by four ' forces ' which report to the Commander Australian Fleet . These are the Fleet Air Arm , the Mine Warfare , Clearance Diving , Hydrographic , Meteorological and Patrol Force , Submarine Force and Surface Force . All naval bases across Australia also report to the Commander Australian Fleet .

Australian Army

The Australian Army is Australia 's military land force . While the Australian Army is principally a light infantry force , it is currently being ' hardened and networked ' and expanded to enable it to conduct higher @-@ intensity operations .

The Army is organised into three main elements which report to the Chief of Army ; the Headquarters of the 1st Division , Special Operations Command and Forces Command .

Headquarters 1st Division is responsible for high @-@ level training activities and is capable of being deployed to command large scale ground operations . It does not have any combat units permanently assigned to it , though it commands units during training activities and the Land Combat Readiness Centre reports to the divisional headquarters . Most of the Army 's units report to Forces Command , which is responsible for overseeing their readiness and preparing them for operations . Special Operations Command is responsible for preparing the ADF 's special forces units for operational deployments . This organisation came into effect during January 2011 ; before this time the Army 's three regular brigades were permanently assigned to the Headquarters 1st Division .

The Australian Army 's main combat forces are grouped in brigades . Its main conventional forces are three regular combat brigades which are organised on a common structure ; the 1st , 3rd and 7th Brigades . Support for the units in these formations is provided by an aviation brigade (16th Brigade) , a combat support and ISTAR brigade (6th Brigade) and a logistics brigade (the 17th Brigade) . In addition , there are six Army Reserve brigades ; these brigades are administrated by the 2nd Division and " paired " with the three regular combat brigades . The Army 's main tactical formations are combined arms battlegroups made up of elements drawn from different units .

Special Operations Command (SOC) commands the ADF 's special forces units . It comprises the Special Air Service Regiment , two commando regiments , the Special Operations Engineer Regiment and signals , logistics and training units . The Army 's special forces units have been expanded since 2001 and are well equipped and capable of being deployed by sea , air or land . It currently comprises approximately 2 @,@ 200 personnel .

= = = Royal Australian Air Force = = =

The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) is the air force branch of the ADF . The RAAF has modern combat and transport aircraft and a network of bases in strategic locations across Australia .

The RAAF has a single operational command , Air Command . Air Command is the operational arm of the RAAF and consists of Air Combat Group , Air Mobility Group , Surveillance and Response Group , Combat Support Group , Air Warfare Centre and Air Force Training Group . Each group consists of several wings .

The RAAF has nineteen flying squadrons ; four combat squadrons , two maritime patrol squadrons , six transport squadrons , six training squadrons (including three Operational Conversion Units and a forward air control training squadron) as well as one Airborne Early Warning & Control squadron and a Joint Terminal Attack Controller squadron . The Air Force also includes a single independent flight (No. 5 Flight) . The ground units supporting these flying squadrons include three expeditionary combat support squadrons , three security force squadrons and a range of intelligence , air traffic control , communications , radar and medical units .

= = Logistic support = =

The ADF 's logistics are managed by the DMO and the Joint Logistics Command . The DMO was created in 2000 by merging the ADF 's Support Command Australia with the Department of Defence 's Defence Acquisition Organisation and National Support Division . The DMO purchases all forms of equipment and services used by the ADF and is also responsible for maintaining this equipment throughout its life of type .

The DMO is not responsible for directly supplying deployed ADF units ; this is the responsibility of the Joint Logistics Command and the single service logistic units . These units include the Navy 's Systems Command and replenishment ships , the Army 's 17th Combat Service Support Brigade and Combat Service Support Battalions , and the Combat Support Group RAAF .

The increasing role of the private sector forms an important trend in the ADF 's logistics arrangements . During the 1990s many of the ADF 's support functions were transferred to the private sector to improve the efficiency with which they were provided . Since these reforms most of the ' garrison ' support services at military bases have been provided by private firms . The reforms

also led to many of the ADF 's logistics units being disbanded or reduced in size . Since this time private firms have increasingly been contracted to provide critical support to ADF units deployed outside Australia . This support has included transporting equipment and personnel and constructing and supplying bases .

= = Military intelligence and surveillance = =

The Australian Defence Force 's intelligence collection and analysis capabilities include each of the services ' intelligence systems and units , two joint civilian @-@ military intelligence gathering agencies and two strategic and operational @-@ level intelligence analysis organisations .
Each of the three services has its own intelligence collection assets . RAN doctrine states that " all maritime units " contribute to the collection of intelligence and many of the RAN 's ships are capable of collecting communications and electronic transmissions . The Collins class submarines are particularly effective in this role . The Army 's intelligence and surveillance units include the 1st Intelligence Battalion , 7th Signal Regiment (Electronic Warfare) , three Regional Force Surveillance Units and the Special Air Service Regiment . The RAAF monitors the airspace of Australia and neighbouring countries using the Vigilare system , which combines input from the service 's Jindalee Operational Radar Network , other ADF air defence radars (including airborne and naval systems) and civilian air traffic control radars . The RAAF 's other intelligence assets include No. 87 Squadron and the AP @-@ 3C Orion aircraft operated by No. 92 Wing . A Space Situational Awareness capability is currently being installed at Naval Communication Station Harold E. Holt to allow the tracking of space assets and debris . Australia also provides personnel to the US Joint Space Operations Center in Colorado Springs which tracks and identifies any man @-@ made object in orbit .
The Defence Intelligence and Security Group within the Department of Defence supports the services and co @-@ operate with the civilian agencies within the Australian Intelligence Community . This Group consists of the Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organisation (DIGO) , Australian Signals Directorate (ASD) and Defence Intelligence Organisation (DIO) . The DIGO is responsible for geospatial intelligence and producing maps for the ADF , the ASD is Australia 's signals intelligence agency and the DIO is responsible for the analysis of intelligence collected by the other intelligence agencies . The three agencies are headquartered in Canberra , though the DIGO has staff in Bendigo and the ASD maintains several permanent signals collection facilities in other locations .
The ASD includes a Cyber Security Operations Centre (CSOC) which is responsible for protecting Defence and other Australian Government agencies against cyberwarfare attacks . The CSOC was established in January 2010 and is jointly staffed by the DSD , other sections of the ADO , Attorney @-@ General 's Department , Australian Security Intelligence Organisation and Australian Federal Police . Unlike the United States military , the ADF does not class cyberwarfare as being a separate sphere of warfare .

= = Personnel = =

The Australian military has been an all @-@ volunteer force since the abolition of conscription in 1972 . Both women and men can enlist in the ADF , although there are some restrictions on the positions that women may fill . In general , only Australian citizens can enlist in the ADF though permanent residents are accepted in " exceptional circumstances " . The minimum age for recruits is 17 and the retirement age is 60 for permanent personnel and 65 for reservists . Discipline of defence personnel is guided by the Defence Force Discipline Act (1982) , ultimately overseen by the Judge Advocate General of the ADF .

= = = Personnel numbers = = =

Over the 2014 ? 15 financial year the ADF had an average strength of 56 @,@ 922 permanent (full

@-@ time) and 23 @,@ 232 reserve (part @-@ time) personnel . There were a further 22 @,@ 166 inactive members of the Standby Reserve as at June 2009 . The Army is the largest service , followed by the RAAF and RAN . The ADO also employed 19 @,@ 988 civilian Australian Public Service (APS) staff as of the 2014 ? 15 financial year . The average distribution of ADF personnel between the services and categories of service over the 2014 ? 15 financial year was as follows :

During the 2009 ? 10 financial year 6 @,@ 063 people enlisted in the ADF on a permanent basis . This represented 91 % of the ADF 's recruitment target for that year . A further 671 people enlisted as part of the gap year scheme (96 % of the target) and 2 @,@ 629 joined the reserves (84 % of the target) . During that financial year 4 @,@ 000 people left the ADF 's permanent force , representing a 7 @.@ 1 % separation rate .

The number of ADF personnel has changed over the last 20 years . During the 1990s the strength of the ADF was reduced from around 70 @,@ 000 to 50 @,@ 000 permanent personnel as a result of budget cuts and the commercialisation of some elements of the military . The ADF began to grow from 2000 after the defence white paper released that year called for an expansion to the military 's strength . During the 2003 ? 04 to 2005 ? 06 financial years the strength of the ADF dropped as a result of problems with attracting further recruits . The ADF has consistently grown in all subsequent financial years , however . This growth is attributable to increased spending on recruitment and improved recruitment and retention policies . Nevertheless , some parts of the ADF are suffering from shortages of personnel (such as technicians and trades people) and demand for skilled labour in the broader economy is driving up the wages the ADF needs to pay to retain key personnel . As of May 2010 , 20 employment categories were considered " critical or perilous " due to a shortage of skilled personnel , though this had been reduced from 32 such categories in 2009 .

As of the 2011 ? 12 budget , Defence planned to have a strength of 58 @,@ 627 full @-@ time personnel supported by 21 @,@ 397 civilians and contractors in the 2018 ? 19 financial year . The Strategic Reform Program has included transferring the roles filled by several hundred ADF members to civilian APS staff as a means of reducing costs .

= = = Reserves = = =

Each of the branches of the ADF has a reserve component . These forces are the Royal Australian Naval Reserve , Australian Army Reserve and Royal Australian Air Force Reserve . The main role of the reserves is to supplement the permanent elements of the ADF during deployments and crises , including natural disasters . This can include attaching individual reservists to regular units or deploying units composed entirely of reserve personnel . As reservists serve on a part @-@ time basis , they are less costly to the government than permanent members of the ADF , but the nature of their service can mean that reservists have a lower level of readiness than regular personnel and require further training before they can be deployed . It has historically proven difficult to set a level of training requirements which allows reservists to be rapidly deployable yet does not act as a disincentive to recruitment and continued participation .

There are two main categories of reserve personnel ; those in the active reserve and those in the standby reserve . Members of the active reserve have an annual minimum training obligation . Army and RAAF reservists may also volunteer for the high readiness reserve ; this category of reservists have higher training and active service obligations . Members of the standby reserve are not required to undertake training , and would only be called up in response to a national emergency or to fill a specialised position . Most standby reservists are former full @-@ time members of the ADF .

While Australian Naval Reserve personnel are assigned to permanent units , most members of the Army Reserve and Air Force Reserve are members of reserve units . Most of the RAAF 's reserve units are not intended to be deployed , and reserve personnel are generally attached to regular air force units during their periods of active service . The Army Reserve is organised into permanent combat and support units , though most are currently manned at levels well below their authorised strengths and are not capable of deploying as formed units . There have been long @-@ running debates over whether the Army Reserve and its structure remain relevant to modern warfare .

The ADF 's increased activities since 1999 and shortfalls in recruiting permanent personnel has led to reservists being more frequently called to active service . This has included large scale domestic deployments , which have included providing security for major events such as the 2000 Summer Olympics and responding to natural disasters . Large numbers of reserve personnel have also been deployed as part of ADF operations in Australia 's region ; this has included the deployment of Army Reserve rifle companies to East Timor and the Solomon Islands . Smaller numbers of reservists have taken part in operations in locations distant from Australia . Notably , companies of the Army Reserve 1st Commando Regiment were regularly deployed to Afghanistan as part of the Special Operations Task Group .

Training

Individual training of Australian servicemen and women is generally provided by the services in their own training institutions . Each service has its own training organisation to manage this individual training . Where possible , however , individual training is increasingly being provided through tri @-@ service schools .

Military academies include HMAS Creswell for the Navy , Royal Military College , Duntroon for the Army , and the Officer Training School ? RAAF Base East Sale for the Air Force . The Australian Defence Force Academy is a tri @-@ service university for officer cadets of all services wishing to attain a university degree through the Australian Defence Force . Navy recruit training is conducted at HMAS Cerberus , Army recruits are trained at the Army Recruit Training Centre and Air Force recruits at RAAF Base Wagga .

Women in the ADF

Women first served in the Australian military during World War II when each service established a separate female branch . The RAAF was the first service to fully integrate women into operational units , doing so in 1977 , with the Army and RAN following in 1979 and 1985 respectively . The ADF initially struggled to integrate women , with integration being driven by changing Australian social values and Government legislation rather than a change in attitudes within the male @-@ dominated military .

The number of positions available to women in the ADF has increased over time . Although servicewomen were initially barred from combat positions , these restrictions began to be lifted in 1990 . In 2010 approximately 92 % of employment categories and 84 % of positions in the ADF were available to females as well as males . The only positions which women are currently excluded from are those in which there is a high probability of ' direct combat ' , which includes all infantry positions and other positions in which there is a high probability of hand to hand combat . As a result , while almost all positions in the Navy and Air Force are open to women , women are excluded from a high proportion of Army positions .

Despite the expansion in the number of positions available to women and other changes which aim to encourage increased female recruitment and retention , there has been little growth in the proportion of female permanent defence personnel . In the 1989 ? 1990 financial year women made up 11 @.@ 4 % of the ADF personnel . In the 2008 ? 2009 financial year women occupied 13 @.@ 5 % of ADF positions . During the same period the proportion of civilian positions filled by women in the Australian Defence Organisation increased from 30 @.@ 8 % to 42 @.@ 8 % . As of the 2014 ? 15 financial year , women made up 14 @.@ 5 % of permanent ADF positions and 16 @.@ 1 % of reserve positions . In 2008 , defence minister Joel Fitzgibbon instructed the ADF to place a greater emphasis on recruiting women and addressing barriers to women being promoted to senior roles . In September 2011 Minister for Defence Stephen Smith announced that the Cabinet had decided to remove all restrictions on women serving in combat positions , and that this change would come into effect within five years . This decision was supported by the CDF and the chiefs of the services . Women became able to apply for all positions other than special forces roles in the Army on 1 January 2013 ; it is planned that this remaining restriction will be removed in 2014 once the physical

fitness standards required for service in these units are determined . Women will be directly recruited into all frontline combat positions from late 2016 . In 2015 the ADF adopted targets to increase the proportion of service personnel who are female by 2018 .

There continue to be concerns over the incidence of sexual abuse and gender @-@ based discrimination in the ADF . In 2014 the Defence Abuse Response Taskforce estimated that around 1 @,@ 100 currently @-@ serving ADF personnel had abused other members of the military , and recommended that a royal commission be conducted to investigate long @-@ running allegations of sexual abuse and assault of servicewomen at the Australian Defence Force Academy . In 2013 Chief of Army General David Morrison publicly released a video in which he warned against gender @-@ based discrimination , and stated that he would dismiss members of the Army who engaged in such conduct .

= = = Ethnic composition = = =

A high percentage of ADF personnel are drawn from the Anglo @-@ Celtic portion of Australia 's population . In 2007 the proportion of ADF personnel born in Australia and the other predominately Anglo @-@ Celtic countries was higher than this population group 's share of both the Australian workforce and overall population . As a result , analyst Mark Thomson has argued that the ADF is unrepresentative of Australia 's society in this regard and that recruiting more personnel from other ethnic backgrounds would improve the ADF 's language skills and cultural empathy .

The ADO is seeking to expand the number of Indigenous Australians it recruits and improve their retention rate . Restrictions on Indigenous Australians ' ability to enlist in the military existed until the 1970s , though hundreds of Indigenous men and women had joined the military when restrictions were reduced during the world wars . By 1992 the representation of Indigenous Australians in the ADF was equivalent to their proportion of the Australian population , though they continue to be under @-@ represented among the officer corps . Two of the Army 's three Regional Force Surveillance Units (NORFORCE and the 51st Battalion , Far North Queensland Regiment) are manned mostly by Indigenous Australian reservists . In 2007 Indigenous Australians made up 1 @.@ 4 % of permanent ADF personnel and 1 @.@ 8 % of reservists .

= = = Sexuality = = =

Australia allows gay men and lesbians to serve openly . Openly gay and lesbian personnel were banned from the ADF until November 1992 when the Australian Government decided to remove this prohibition . The heads of the services and most military personnel opposed this change at the time , and it caused considerable public debate . Opponents of lifting the ban on gay and lesbian personnel argued that doing so would greatly harm the ADF 's cohesiveness and cause large numbers of resignations . This did not eventuate , and the reform caused relatively few problems . A 2000 study found that lifting the ban on gay service did not have any negative effects on the ADF 's morale , effectiveness or recruitment and retention , and may have led to increased productivity and improved working environments .

Since 1 January 2009 same @-@ sex couples have had the same access to military retirement pensions and superannuation as opposite @-@ sex couples . Transgender personnel are also permitted to serve in the ADF , and are provided with support when necessary . The ADF has permitted a contingent of gay and lesbian personnel to march together in the Sydney Mardi Gras since 2008 , and from 2013 these personnel were authorised to wear their uniforms during the parade .

= = Defence expenditure and procurement = =

= = = Current expenditure = = =

The Australian Government allocated A $ 31 @.@ 9 billion to the Australian Defence Organisation in the 2015 ? 16 financial year . This level of expenditure is equivalent to approximately 1 @.@ 92 % of Australian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) . This was an increase from the A $ 25 @.@ 4 billion allocated in the 2013 ? 14 financial year which represented approximately 1 @.@ 59 % of GDP . In 2013 ? 14 the Defence budget was 6 @.@ 6 % of the Government 's planned expenditure . In broad terms , 42 @.@ 2 % of the 2011 ? 12 defence budget will be allocated to personnel expenses , 35 @.@ 4 % to operating costs and 22 @.@ 4 % to investment . The amount allocated to defence in the 2013 ? 14 budget was 2 @.@ 3 % higher than that in the previous year 's budget in real terms , though the 2012 ? 13 expenditure was the lowest proportion of GDP to be allocated to Defence since 1938 . The 2013 ? 14 budget also forecast that total expenditure on Defence over the next six years will be $ 200 billion , representing a real annual growth rate of 2 @.@ 5 % . This was despite the former Labor Government promising to increase Defence spending by 3 % in real terms until 2016 at the 2007 election .

The 2009 defence white paper included a commitment to increase defence spending by 3 % in real terms each year over a 21 @-@ year period . The white paper also specified that defence would be required to undertake a package of reforms named the ' Strategic Reform Program ' which aimed to save A $ 20 @.@ 6 billion over ten years through improvements to management practices and other efficiencies . However , the actual rate of growth in funding over the seven years covered by the white paper will be 1 % .

In relative terms , Australia 's defence expenditure as a proportion of GDP is greater than that of most developed Western nations , but is smaller than the proportion allocated to defence by Australia 's larger neighbours . The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute has estimated that Australia 's defence spending in 2010 was the 13th highest of any country in purchasing power parity terms . As a proportion of GDP Australia 's defence spending ranks as 57th of the countries for which data is available .

= = = Long term procurement projects = = =

The Defence Capability Plan (DCP) sets out the ADF 's long term capital programs . DCPs have been regularly produced since 2000 . The current public version DCP , which was released in 2009 and updated in late 2010 , contains 140 projects and phases of projects which have a total estimated cost of A $ 153 billion in 2010 dollars . Work on these projects will take place between 2011 and 2020 . The most expensive and complex projects in the DCP are the Collins class submarine replacement project , the purchase of at least 72 F @-@ 35 Lightning II fighters , upgrades to the RAAF 's Wedgetail AEW & C aircraft , the replacement of many of the ADF 's wheeled vehicles , the replacement of the Army 's ASLAV and M @-@ 113s and the development of new offshore combatant vessels and frigates to replace most of the RAN 's surface combatants .

= = Current equipment = =

The Australian Defence Force seeks to be a high @-@ technology force , and much of its equipment is scheduled to be replaced or upgraded in the near future . Australia does not possess weapons of mass destruction and has ratified the Biological Weapons Convention , Chemical Weapons Convention and Nuclear Non @-@ Proliferation Treaty . Although most of the ADF 's weapons are only used by single service , there is an increasing emphasis on commonality . The three services use the same small arms and the FN Herstal 35 is the ADF 's standard hand gun , the F88 Austeyr the standard rifle , the F89 Minimi the standard light support weapon , the FN Herstal MAG @-@ 58 the standard light machine gun and the Browning M2HB the standard heavy machine gun .

The Royal Australian Navy operates 47 commissioned ships and submarines , and 3 non @-@ commissioned vessels . The Navy 's 11 frigates are its most capable surface combatants ; the three remaining Adelaide @-@ class frigates provide the RAN 's surface offensive capability , while the eight Anzac @-@ class frigates are general purpose escorts . The RAN 's submarine force has six

Collins @-@ class submarines . There are 13 Armidale @-@ class patrol boats for border security and fisheries patrol duties in Australia 's northern waters . The RAN 's amphibious force comprises the two Canberra @-@ class landing helicopter docks and the dock landing ship HMAS Choules . The Navy 's minesweeping force operates six Huon @-@ class minehunters . Two replenishment vessels (Sirius and Success) and six survey vessels (the Leeuwin and Paluma classes) support these combatants . Non @-@ commissioned ships operated by the RAN include the sail training ship Young Endeavour and two Cape @-@ class patrol boats leased to the RAN from the Australian Border Force . As of September 2014 , the Fleet Air Arm 's helicopter force comprised 42 helicopters ; 16 Seahawks and 4 MH @-@ 60R Romeos for anti @-@ submarine tasks , 6 MRH 90 transport helicopters , 13 Eurocopter AS350 Squirrels and 3 Bell 429 GlobalRangers for training purposes .

The Australian Army is primarily a light infantry force with equipment which may be carried by individual soldiers . It is also equipped with armoured vehicles and artillery ; the Army is introducing more armoured vehicles into service as part of the ' hardened and networked army ' initiative . The Army 's armoured , mechanised and motorised units are currently equipped with 59 M1A1 Abrams main battle tanks , 774 M113 armoured personnel carriers (including vehicles in store) , and 257 ASLAV armoured reconnaissance vehicles . 838 Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicles are currently in service with 214 on order as of July 2012 . The Army 's artillery holdings consist of 112 L119 Hamel 105 mm calibre towed guns , 36 155 mm towed M198 howitzers , an unspecified number of 81 mm mortars and 30 RBS @-@ 70 surface @-@ to @-@ air missiles . As of July 2015 , Australian Army Aviation is equipped with 115 helicopters , including 19 Kiowa reconnaissance helicopters , 22 Eurocopter Tiger armed reconnaissance helicopters , 34 S @-@ 70A @-@ 9 Blackhawk , six CH @-@ 47D Chinooks , one CH @-@ 47F Chinook (with six on order) , 27 of a planned 46 MRH 90 transport helicopters , and 12 Bell 206 training aircraft . The Army also operates 18 AAI RQ @-@ 7 Shadows as well as several ScanEagle and Skylark unmanned aerial vehicles . To support amphibious operations , the Army is equipped with 15 LCM @-@ 8 watercraft .

The Royal Australian Air Force operates combat , maritime patrol , transport and training aircraft . As at July 2015 the combat aircraft force comprised 71 F / A @-@ 18A and B Hornets and 24 F / A @-@ 18F Super Hornets . The maritime patrol force was equipped with 15 AP @-@ 3C Orions and 6 Boeing E @-@ 7A Wedgetail AEW & C aircraft . The air transport force operated 12 C @-@ 130J @-@ 30 Super Hercules , 6 C @-@ 17 Globemaster IIIs with 2 on order , 2 C @-@ 27 Spartans with 8 on order and 9 Super King Air 200 / 300 utility transport aircraft . The RAAF also operates 3 Bombardier Challenger and 2 Boeing Business Jet 737 aircraft as VIP transports . 5 Airbus KC @-@ 30B Multi @-@ Role Tanker Transports were in service . The RAAF also operates 67 Pilatus PC @-@ 9 , 8 Beechcraft B300 King Air and 33 Hawk 127 training aircraft .

= = Current bases = =

The Australian Defence Force maintains 60 major bases and many other facilities across all the states and territories of Australia . These bases occupy millions of hectares of land , giving the ADO Australia 's largest real estate portfolio . Defence Housing Australia manages around 17 @,@ 000 residences occupied by members of the ADF . While most of the Army 's permanent force units are based in northern Australia , the majority of Navy and Air Force units are based near Sydney , Brisbane and Perth . Few ADF bases are currently shared by different services . Small Army and RAAF units are also located at Royal Malaysian Air Force Base Butterworth .

The administrative headquarters of the ADF and the three services is located in Canberra alongside the main offices of the Department of Defence and Defence Materiel Organisation and the interim headquarters of Joint Operations Command . JOC and the other operational headquarters will be co @-@ located near Bungendore , New South Wales as part of the Headquarters Joint Operations Command Project .

The Royal Australian Navy has two main bases ; Fleet Base East (HMAS Kuttabul) in Sydney and Fleet Base West (HMAS Stirling) near Perth . The Navy 's operational headquarters , Fleet Headquarters , is located adjacent to Fleet Base East . The majority of the Navy 's patrol boats are

based at HMAS Coonawarra in Darwin , Northern Territory with the remaining patrol boats and the hydrographic fleet located at HMAS Cairns in Cairns . The Fleet Air Arm is based at HMAS Albatross near Nowra , New South Wales .

The Australian Army 's regular units are concentrated in a few bases , most of which are located in Australia 's northern states . The Army 's operational headquarters , Forces Command , is located at Victoria Barracks in Sydney . Most elements of the Army 's three regular brigades are based at Robertson Barracks near Darwin , Lavarack Barracks in Townsville , Queensland , and Gallipoli Barracks in Brisbane . The Deployable Joint Force (Land) Headquarters is also located at Gallipoli Barracks . Other important Army bases include the Army Aviation Centre near Oakey , Queensland , Holsworthy Barracks near Sydney , Woodside Barracks near Adelaide , South Australia and Campbell Barracks in Perth . Dozens of Army Reserve depots are located across Australia .

The Royal Australian Air Force maintains several air bases , including three which are only occasionally activated . The RAAF 's operational headquarters , Air Command , is located at RAAF Base Glenbrook near Sydney . The Air Force 's combat aircraft are based at RAAF Base Amberley near Ipswich , Queensland , RAAF Base Tindal near Katherine , Northern Territory and RAAF Base Williamtown near Newcastle , New South Wales . The RAAF 's maritime patrol aircraft are based at RAAF Base Edinburgh near Adelaide and most of its transport aircraft are based at RAAF Base Richmond in Sydney . RAAF Base Edinburgh is also home to the control centre for the Jindalee Operational Radar Network . Most of the RAAF 's training aircraft are based at RAAF Base Pearce near Perth with the remaining aircraft located at RAAF Base East Sale near Sale , Victoria and RAAF Base Williamtown . The RAAF also maintains a network of bases in northern Australia to support operations to Australia 's north . These bases include RAAF Base Darwin and RAAF Base Townsville and three ' bare bases ' in Queensland and Western Australia . Of the RAAF 's operational bases , only Tindal is located near an area in which the service 's aircraft might feasibly see combat . While this protects the majority of the RAAF 's assets from air attack , most air bases are poorly defended and aircraft are generally hangared in un @-@ hardened shelters .

= = Domestic responsibilities = =

The Australian Defence Force has domestic responsibilities . In most of these tasks the ADF supports the relevant civilian authorities . These responsibilities are typically undertaken by specialised elements of the ADF , though the services ' combat elements can be deployed within Australia in response to major emergencies .

The ADF makes a significant contribution to Australia 's domestic maritime security . ADF ships , aircraft and Regional Force Surveillance Units conduct patrols of northern Australia in conjunction with the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service . This operation , which is code @-@ named Operation Resolute , is commanded by the Border Protection Command which is jointly manned by members of the ADF and Customs . Up to 400 personnel were assigned to Operation Resolute in July 2010 .

While the ADF does not have a significant nation @-@ building role , it provides assistance to remote Indigenous Australian communities through the Army Aboriginal Community Assistance Program . Under this program , which has been conducted since 1996 , an engineer squadron works with one community for several months each year to upgrade local infrastructure and provide training . The ADF also took part in the intervention in remote Northern Territory Indigenous communities between June 2007 and October 2008 . During this operation ADF personnel provided logistical support to the Northern Territory Emergency Response Task Force and helped conduct child health checks .

The ADF shares responsibility for counter @-@ terrorism with civilian law enforcement agencies . Under the Australian National Counter @-@ Terrorism Plan the State and Territory police and emergency services have the primary responsibility for responding to any terrorist incidents on Australian territory . If a terrorist threat or the consequences of an incident are beyond the capacity of civilian authorities to resolve the ADF may be ' called out ' to provide support . To meet its counter @-@ terrorism responsibilities the ADF maintains two elite Tactical Assault Groups , the Special

Operations Engineer Regiment as well as a company @-@ sized high readiness group in each Army Reserve brigade and the 1st Commando Regiment . While these forces provide a substantial counter @-@ terrorism capability , the ADF does not regard domestic security as being part of its ' core business ' .

= = Foreign defence relations = =

The Australian Defence Force cooperates with militaries around the world . Australia 's formal military agreements include the ANZUS Alliance with the United States of America , the Closer Defence Program with New Zealand and the Five Power Defence Arrangements with Malaysia , Singapore , New Zealand and the United Kingdom . Australia is currently developing closer security ties with Japan . ADF activities under these agreements include participating in joint planning , intelligence sharing , personnel exchanges , equipment standardisation programs and joint exercises . Australia is also a member of the UKUSA signals intelligence gathering agreement .

New Zealand , Singapore and the United States maintain military units in Australia . The New Zealand and Singaporean forces are limited to small training units at ADF bases , with the New Zealand contingent comprising nine Army personnel involved in air navigation training . Two Republic of Singapore Air Force pilot training squadrons are based in Australia ; 126 Squadron at the Oakey Army Aviation Centre and 130 Squadron at RAAF Base Pearce . The Singapore Army also uses the Shoalwater Bay Military Training Area in Queensland for annual large @-@ scale exercises .

Two United States intelligence and communications facilities are located in Australia ; the Pine Gap satellite tracking station near Alice Springs and Naval Communication Station Harold E. Holt near Exmouth , Western Australia . Pine Gap is jointly operated by Australian and United States personnel and Naval Communication Station Harold E. Holt has been an exclusively Australian @-@ operated facility since 1999 . In early 2007 the Australian Government approved the construction of a new unmanned US communications installation at the Defence Signals Directorate Australian Defence Satellite Communications Station facility near Geraldton , Western Australia . The United States Military also frequently uses Australian exercise areas and these facilities have been upgraded to support joint Australian @-@ United States training . As well as these facilities , between 200 and 300 US Military personnel are posted to Australia to liaise with the ADF and in November 2011 the Australian and American Governments announced plans to rotate United States Marine Corps and United States Air Force units through bases in the Northern Territory for training purposes .

The ADF provides assistance to militaries in Australia 's region through the Defence Cooperation Program . Under this program the ADF provides assistance with training , infrastructure , equipment and logistics and participates in joint exercises with countries in South East Asia and Oceania . The Pacific Patrol Boat Program is the largest Defence Cooperation Program activity and supports 22 Pacific class patrol boats operated by twelve South Pacific countries . Other important activities include supporting the development of the Timor Leste Defence Force and Papua New Guinea Defence Force and supplying watercraft to the Armed Forces of the Philippines . Australia also directly contributes to the defence of Pacific countries by periodically deploying warships and aircraft to patrol their territorial waters ; this includes an annual deployment of RAAF AP @-@ 3 Orions to the region as part of a multi @-@ national maritime surveillance operation . Under an informal agreement Australia is responsible for the defence of Nauru .

= = Assessment of capabilities = =

The ADF 's capabilities enable it to carry out a range of tasks . The size of the force that the government can deploy differs according to the likelihood of high @-@ intensity combat and the distance from Australia . In overall terms , Dr. Mark Thomson of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute assesses the ADF 's size and capability as being typical for a Western nation with Australia 's economic and population base .

The ADF has probably the most capable air and naval capabilities in the South @-@ East Asia region , though the small size of the Army and the age of much of the RAN and RAAF 's equipment constrains Australia 's ability to make large @-@ scale deployments or engage in high @-@ intensity combat . The ADF 's personnel shortages may also limit its ability to quickly conduct new deployments .

The ADF is highly capable of defeating direct attacks on Australia by conventional forces , though such attacks are highly improbable at present . The ADF 's intelligence gathering capabilities should enable it to detect any attacking force before it reaches Australia . Once detected , the RAN and RAAF would be able to defeat the attacking force while it was still in Australia 's maritime approaches . The Army and RAAF are also capable of defeating small raiding forces once they are detected . The ADF currently maintains sufficient forces to meet its domestic security and counter @-@ terrorism responsibilities .

The RAN and RAAF are capable of deploying significant numbers of capable ships and aircraft , these forces are large and modern enough to operate independently in a high @-@ threat environment and would typically make up a small part of a larger international coalition force . Due to its relatively small size the Army 's capability for high intensity warfare is more limited than that of the other services .

As a result of these limitations , the ADF is capable of providing only relatively small , but high @-@ quality , ' niche ' forces for high intensity warfare . Such forces include the Navy 's submarines , the Army 's special forces and the RAAF 's Orion aircraft . However , the ADF 's logistic capabilities are insufficient to independently supply such forces deployed in areas distant from Australia . As a result , the ADF can only contribute forces to high intensity warfare outside of Australia 's region when larger coalition partners provide logistical support .

The ADF is highly capable of undertaking peacekeeping operations around the world . The Navy 's frigates and transport ships , the Army 's light infantry battalions and the RAAF 's transport aircraft are well @-@ suited to peacekeeping . The ADF has the capability to undertake peacekeeping and low @-@ intensity warfare operations independently in Australia 's region and can sustain such deployments for a lengthy period . It is also capable of leading international peacekeeping forces in the Asia @-@ Pacific region and , in the unlikely event of an external attack , defending Australia 's Pacific neighbours .

= = = Works consulted = = =