

# DEFENCE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT POLICY STATEMENT

Vice Chief of the Defence Force Group | Cadet, Reserve and Employer Support Division



**The Australian Government values the participation of young people in Australian society and recognises that working for and with young people is crucial to the nation's economic and social wellbeing.**

The Australian Government also realises that today's youth face complex challenges in areas such as education, employment and participation in an increasingly connected world. They also face challenges in maintaining their physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. To assist young people in developing the confidence, resilience and skills to meet these challenges calls for a Government wide approach.

In supporting the Government's youth policy, Defence is committed to providing a range of safe, challenging, high quality and contemporary youth engagement and development activities. Defence is well placed to provide these activities due to our presence in urban and regional areas across Australia; our high profile in the community; our commitment to the values and principles that have shaped Australian society; and our custodianship of important aspects of Australian history and culture.

Defence also faces the continuing challenge of attracting the right people, with the right skills, behaviours and attitudes to secure Australia and its interests into the future. With approximately 17% of the population aged between 15 and 24 years, it is important that we continue our efforts in promoting the employment pathways that Defence has on offer.



In establishing and delivering youth engagement and development activities, Defence will adhere to the following core principles:

- **Safety and wellbeing** - The safety and wellbeing of all young people involved in a Defence youth activity is paramount.
- **Coordinated, coherent and well governed youth activities** - All Defence youth activities must be delivered in a coordinated, coherent and well governed manner to ensure the effective use of resources and to maximise outcomes for both participants and Defence.
- **Human Rights commitment** - Defence will ensure that at all times it upholds the Australian Government's important commitments to Human Rights in the delivery of youth activities.
- **Inclusivity** - Defence is committed to practices that encourage participation in our youth activities, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or health condition.
- **Rewarding and Enriching** - All Defence youth activities must align with good practice youth development principles.

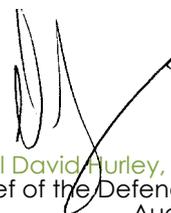
Reflecting on the nature of the organisation, Defence has developed the following themes for its youth engagement and development activities:

- **Contributing** to national efforts in the field of youth development;
- **Informing** the community of Defence's role;
- **Promoting** Defence-related employment pathways; and
- **Supporting** ADF members and their families.

In order to ensure that our youth activities maintain currency and relevance Defence will continue to evaluate emerging trends and practices in youth engagement and development, both nationally and internationally. Defence will also, where appropriate, partner with other organisations to ensure that we continue to develop, deliver and support challenging and contemporary activities which contribute to the development of productive and confident young Australians.



Mr Duncan Lewis, AO, DSC, CSC  
Secretary  
August 2012



General David Hurley, AC, DSC  
Chief of the Defence Force  
August 2012

