



Australian Defence Force Cadets Adult Membership Management Guide Community Based Units

This guide contains information for adult volunteers participating in a community based unit of the Australian Defence Force Cadets (ADF Cadets).

This guide explains what adult volunteers in community based units can expect from Defence and the ADF Cadets program, and what Defence expects from adult volunteers. Volunteers are required to sign the ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Adult) Declaration acknowledging acceptance of and commitment to the expectations of behaviour by all adult members of the ADF Cadets.

The guide is provided as an introduction to volunteering in the ADF Cadets. More detailed guidance is provided in the Defence [Youth Policy Manual](#), One Cadet and individual cadet organisation local policy application documents.





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THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE CADETS PROGRAM

1. HISTORY OF THE ADF CADETS

Australian Defence Force Cadets is the collective title for the three individual cadet organisations known singularly as the:

- Australian Navy Cadets (ANC);
- Australian Army Cadets (AAC); and
- Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC).

The Australian Defence Force Cadets can trace its origins back to pre-Federation days.

Australian Army Cadets. The first cadet unit was established in New South Wales at St Mark's Collegiate School in 1866. This unit later transferred and became the Kings School Cadet Corps in 1869. More schools established units, including state schools, and by 1871 the cadet strength of New South Wales was 850. Army cadets remained under state auspices until 1906. Cadets were voluntary during this time, and were directed by able staff that included Lieutenant T.A Blamey (later to become Field Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey).

Australian Navy Cadets. Naval cadets formed part of the Citizens Naval Forces and were voluntary for youths aged 14 and above. After World War 1, the Navy League branch in NSW formed the very first Australian Sea Cadet Corps (ASCC). The ASCC was designed to instil youth with maritime training, discipline and to foster an interest in the Navy. By 1939, the Navy League had established 12 units in NSW and Victoria.

Australian Air Force Cadets. The Air Training Corps was founded during the dark days of World War II. It has as its foundation, the Empire Air Training Scheme, a British project designed to train young men to become aircrew for the Royal Air Force (and the RAAF). By 1943, there were 97 squadrons in operation with 12,640 cadets. Of these, more than 4,000 progressed to RAAF aircrew and a large proportion of the remainder into other RAAF or Service postings. International Air Cadet exchange programs were established to foster links between overseas Air Cadet units and programs.

The title Australian Defence Force Cadets (ADF Cadets) came into being in August 2001 in response to the Topley Review the first of several reviews that have contributed to the modernisation and reform of the cadet organisations over the last two decades - action that continues to this day.





2. ADF CADETS PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The Cadet organisations operate as a partnership between Defence and the community. The cadet organisations provide development opportunities that play an important role in shaping the values and life experiences of the approximately 22,000 young people who participate in the program across Australia. The purpose and objectives of the ADF Cadets program are to:

Conduct a creative personal development program in a military environment that:

- Extends individuals beyond their self-imposed limits;
- Develops an understanding of the balance between personal freedoms and choice and the responsibilities that they bring;
- Promotes self-reliance, self-esteem and self-discipline; and
- Develops and recognises a broad range of skills including leadership and teamwork.

Contribute to social development by:

- Encouraging pride in self, community and the nation;
- Equipping young people to be better citizens;
- Encouraging a volunteer ethos;
- Developing work and life skills; and
- Providing a supportive and safe environment.

Contribute to the development of the ADF through:

- Enhancing Defence's reputation in the community;
- Maintaining Service customs, traditions and values;
- Understanding what Defence does; and
- Demonstrating a return on the Defence Organisation's investment by promoting career opportunities within Defence.

3. ADF CADETS STRUCTURE

Defence has strong community ties brought about through its national presence, high community profile, custodianship of Australian history and culture, and commitment to the values and principles that have shaped our nation.

Engagement with youth brings important responsibilities, including the obligation to ensure that youth safety and wellbeing is paramount. Defence is also obliged to ensure that Defence youth activities are delivered in a coordinated, coherent and well-governed manner to maximise outcomes for both participants and Defence, and to ensure the effective use of resources.





Following the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in 2016 Defence embarked on probably its most significant reform of the ADF Cadets. This reform includes the establishment of a formal ADF Cadets Headquarters (ADFC HQ) with the primary role of consolidation and centralisation of accountabilities for common elements of the ADF Cadets program and development of One Cadet culture and governance. At the same time the development and roll out of the Defence Youth Safety Framework (DYSF) was accelerated to provide the definitive guidance on achieving and maintaining youth safety across Defence and in particular the ADF Cadets.

Defence is committed to providing a range of safe, challenging, high quality and contemporary youth engagement and development activities in metropolitan and regional areas across Australia.

4. ADF CADETS POLICY

[The Youth Policy Manual \(YOUTHPOLMAN\)](#) provides the overarching administrative policy framework that informs Defence youth engagement and development activity, youth safety governance and the conduct of Defence youth programs. YOUTHPOLMAN assembles leading practice source policy and governance guidance in a single reference point.

One Cadet (guidance common to all three organisations) and individual cadet organisation procedures, protocols, guides, fact sheets, standing orders and instructions give effect to [YOUTHPOLMAN](#).

If you're looking for the chance to do things you don't do in everyday life, then the [Australian Defence Force Cadets \(ADF Cadets\)](#) is for you.

5. VOLUNTEERING IN THE ADF CADETS

Volunteering in the ANC. The ANC is a leading provider of youth development experiences, sponsored by the Royal Australian Navy and aims to build teamwork and leadership skills in young people through exciting and rewarding adventure and maritime activities and quality learning opportunities. Adventure and fun are the key ingredients for all camping, water sport and team challenge activities. Becoming an ANC volunteer is equally challenging and rewarding.

Volunteering in the AAC. The AAC is a community-based youth development organisation focused on the Australian Army customs, traditions and values. AAC activities and experiences are aimed at enhancing the individual, their local community, the Australian Army and, through all of this, the Australian nation. The program is conducted in communities and schools across Australia by the Australian





Army, with support from the Department of Defence in partnership with these communities and schools.

Volunteering in the AAFC. The AAFC is a youth oriented organisation that is administered and actively supported by the Royal Australian Air Force. Activities undertaken by the AAFC include flying, field craft, adventure training, firearms safety training, drill and ceremonial, service knowledge, aero modelling, navigation and gliding. Our fundamental aim is to foster qualities that will enable cadets to become responsible young adults, who will make a valuable contribution to the community. The AAFC provides a foundation of knowledge and skills that will assist cadets towards their future.

6. YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE ADF CADETS

Visit [YOUTH HQ](#) which provides information for young people wanting to be a cadet in the ANC, AAC or the AAFC.

7. ADULT VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT

Whilst neither Defence nor the individual cadet organisations currently require a minimum commitment volunteers find that they enjoy their involvement, the longer they remain in their chosen organisation. Continuity of adult volunteers is particularly important to the cadets and the ongoing operation of the program.

The commitment in terms of days per annum will vary from unit to unit, year to year and the role the volunteer undertakes – as well as individual volunteer availability.

To ensure the safety and effectiveness requirements of the program can be met, whether that's general or youth specific requirements, much of a volunteer's first year in the program might be spent undertaking training.

8. BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

Participating in a volunteer program has a number of benefits:

- personal satisfaction;
- extending oneself and increasing self-knowledge;
- access to personal and professional learning opportunities;
- service to the community;
- working in a collegial environment with others, and
- social interaction with others from around Australia and even the world.





9. PRIMARY ROLES FOR ADULT VOLUNTEERS

ADF Cadets adult volunteers come from a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences but all share a keen interest in working with and developing the youth of Australia. Your role and responsibilities as a volunteer in the ADF Cadets program will be agreed between you and the senior leadership of your cadet organisation relative to organisational need and requirement for the role, your availability, suitability and any qualifications you have. Whilst you will have access to reimbursement for certain out of pocket expenses associated with your role in the ADF Cadets at no time does your involvement in the ADF cadets program [constitute an employment arrangement](#). Nor do you become a member of the ADF.

Each cadet organisation has the following categories of volunteers:

- **Officer of Cadets (OOC) and Instructor of Cadets (IOC)** – These are rewarding roles where you not only take part in youth development activities, but you get the chance to lead and share your knowledge and experience with young people.
- **Defence Approved Helper (DAH)** – as a member of the community you could be a parent, carer, friend or even a former cadet helping a cadet unit with activities such as management of cadet unit canteen rosters/services, assistance with planning and coordination of ADF Cadets activities and/or basic cadet unit administrative support. You will not provide direct supervision of cadets.

10. APPLYING TO BECOME AN ADULT VOLUNTEER

As adult volunteers in a youth program you will be engaging closely with young people under the age of 18, which requires a formal entry process that includes suitability screening. Whether applying to be an OOC, IOC, or DAH, the first step in this process is to register an Expression of Interest (EOI) for the role of DAH. It is important to note that application does not guarantee acceptance.

An adult volunteer must meet the following criteria:

- be over the age of 18;
- be an Australian or New Zealand citizen or a permanent or legal temporary Australian resident; and
- be considered suitable for the role of ADF cadets adult volunteer.

A key requirement of suitability is that all adult volunteers must be granted (and then maintain) a Working with Children / Vulnerable People Check for the relevant State and Territory Authority.

Acceptance is also dependent on the availability of positions/roles at the time of application.





Depending on circumstances, an adult volunteer may be allowed to participate in ADF Cadets activities while their application is being processed. This participation can be useful as it allows volunteers to familiarise themselves with the ADF Cadets environment and undertake preliminary training. If this occurs, the volunteer cannot, however, have any unsupervised contact with young people under the age of 18, or undertake any supervisory role.

The documentation to be provided when registering an Expression of Interest (EOI) includes the following, noting not all documents will be required of all applicants:

- evidence of being over the age of 18 (drivers licence/passport/birth certificate);
- evidence of Australian citizenship or permanent residency;
- evidence of New Zealand citizenship or a legal temporary residency
- Working with Children / Vulnerable People clearance
- receipt of national police check advice from the Australian Federal Police;
- relevant training certificates i.e. First Aid (if applicable);
- health needs declaration and/or medical practitioner's Individual Health Plan (if applicable);
- a completed ADF Cadets Adult Code of Conduct Declaration acknowledging acceptance of and commitment to the behavioural expected of all adults associated with the ADF cadets; and
- a formal review of your military conduct record if you are currently serving or have served previously in the Australian Defence Force.

Information collected by Defence for the purpose of suitability screening will be treated in accordance with the [Defence Privacy Policy and the Privacy Act 1988](#).

11. ACCEPTANCE AND PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Successful applicants will receive a Membership Instrument of Acceptance either as an OOC or IOC, or as a DAH. Those accepted as a DAH can later apply to become an OOC or IOC. This does not require a new expression of interest but will include a review of information provided in the original application and a formal interview.

All new adult ADF Cadets members are subject to a probationary period following their acceptance. This provides an opportunity for volunteers to settle into their roles, and understand the program aims/goals and the responsibilities associated with being an adult member of the ADF Cadets as well as the commitment required. A volunteer may withdraw from the ADF Cadets at any time during the probation period.

Throughout the probation period, volunteers are monitored closely with respect to:

- their role and responsibilities;
- their behaviours when interacting with other ADF Cadets members both their fellow volunteers and young people alike; and
- their compliance with the ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Adults) and ADF Cadets guidance.





Unless a volunteer fails to meet the requirements of probation or has exhibited behaviour contrary to the ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Adults) completion of the probation period is considered confirmation of acceptance as a member of the ADF cadets. A volunteer who has **not** met the requirements may have their probation extended or their membership cancelled.

12. BEHAVIOUR AND THE ADF CADETS CODE OF CONDUCT (Adults)

Regardless of status, all adults associated with the ADF Cadets, volunteers and Defence members alike, are required to act in accordance with the relevant ADF Cadets guidance, specifically the [Youth Safe Behaviour Policy](#) and the [ADF Cadets Code of Conduct \(Adults\)](#). Failure to do so could result in administrative action such as:

- immediate stand down from a specific activity, or the entire program pending investigation;
- counselling by a member of the relevant ADF Cadets organisation chain of command;
- a verbal warning;
- a written warning;
- additional supervision;
- reduction in the level of responsibility of the volunteer role;
- cancellation of ADF Cadets membership.

13. WITHDRAWAL/CANCELLATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Volunteer withdrawal. A volunteer can withdraw from the ADF Cadets at any time, but should give at least two weeks written notice of the intent to withdraw whenever possible.

Cadet organisation initiated cancellation. Membership cancellation can be initiated by a cadet organisation, either because there is no longer a role for the member or they are no longer deemed suitable to be a member of the ADF Cadets.

If there is no longer a useful role for a member, usually because there has been a change in organisational structure or unit establishment ADF Cadets leadership will endeavour to identify another role for the volunteer before membership is cancelled.

If a member's behaviour does not meet the required standards and/or the member is deemed unsuitable to work with young people their membership may be cancelled. Potential reasons for cancellation action include, but are not limited to:

- a member poses an immediate risk to the safety and wellbeing of another ADF Cadets member, particularly a young person;
- a member fails to display behaviours in accordance with the [ADF Cadets Youth Safe Behaviours policy \(Adults\)](#);
- a member fails to complete youth safety education and training requirements;
- failure to maintain a relevant working with children / vulnerable people clearance;





- inappropriate interaction with young people under the age of 18;
- breaches of the *ADF Adult Cadets Code of Conduct*;
- non-compliance with any aspect of ADF Cadets requirements;
- insufficient commitment to the program or irregular attendance;
- failure to meet the requirements of probation;
- misrepresenting Defence or the ADF Cadets organisations;
- non-compliance with the requirements of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) or any health or safety direction from Defence/ADF Cadets.

Defence and the ADF Cadets will ensure that the principles of procedural fairness are upheld throughout the decision making process.

If membership is cancelled, the volunteer must return their name badge, uniform and/or any other property/equipment owned by Defence or the ADF Cadets on or before the last day of their membership.

Volunteers who have had their membership to an individual cadet organisation cancelled for any reason other than a change in organisational structure or unit establishment are strictly prohibited from volunteering in any other cadet organisation. For example, a volunteer in the AAC whose membership is cancelled for a breach of the code of conduct or because they have been assessed as a risk to the safety or wellbeing of a young person is strictly prohibited from volunteering with the ANC or AAFC. Information pertaining to membership is shared between the three organisations that comprise the ADF Cadets.

14. ATTENDANCE

The success of the ADF Cadets program depends on the commitment and reliability of the adult volunteers.

When attending cadet unit parades/activities the attendance sheet must be signed on arrival and departure. Sign-in and out is a critical component of work health and safety, security and insurance liability management and forms the basis for validating claims for reimbursement.

Unexpected absences. When a volunteer is unexpectedly delayed or prevented from attending cadet unit parades/activities he/she should advise their Commanding Officer as soon as practically possible.

Planned absences. Volunteers are asked to give as much notice as possible when planning for holidays or other absences. OOC/IOC should record planned absences in CadetNet. Volunteers can request an absence from their voluntary role at any time however after a sustained absence (six months and over) a volunteer may be asked to undertake refresher training as determined by the relevant ADF Cadets training manager/delegate.





Each cadet organisation has its own procedures for attendance / absence management. Volunteers should familiarise themselves with these procedures as the duration of, or reason for leave (planned or unplanned) will have different effects on the volunteers membership including recognition of the years of volunteer service.

15. SECURITY

Formal ADF Cadets identification must be worn and visible at all times when participating in ADF Cadets activities, particularly activities on Defence establishments. Defence has the right to refuse entry to a Defence establishment to any ADF Cadets member unable to produce the appropriate identification.

It is important to note that access requirements will differ dependent on the overarching security state and may even differ establishment to establishment at the same security state dependent on the nature of the establishment and the threat assessment on the day.

16. DRESS CODE AND UNIFORM GUIDELINES

The behaviour and appearance of ADF Cadets volunteers reflects not just on the cadet organisation to which you belong but also the cadet organisation's parent Service as in the eyes of the public Defence personnel and ADF Cadets members are often seen as one and the same.

There is an expectation that all members of the ADF Cadets, both adults and young people alike, present and act appropriately, particularly when in uniform in public. This means:

- wearing a uniform that fits well, not too tight and not too loose;
- wearing a uniform that is well maintained - clean, neat and tidy;
- wearing your uniform with pride and in accordance with the relevant cadet organisation procedures and /protocols.

Uniforms are supplied at no cost to the volunteer; the only costs you bear are laundering which is at your own expense

17. ADF CADETS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM

The Information Technology System used by the ADF Cadets is known as CadetNet. Volunteers in the roles of OOC/IOC and cadets are provided with CadetNet logon identifications once accepted into the program. Logon passwords must be protected and CadetNet must only be used for ADF Cadets tasks and activities in accordance with the [YOUTHPOLMAN ICT Policy](#)





18. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of the ADF Cadets Learning and Development program is to ensure all adult volunteers and cadets alike understand the Defence and ADF Cadets policies, procedures and protocols relevant to their role and to provide them with the appropriate knowledge and skills to enable the ADF Cadets program to be the best it can be and deliver the best possible experience for the cadets. Defence is committed to providing its volunteers with ongoing learning and development opportunities, and requires all volunteers to participate in its Learning and Development program.

During the course of your participation as a volunteer member of the ADF Cadets you will be required to complete certain mandatory training requirements such as:

- Work Health and Safety (WHS)
- Security; and
- [Youth Safety Training](#).

19. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Performance monitoring is key to effective performance and allows ADF Cadets supervisors to receive feedback and discuss your experience of the ADF cadets with you. Topics that might be included in a performance monitoring discussion are:

- your contribution to the program;
- your participation in activities;
- your commitment to the organisation;
- your completion of mandatory training;
- your response to direction and adherence to guidance;
- your behaviour and the Code of Conduct;
- your desire to take on more or less responsibility;
- anything that might be impacting on your commitment, participation or contribution
- any concerns you may have about any aspect of the program's operations or your interactions with other members.

Periodic performance discussions allow you to discuss whether you are achieving the benefits of volunteering and identify and resolve any issues before they spiral out of control and result in avoidable interpersonal disputes and/or formal complaints.

20. ISSUES AND COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT

ADF Cadets members should endeavour to resolve issues at the earliest possible opportunity and at the lowest possible level. If issues cannot be resolved you can raise the matter within your respective ADF Cadets chain of command who will ensure that the applicable ADF Cadets policy and the relevant cadet organisation complaint management procedure is followed.





21. VOLUNTEERS WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

Everyone, Defence leaders, Defence personnel generally, ADF Cadets adults and cadets themselves, has a role in ADF Cadets work health and safety under the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) (the Act).

All persons associated with ADF Cadets activities, regardless of whether they are Defence personnel, or ADF Cadets members, both adults and cadets, are considered as **workers** under the Act.

There are no health or fitness requirements associated with being a member of the ADF Cadets. However, all members particularly those who have responsibility for the care and well-being of the cadets, are also responsible for ensuring they have the level of health and wellbeing that will enable the member to undertake those responsibilities without putting either themselves, other members of the cadet organisation or the young people for whom the member is responsible at risk.

Where it is reasonably practicable to do so, provision can be made to accommodate individual work health safety needs to maximise inclusivity whilst also maintaining safety. Work health safety training is mandatory for both adults and cadets.

22. ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

Defence requires all youth program activities to be free from the effects of alcohol tobacco and prohibited substances. The consumption, possession, supply, sale or use of alcohol, tobacco and/or prohibited substances by adult volunteers, (and cadets over the age of 18), while participating in, or supporting activities in the ADF Cadets program is prohibited. All adults participating in ADF Cadets activities must at all times register a zero blood alcohol reading in accordance with National Guidelines for hand held breath analyser tests. Non-compliance with this policy may lead to cancellation of the volunteer's membership of ADF Cadets.

23. ACCEPTING PERSONAL GIFTS AND BENEFITS

On occasion a volunteer may be offered a personal gift. Volunteers must not accept personal gifts of any value. However token gifts (e.g. a badge, chocolates) may be accepted, but must be declared to their unit commander. Volunteers must never solicit, demand or request any gifts or benefits, nor accept personal gifts or benefits for either themselves or others.

24. INSURANCE

Volunteers are covered under Comcare Insurance provisions while engaged in volunteer duties. Volunteers are required to accurately record their participation in ADF cadets activities through the use of the Attendance Record supplied for each





activity. Volunteers are required to provide evidence of comprehensive car insurance and complete an [ADF Cadets Defence Vehicle Usage Declaration when driving a Defence vehicle](#).

25. REIMBURSEMENT OF OUT OF POCKET EXPENSES

Officers and Instructors of Cadets may receive reimbursement for certain out of pocket expenses associated with their cadet activities. Reimbursement is dependent on application and approval and is only applicable to expenses related to participation in an approved activity. Further information can be provided through the relevant ADF Cadets organisation.

Notice:

Adult Volunteers are not members of the ADF and therefore cannot give any approvals, warranties or assurances to any persons that could give rise to legally (or otherwise) binding obligations on Defence or the ADF Cadets.

Disclaimers:

Nothing in this guide will be interpreted to mean that volunteers are in an employer-employee relationship with the Commonwealth of Australia.

Nothing in this guide will be interpreted to be an offer by the Commonwealth of Australia capable of acceptance and giving rise to a legally binding agreement.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Youth Directorate:
defence.youth@defence.gov.au

