

# AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE CADETS

## YOUTH BEHAVIOUR

### INTRODUCTION

1.1 Defence is committed to taking all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of youth with whom it comes into contact through the development of a youth safe culture and the promotion of both individual and collective responsibility for youth safety.

1.2 The ADF Cadets are community-based youth development organisations supported by Defence to deliver programs focussed on Defence customs, traditions and values. Membership of the ADF Cadets enables young people to make new friends, be a part of a team, and experience challenges that develop their skills as potential leaders, as well as developing skills that better equip them for life.

### POLICY INTENT

1.3 This policy provides direction to Defence personnel and the ADF Cadets, and guidance to young people, their parents/family and adult members involved in ADF Cadets program.

1.4 This policy articulates Defence and the ADF Cadets commitment to promoting the wellbeing of youth and protecting young people from abuse through a focus on behaviour.

### POLICY PRINCIPLE

1.5 The principles that underpin this policy are:

- a. Principle 1 – Cadets are supported to behave in a manner that is safe, inclusive and respectful of others and promotes the goals of the ADF cadets program.
- b. Principle 2 – Appropriate Cadet behaviour is promoted through positive and proactive role models and access to appropriate learning and development opportunities.
- c. Principle 3 – ADF Cadets respond promptly, seriously, with fairness and sensitivity to any incident or allegation of unacceptable behaviour.

### POLICY PRACTICE AND MEASURES

1.6 Defence and the ADF Cadets fulfil their youth protection responsibilities by adhering to the requirements of the [Defence Youth Safety Framework \(DYSF\)](#) and the policies contained in the [Youth Policy Manual \(YOUTHPOLMAN\)](#).

1.7 The [YOUTHPOLMAN Glossary](#) provides definitions applicable to this policy.

1.8 The ADF Cadets program is to ensure that all activities and events are conducted in a manner consistent with relevant Defence policies and the policies contained in the YOUTHPOLMAN<sup>1</sup>.

1.9 The resources located on YouthHQ provide information and contact details regarding the types of support and counselling services, such as Sexual Misconduct Prevention Response Office (SeMPRO) or the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

**Principle 1- Cadets are supported to behave in a manner that is safe, inclusive and respectful of others and promotes the goals of the ADF cadets program.**

1.10 When participating in ADF Cadets activities, all cadets are encouraged to develop an understanding of the balance between personal freedoms and choices and the responsibilities associated with being a member of the ADF Cadets.

1.11 ADF Cadets encourages all members to feel confident to speak up against and report incidents of inappropriate/unacceptable behaviour.

1.12 The ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Youth) is a component of the organisation's approach to youth safety. It describes the behaviour standards expected to be observed and demonstrated by all cadets.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT (YOUTH)**

1.13 The behaviour exhibited by cadets is to be consistent with the behavioural requirements stipulated in the ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Youth), other YOUTHPOLMAN policies and relevant Cadet Organisation procedures. The ADF Cadets organisations are to ensure that all cadets:

- a. have provided a signed copy of the ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Youth) and that this document is recorded on CadetNet.
- b. are made aware that the standards of behaviour set out in the ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Youth) apply during ADF Cadets 'contact' hours and whenever a cadet's behaviour has the potential to impact on their ADF Cadets program or the broader Defence organisation. This may include social functions involving fellow ADF Cadets members and activities on social media.

1.14 Failure to comply with the policies contained in the YOUTHPOLMAN and/or the ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Youth) may result in, where applicable:

- a. a report being made to the cadets parent/guardians.
- b. members being withdrawn from participation in activities.
- c. cancellation of membership of the ADF Cadets.
- d. a report to the police and/or the relevant state or territory child and youth protection authority.

### **Principle 2 - Appropriate Cadet behaviour is promoted through positive and proactive role models and access to appropriate learning and development opportunities.**

1.15 The ADF Cadets are to ensure that all activities are to be led by trained and experienced Officers of Cadets (OOC) and Instructors of Cadets (IOC) with the appropriate knowledge, skills and competencies to apply the principles in this policy through the completion of training appropriate to their role and responsibility.

1.16 All adults working with young people are acting in a position of trust and young people, cadets particularly, are likely to view both Defence and Cadet adults as role models and as such adults have a responsibility to behave:

- a. with the best interests of cadets in mind at all times;
- b. with integrity – acting honestly, respectfully and courteously at all times and not allowing mateship and/or familiarity to be misused to cover up bad behaviour or bring the organisation into disrepute; and

- c. in a way that encourages young people and adults alike to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviours considered inappropriate, unacceptable and/or unsafe.

### **Principle3 – ADF Cadets respond promptly, seriously, with fairness and sensitivity to any incident or allegation of unacceptable behaviour**

1.17 Unacceptable behaviour is behaviour that is unlawful, discriminatory or harassing and includes behaviour that is violent, offensive, belittling, abusive or threatening to another person or property which has the potential to adversely affect individuals, team morale, discipline and/or cohesion.

1.18 Unacceptable behaviour is not tolerated by Defence or the ADF Cadets. Unacceptable behaviour is considered a breach of the ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Youth) and will be managed in accordance with the ADF Cadets Membership Management policy and the relevant Cadet Organisation procedure.

1.19 Misbehaviour will be addressed by the supervising Unit Commander, Officer or Instructor of Cadets and may be reported to the relevant Cadet Organisation headquarters.

1.20 Defence and the ADF Cadets will ensure the principles of procedural fairness are upheld throughout the complaints and decision-making processes in relation to membership.

## **REPORTING AND MANAGEMENT OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR**

1.21 ADF Cadets are to provide parents and guardians with information about complaint handling and resolution. This will equip parents/guardians to act as effective advocates for the young person, who may prefer that an adult makes a complaint on their behalf.

1.22 All reports of unacceptable behaviour made by young people or their parents/guardians are to be taken seriously and managed fairly, transparently and equitably in accordance with policy contained in YOUTHPOLMAN and the respective Cadet Organisation procedure.

1.23 The Cadet organisations must ensure that all Defence, Cadet Adults and Cadets (including Cadets over the age of 18) are aware of their responsibility to report any disclosures or concerns of harm relating to any young person in accordance with the Defence Youth Safety Incident Management policy and the Incident Management Guide.

## **PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

1.24 While conducting its activities and programs, Defence gathers and retains personal information about ADF Cadets members and participants. This personal information is regulated by a number of laws, with personal information held by the Commonwealth regulated by the *Privacy Act 1988*.

1.25 Information may be shared with third parties when it is considered to be in the best interests of the young person's safety, health and /or wellbeing. The ADF Cadets must ensure that a decision in respect to the disclosure of information to a third party is in accordance with the Disclosure of certain personal information in relation to youth safety incidents policy contained in YOUTHPOLMAN.

1.26 It is important to maintain appropriate levels of privacy and confidentiality. Individual's making decisions are to consider what information is shared, with whom and when. All decisions about sharing information should be made with the individual's explicit consent (or parental consent for

young people unable to give explicit consent). Information should only be shared with those who have an appropriate reason to know and be limited to what they need to know. Guidance on the disclosure of personal information can be found on the YOUTH HQ website.

**Accountable Officer:**                    **The Vice Chief of the Defence Force**

**Policy Officer:**                         **Head Reserve and Youth Division**

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<sup>i</sup> Part 1- Defence Youth safety Risk Management, Defence Youth safety Incident Management, Relationships between Defence and ADF Cadets adults and young people under the age of 18, Disclosure of Certain Personal Information, Defence Youth Safety – Use of Social Media, Defence Youth Programs Alcohol , Tobacco and Prohibited Substances, Defence Youth Programs Diversity and Inclusion.

Part 2 – ADF Cadets Youth safety, ADF Cadets Youth Safe Behaviour (Youth and Adults), ADF Cadets Complaint Resolution, ADF Cadets WHS, ADF Cadets Rehabilitation and Compensation, ADF Cadets Defence Weapons, ADF Cadets Firearms, ADF Cadets Military-Like Activities ADF Cadets Use of Defence Road Transport Assets, ADF Cadets Enterprise Security and Activities at SAFEbase Charlie.