

AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE CADETS DEFENCE WEAPONS

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The use of Australian Defence Force weapons (Defence weapons) for approved activities is a distinguishing feature of the Australian Defence Force Cadets (ADF Cadets) as a youth development program, and among the features of the scheme that attract young people who are interested in military matters.

1.2 Defence weapons are used to develop safety, discipline, competence, confidence and team work skills, through a logical staged sequence of familiarisation, to a stage where cadets can confidently participate in live firing on a controlled Defence or Defence-approved civilian range; and/or in ceremonial activities that may involve the firing of blank ammunition. (They are used to inculcate pride and respect).

1.3 All Defence weapons activities must have the cadets' best interests (including their physical, psychological and emotional wellbeing) as the primary consideration, and must comply with Work Health and Safety and Defence Youth Safety standards.

POLICY INTENT

1.4 This policy provides direction and guidance on the use of Defence weapons, and associated equipment and ammunition. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the ADF Cadets Military-Like Activities policy, the Defence Security Manual (DSM), and the Defence Training Area Management Manual (DTAMM), and has been developed in accordance with Australia's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. This policy excludes Cadet Firearms, which are covered by a separate policy.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

1.5 The principles that underpin this policy are:

1.6 Principle 1 - Access to and use of Defence weapons and ammunition by ADF Cadets members is in accordance with Defence policy and procedures.

POLICY PRACTICES AND MEASURES

1.7 **Principle 1 - Access to and use of Defence weapons and ammunition by ADF Cadets members is in accordance with Defence policy and procedures.**

1.8 Activities involving the use of Defence weapons by ADF Cadets members must only be conducted by ADF members and ADF Cadets Officers of Cadets (OOC) and Instructors or Cadets (IOC) who are:

- a. qualified and permitted to conduct Defence weapons activities members in accordance with Defence policy and relevant Cadet organisation procedures
- b. ADF members who are currently qualified to use the weapon in accordance with their parent Service's requirements, may conduct Defence weapons activities for ADF Cadets members in their capacity as an OOC or IOC.

1.9 ADF Cadets range practices must comply with the requirements of:

- a. LWP-G 7-3-1 Australian Defence Force Range Orders (Land) (LWP-G 7-3-1)

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- b. Safe Handling of Service Weapons Training (for civilians)
- c. Standing Orders applicable to the range on which the practice is fired as issued by:
 - (1) Directorate of Operations and Training Area Management for Estate and Infrastructure Group-managed ranges and Non-Defence Training Areas (NDTA); and
 - (2) range operators for all other ranges.
- d. authorised ADF procedures for the weapon(s) and practice being fired.

1.10 ADF Cadets members must complete the weapons and explosive ordnance training courses if they are handling, storing or transporting bulk weapons and/or bulk ammunition.

USE OF DEFENCE WEAPONS MUST BE ON AUTHORISED RANGES

ADF Cadets members must only live-fire approved weapons at Defence ranges or non-Defence ranges certified to allow the ammunition being used, which may include:

- a. Defence-approved NDTA (e.g. civilian rifle ranges/gun clubs); and
- b. Royal Australian Navy (RAN) ships, with the approval of the Commanding Officer of the ship.

1.11 A civilian range is considered Defence-approved when the requirements specified in the DTAMM have been met. Approved non-Defence ranges are certified and may only be used while their Certificate of Range Safety Compliance remains current.

APPROVED ACTIVITIES

1.12 ADF Cadets members may use the following Defence weapons for Defence-approved live-fire practices:

- a. family of F88 weapons and other small arms approved for live-firing by the relevant Directors-General Cadets and COMD AAC.¹

1.13 Subject to the requirements of this policy, ADF Cadets may participate in Weapons Training Simulation Systems (WTSS) practices, using all small arms (including pistols and light support weapons) that have been adapted for WTSS use. The use of bayonets by ADF Cadets members is prohibited, other than for ceremonial purposes.

1.14 Subject to the requirements of this policy, ADF Cadets may use approved small arms of other nations when participating in international competitions or activities that have been approved by their Service Chief.

1.15 Participation in ADF Cadets activities involving the use of Defence weapons is completely voluntary for all ADF Cadets members. Non-participation in an activity that involves the use of Defence weapons is not a prerequisite for involvement in the ADF Cadets program however there may be individual activities or courses where the use of a weapon is a requirement.

¹ Directors-General Cadets includes the Director-General Australian Navy Cadets and the Director-General Australian Air Force Cadets. Commander AAC is appointed.

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1.16 Before participating in a Defence weapons activity, a cadet who is under 18 years of age must have the written consent of their parent/guardian to participate. Such consent may be given or withdrawn at the time of initial enrolment, and/or prior to participating in a particular Defence weapons activity.

1.17 A cadet under 18 years of age who is recognised as living independently under applicable State/Territory legislation may in accordance with ADF Cadet procedures seek approval from the relevant Director-General and COMD AAC or their delegate for exemption from the requirement for parental consent, and the Director-General Cadets and COMD AAC or their delegate may give such approval.

FAMILIARISATION ACTIVITIES

1.18 Subject to any additional procedures, ADF Cadets members may fire Defence weapons in a familiarisation activity or practice if they:

- a. have parental consent (where required) in accordance with this policy
- b. display a level of maturity acceptable to the ADF Cadets Chain of Command
- c. have completed their initial induction training
- d. are fit and able to handle a Defence weapon
- e. are under the direct supervision of qualified ADF members and/or OOC and/or IOC, in accordance with relevant Defence and ADF Cadets procedures applicable to such activities or practice
- f. have completed the minimum training requirements for participation in a familiarisation activity or practice for the weapon, as specified by the relevant cadet organisation procedure.

QUALIFICATION SHOOTS

1.19 Subject to any additional ADF Cadets procedures, ADF Cadets members may fire Defence weapons in a qualification shoot if they:

- a. have parental consent (where required) in accordance with this policy
- b. display a level of maturity acceptable to the ADF Cadets chain of command
- c. are fit and able to handle a Defence weapon
- d. have completed their initial induction training and at least one year of cadet service
- e. have completed the requisite Defence weapon training in accordance with the relevant weapon manual and as specified by the relevant cadet organisation procedure
- f. comply with the requirements of Safe Handling of Service Weapons Training (for civilians).

USE OF SIMILAR WEAPONS OF DEFENCE FORCES OF OTHER NATIONS IN APPROVED INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

1.20 ADF Cadets members may use approved small arms of other nations in international competitions or activities, provided that:

- a. the member is eligible to use a similar type of weapon under this policy
- b. the Service Chief or their delegate has approved the activity

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- c. the member has been briefed and has displayed, to the satisfaction of a qualified operator of the weapon, a suitable understanding of the safe handling and operation of the weapon before undertaking the activity
- d. in the case of cadets, they have parental consent, or
- e. a cadet under 18 years of age who is recognised as living independently under applicable State/Territory legislation has in accordance with ADF Cadets procedures sought approval from the Director-General Cadets and COMD AAC for exemption from the requirement for parental consent, and the Director-General Cadets and COMD AAC has given such approval.

RANGE SENTRIES

1.21 An OOC or IOC may be appointed as a Range Sentry by the Officer in Charge of the range practice. The OOC or IOC is to be briefed on the duties of a sentry, in accordance with the relevant Range Standing Orders, and acknowledge receipt of the brief in writing by initialling the master range instruction.

1.22 Cadets cannot perform as range sentries.

RECORDS OF DEFENCE WEAPONS TRAINING

1.23 A record of all Defence weapons training completed by an ADF Cadets member forms part of the member's general ADF Cadets record.

TARGETS

1.24 Cadets participating in live-fire or WTTS practices must not use targets that are representative of humans or animals.

1.25 For WTSS practices, ADF Cadets members must use only:

- a. the approved family of F88 weapons Cadet practices
- b. other approved small arms practices.

1.26 Cadets may not participate in any WTTS Computer Generated Imagery scenario, other than the 'falling plate' practice.

AMMUNITION

1.27 Only Defence-approved ammunition, supplied through the Defence supply system, is to be used.

1.28 For approved ceremonial activities, only blank ammunition may be used with the family of F88 weapons, subject to any additional ADF Cadets organisation procedures. The activity must be conducted under the supervision of ADF personnel or OOC/IOC qualified on the family of F88 weapons in accordance with LWP-G 7-3-1 Australian Defence Force Range Orders (Land) and the activity must comply with Safe Handling of Service Weapons Training (for civilians).

SOURCING, HANDLING AND TRANSPORTING DEFENCE WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION

1.29 Ammunition must be requested, handled and acquitted in accordance with Defence policy and ADF Cadets procedures.

1.30 Defence weapons and ammunition must be stored and transported in accordance with the provisions of Defence Explosive Ordnance Publications 101 (eDEOP 101) and DSM for the management and safety of explosive ordnance activities.

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1.31 Loss or theft of, or other incidents concerning, a Defence weapon and/or associated equipment, must be reported in accordance with the DSM, eDEOP 101 and ADF Cadets procedures.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

SERVICE CHIEFS

1.32 The Service Chiefs are responsible for approving the use of weapons of other Nations' Defence Forces for approved international competitions, in accordance with this policy.

DIRECTORS-GENERAL CADETS AND COMMANDER AAC

- 1.33 The Directors-General Cadets and COMD AAC are responsible for:
- a. approving small arms other than the family of F88 weapons for live-firing by ADF Cadets, under this policy
 - b. specifying the minimum training requirement for participation in a familiarisation practice or a qualification shoot under this policy
 - c. ensuring compliance with applicable publications such as Standing Orders and LWP-G 7-3-1.

RELATED INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict

Accountable Officer: Chief Joint Capability

Policy Officer: Head Reserve and Youth Division

