

DEFENCE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM GOVERNANCE

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Defence Work Experience Program (DWEPP) provides Australians interested in Defence as a future career with the opportunity to sample life in Defence and learn more about the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the Australian Public Service (APS).
- 1.2 The 2016 Defence White Paper identifies DWEPP as a strategic attraction tool and recognises it's in Defence's interests to engage proactively with youth, to enable us to attract the right people, with the right skills, behaviours and attitudes in order to build Defence's future capability.
- 1.3 Defence determines the number, timing and types of DWEPP placements on offer, taking into account factors such as the availability of resources, workloads and operational requirements.
- 1.4 The DWEPP is part of Reserve and Youth Division (RYD) within the Joint Capabilities Group (JCG). A network of regionally based work experience liaison officers (WELOs) facilitate the creation of national placements which constitute safe, activity-based learning opportunities.
- 1.5 Defence commanders and managers are encouraged to support the DWEPP and where possible offer placements in their units and groups.

POLICY INTENT

- 1.6 This policy provides direction and guidance to Defence personnel (including work experience supervisors) and external and outsourced service providers (where this is a term of their contract with Defence) on the governance of the DWEPP.
- 1.7 Defence facilitates the provision of DWEPP placements in order to:
- a. foster community awareness of Defence as an employer of choice offering a wide variety of career opportunities; and
 - b. contribute to the broader national objective of providing young Australians with opportunities to develop and gain confidence as they transition into the workplace.
- 1.8 This policy does not apply to the work experience placements delivered by external and outsourced service providers. These placements are negotiated between those providers and the educational institution.
- 1.9 Additional guidance for Units and Supervisors such as information on risk management, work experience agreements and approved/prohibited activities will be provided by the WELOs as a component of the placement and must be read in conjunction with this policy.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- 1.10 The DWEPP governance regime focusses on consistent application of youth safety policies, procedures and practices across Defence and aligns with the broader legislative framework in which Defence operates.

Defence recognises:

- a. its legal duty of care to ensure reasonable steps are taken for the safety of Defence members and DWEP participants;
- b. the requirements for a higher standard of care on the part of the Commonwealth from Defence members for DWEP participants under the age of 18;
- c. statutory obligation under the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) which requires all Defence personnel and external service providers, to take all reasonably practicable steps to protect the health and safety of workers. For the purposes of this policy, all persons participating in DWEP placements and activities are considered as workers under the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#);
- d. its obligations under Australia's ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990) that sets out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of children and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts (2002). Signatories to the Conventions must take "all feasible measures to ensure members of their armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in hostilities";
- e. the requirement to comply with commonwealth and state and territory laws and various state and territory child protection legislation related to work experience placements and 'Working with Children Checks' (WWCC); and
- f. its information management requirements through adherence to the [Records Management Policy Manual](#) and the [Privacy Act 1988](#).

GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

- 1.11 Good governance means that there are organisational systems in place to ensure achievement of positive youth experiences and outcomes which focus on:
- a. overall safety and wellbeing of young people by providing for their physical and mental wellbeing, with due consideration of age, maturity, circumstance and situation; and
 - b. the importance of providing safe and protective environments for young people who interact with Defence.

POLICY PRACTICE AND MEASURES

1.12 The Defence Work Experience Program aims to provide diverse, equitable and inclusive allocations of placements and in doing so implement appropriate strategies to support, encourage and value participant's access to DWEP activities.

1.13 DWEP is committed to delivering activities that are safe, positive and inclusive of all people regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, cultural background or ability. DWEP aims to deliver placements that respect the value, needs and rights of all people.

1.14 DWEP is managed in a manner consistent with this policy and the policies contained in the [YOUTHPOLMAN](#).

1.15 The [YOUTHPOLMAN Glossary](#) provides definitions related to this policy.

DEFENCE YOUTH SAFETY

1.16 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. To achieve this Defence has developed and implemented the Defence Youth Safety Framework (DYSF) which is underpinned by the principles in the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020. This policy together with the specific resources located on [YouthHQ](#) outlines this commitment.

1.17 All states and territories have relevant legislative requirements on the mandatory reporting of incidents of suspected child abuse. The legal onus is on whoever is deemed to have a mandatory requirement to report such incidents; how and to what body differs by jurisdiction.

1.18 Defence requires all Defence personnel, contractors, volunteers, visitors, and other adults involved in DWEP, to report in accordance with the legislation of the jurisdiction in which an incident occurs.

1.19 All youth safety incidents are to be reported and managed in accordance with Defence Incident Reporting and Management Manual, [Defence Youth Safety Incident Management policy and Incident Management Guide \(YOUTH POLMAN P1\)](#).

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ADULTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

1.20 Defence considers those adults who have, or assume, responsibility for the care and supervision of a young person as owing them a special duty of care ¹as detailed in Defence Youth Safety policy, *Relationships between adults and youth under 18*.

1.21 Regardless of individual state or territory legislation that defines age of consent, Defence does not tolerate any sexual or physical interaction between adults and persons under the age of 18.

1.22 Defence Host units will ensure that interactions and relationships between adults and young people are managed in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Defence Youth Safety Framework and the policies contained in [YOUTH POLMAN](#).

YOUTH SAFETY TRAINING

1.23 Defence Host units must ensure that all Defence personnel and adult supervisors complete the mandatory Defence Youth Safety training as identified in the Defence Youth Safety Framework (DYSF) Training Continuum:

- a. Level 1 - Awareness - All Defence
- b. Level 2 - Practitioner - Youth Facing Roles
- c. Level 3 - Leader - Responsible Officers and Placement Leaders.

WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS

1.24 DWEP placements fall into one of three categories: secondary, tertiary and alternate. They comprise short-term, voluntary periods of unpaid work undertaken at a Defence establishment by a DWEP participant.

¹ Duty of Care. In the context of Defence Youth Safety means the duty to take reasonable care to protect those children and/or young people from a reasonably foreseeable risk of harm.

To be considered eligible DWEP applicants must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. be enrolled in an Australian secondary school or higher education facility (at the time of the placement); and
- b. be a minimum of 15 years of age or older.

1.25 Alternative DWEP placements refer to applicants (either over or under 18 years of age) who do not fit within either the secondary or tertiary placement criteria. Applicants may have completed their studies, be employed or unemployed. Applicants will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

1.26 Due to the nature of activities undertaken at some hosting units, participants may require a baseline security clearance. The WELO can assist with this process.

1.27 DWEP placements at establishments are subject to a written DWEP agreement between the Defence Unit, the educational institution (where applicable) and the DWEP participant. Where DWEP participants are minors (eg under 18 years of age), their parent/guardian must give written consent by also signing the agreement. The DWEP placement agreements must comply with relevant Defence policy and commonwealth, state or territory legislation and child protection laws.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.28 The DWEP is managed by RYD within the JCG. Head RYD is responsible for maintaining the DWEP governance framework and ensuring the DWEP operates safely and appropriately and minimises the commonwealth's exposure to liability and litigation.

1.29 Director Youth (DY) has overall responsibility for the management and allocation of DWEP resources, annual program budgets, the annual report and WELO performance management. DY and the Assistant Director DWEP will advocate and represent the DWEP in the wider Defence youth engagement and development context.

1.30 The WELOs assist in the management and co-ordination of the regional aspects of this nation-wide program. This includes working with a network of regionally based Defence personnel to enhance and deliver interesting and engaging work experience opportunities that showcase employment in the ADF and APS.

1.31 The Head of Resident Unit (HRU) or authorised officer is responsible for the overall management and implementation of the individual unit or branch work experience program.

1.32 Units must conduct and submit a risk assessment and a management plan to the relevant WELO prior to placements occurring.

1.33 The risk assessment must address [Defence Youth Safety Risk](#) aspects and include:

- a. risk identification and analysis;
- b. development of risk management and mitigation strategies; and
- c. the regular monitoring of identified risks in accordance with the DYSF.

1.34 Key youth safety risks to be considered include:

- a. involvement of unsuitable people (adults and/or youth) in DWEP activities;
- b. development of inappropriate relationships of trust between adults associated with DWEP activities and youth under the age of 18; and
- c. exposure of young people under the age of 18 to alcohol and/or prohibited substances and/or age inappropriate materials of any sort.

- 1.35 Where the unit has appointed a DWEP supervisor(s), they must:
- a. ensure they understand the goals and expected outcomes of the DWEP placement and their requirement to provide feedback to the HRU or authorised officer;
 - b. supervise the DWEP participant, taking into account the participant's age, skills and experience;
 - c. as a delegate, undertake any of the roles and duties of the HRU or authorised officer as directed; and
 - d. complete the relevant mandatory Defence Youth Safety training.

INSURANCE AND LIABILITY

1.36 The Educational Institution (EI) must sign the DWEP agreement, provide emergency contact details and notify Defence (via the signed Agreement) of any individuals who have medical or other conditions that may affect their ability to participate in the Work Experience placement.

1.37 Secondary and tertiary placements. Each State and Territory has different requirements in relation to work experience insurance and liability issues. As a minimum, the applicant's educational institution must have:

- a. insurance cover against injury or death for the DWEP participant, while they are taking part in the DWEP; and
- b. public liability insurance to compensate for any damage to property (Defence and third party) caused by the participant while they are taking part in the DWEP.

1.38 Alternative placements. DWEP participants who are accepted for work experience under the category of alternative placement will be considered to be a 'voluntary worker' for insurance purposes and as such, covered by Defence insurance policies.

CONFIDENTIALITY

1.39 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 in the [YOUTHPOLMAN P1](#).

PRIVACY

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

1.41 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. DWEP must ensure that a decision relating 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](#).

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](#)

RELATED POLICY

[The Youth Policy Manual \(YOUTHPOLMAN\)](#)

[Defence Youth Safety Framework Resources](#)

- Defence Youth Safety Code of Conduct Guide
- Defence Youth Safety Training Guide
- Incident Management guide
- Incident Management – State and Territory Contact Information guide
- Defence Youth Safety Risk Management Guide
- Recognising Indicators of Abuse Guide
- Understanding Sex and Gender
- Defence Youth Safety Prohibition of Sexual Interactions with Young People Fact Sheet
- Using social media safely
- What do I need to know about safe social networking
- Defence Decision makers' guide
- Supplement to the Defence Decision Maker's Guide for the Disclosure of Certain Personal information of Young People under 18
- Defence Youth Safety Privacy Fact Sheet

[Diversity at Defence](#)

Accountable Officer: Chief of Joint Capabilities

Policy Officer: Head Reserve and Youth Division