



Australian Defence Force Cadets Youth Membership Management Guide for Community Based Units

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

This guide explains what young people in community based units can expect from Defence and the ADF Cadets program, and what Defence expects from young people.

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

The ADF Cadets youth development program is community-based and supported by Defence to deliver activities focussed on Defence customs, traditions and values. The ADF Cadets is the collective title for the three individual cadet organisation's known as the Australian Navy Cadets (ANC), Australian Army Cadets (AAC) and the Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC)

Membership of the ADF Cadets enables young people and adults alike 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 equip them for life¹.

1. INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT

Defence is committed to delivering coordinated, coherent and well governed youth activities that are safe, positive and inclusive of all young people, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or ability. In delivering this commitment Defence and the ADF Cadets aims to provide positive and safe youth development experiences, respecting the value and dignity of all people, and recognising the particular rights and needs of young people.

2. HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This Guide has been designed to make it easier to learn about the ADF Cadets program. The guide can help those who are new to ADF Cadets and encourage those who are experienced to learn more. There is so much jargon out there that the meaning of words is often lost, and terms like Gen X or tweens become meaningless and out-of-date almost as soon as they are printed. In an effort to avoid that trap, this guide sticks to simple terms. Here is how age-related words are defined for use in this guide:

- Young person. A person who is under 18 years of age. In the Defence Youth program, the terms child, young person, youth and minor are equivalent and interchangeable.
- Cadet. A young person enrolled as a cadet in the ANC, AAC and the AAFC.
- Parent. Is any person having parental responsibility or guardianship of a young person under the age of 18. This includes legal guardians, responsible third parties and/or specified next of kin.
- The term parent/guardian/family are equivalent and used interchangeably in this guide.

This guide informs young people and adults about being a member of the ADF Cadets program. The following section begins with the ADF Cadets purpose and structure and the guide carefully details different aspects of the ADF Cadets program.

3. ADF CADETS PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE

The ADF Cadets is made up of three organisations:

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

The ADF Cadets have overlapping values and achieve similar youth development outcomes for young people. Each cadet organisation has distinctive and separate approaches and organisational cultures based on their parent service of Navy, Army or Air Force. Cadet units occupy facilities in Defence establishments, Defence-owned or leased buildings, schools, and buildings leased by individual units – so there is bound to be one near you.

¹ Note: Membership in the ADF Cadets is not considered a prerequisite for acceptance into the Australian Defence Force.





Cadets learn leadership, team building and survival skills and are supervised by adult volunteers known as Officers of Cadets (OOC) and Instructors of Cadets (IOC). These people are drawn from the local community and have been screened to meet certain suitability requirements to ensure your safety and wellbeing.

Each Cadet organisation has its own fee structure, or charges for certain events like camps/bivouacs. They also raise extra funds through fundraising activities or contributions. Some Units accept enrolments at any time of the year, while others have specific enrolment periods.

- **Australian Navy Cadets.** Offer adventure activities like sailing, hiking, canoeing and camping. Cadets learn everything about seamanship from maritime navigational training, knot tying and ropes handling to Naval signals and communication.
- **Australian Army Cadets.** Cadets are involved in action and adventure activities such as camping, abseiling, navigation and learn basic skills like bush survival, first aid and fieldcraft.
- **Australian Air Force Cadets.** Offer aviation activities such as flying, gliding, aerospace studies, communications and navigation. Cadets learn about air traffic control, aeromodelling, aircraft engineering, orienteering and map reading.

Information can be found by visiting the Defence Youth website [YOUTH HQ](#).

4. MILITARY-LIKE ACTIVITIES

Military-Like Activities are a distinguishing feature of the ADF Cadets program. Cadets participate in ceremonial activities, military-like drills, skills and procedures. Participation in these activities is voluntary and is not a prerequisite for military service in the Australian Defence Force.

- The Australian Navy Cadets (ANC) supported by the Royal Australian Navy, provides a focus on the many aspects of maritime activities and seamanship.
- The Australian Army Cadets (AAC) supported by the Australian Army, provides a focus on land activities in an Army setting.
- The Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC) supported by the Royal Australian Air Force provides a focus on aviation related activities.

5. KEEPING CADETS SAFE

Defence and the ADF Cadets program have important responsibilities to keep cadets safe and protected from harm. Defence has developed a Youth Safety Framework and created policies which can be found in the [Defence Youth Policy Manual](#) (YOUTH POLMAN) and on the Defence Youth Website [YOUTH HQ](#).

6. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND OBLIGATIONS

Parents/family can be involved in the program. The support of parents and family in cadet activities is highly valued, so that we all maintain a safe, harmonious and happy environment for every member parents will be expected to model acceptable behaviour and approach others in the cadet unit with respect and courtesy. As visitors to the cadet unit parents and family members are expected to

- a. tell the Officers and Instructors of Cadets OOC / (IOC) about any changes or issues relating to the cadets living arrangements, emergency contacts, address, custody arrangements (if applicable), and/or health issues.
- b. make sure cadets arrive to their unit on time and are not late picking cadets up at the end of the cadet activity.
- c. make appointments with unit OOC/IOC to discuss any issues or concerns.
- d. behave appropriately in the presence of other people this includes, volunteers, other young people, parents and/or visitors to the cadet unit. For example offensive, abusive language (i.e. swearing) is not acceptable.





7. ADF CADETS MEMBERSHIP

To enrol as a cadet you must:

- be a resident of Australia
- if you are waiting for resident status talk to your local unit OOC/IOC and they can provide you with specific advice.
- find the [location of your nearest Unit](#) and contact the OOC/IOC during the hours the Unit meets.

Information regarding the minimum age bracket for joining the ADF Cadets is located on the <https://www.cadetnet.gov.au/>

A signed application form must be provided to the local cadet unit OOC/IOC. He/she will:

- arrange an interview with you and/or your parent/guardian.
- The interview is an opportunity for to discuss the activities and the commitment needed and to ask questions about the program.
- It is also a great opportunity to provide additional such as individual health plans and/or/care plans.

Note: All the information collected by Defence for the purpose of enrolling as a cadet will be treated in accordance with the [Defence Privacy Policy and the Privacy Act 1988](#).

8. COMMITMENT AND ATTENDANCE

The success of the ADF Cadets program depends on the commitment and reliability of everyone involved. Cadets are expected to:

- show commitment by attending activities for a reasonable period of time.
- show a keen interest in participation and are punctual to cadet activities.

9. ACCEPTANCE AS A CADET

A letter of '*Membership Acceptance*' will be provided to successful applicants along with a logon to the ICT System used by the ADF Cadets known as CadetNet. Passwords must be protected and only used for Cadet tasks and activities.

10. BEHAVIOUR AND THE YOUTH CODE OF CONDUCT

The ADF Cadets has high standards of honesty and integrity which stresses the importance of treating everyone fairly, ethically and with respect and dignity. Cadets model their individual cadet organisation values. The following qualities and behaviours are common in all cadets, past and present.

*Respect, Integrity, Courage, Improvement and Initiative
and Teamwork*

The ADF Cadets have expectations of cadets to display these qualities. The Code of Conduct describes each of these qualities. Cadets will be required to sign the Code of Conduct (Youth) to demonstrate their understanding of the consequences of breaching the code of conduct, for example misbehaviour may result in the cadet being removed from an activity and possibly being excluded from future activities.

Parents will also be asked to sign the Code of Conduct, so that they also understand the behaviour expectations of cadets and the consequences of breaching the code of conduct.

Talk to the unit OOC/IOC and they will be able to provide more information about the code of conduct (YOUTH).





11. WITHDRAWAL/CANCELLATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Participation in the ADF Cadets program is voluntary and cadets can leave at any time. you should let the OOC/IOC know at the earliest possible time, this makes it easier to offer a place in the cadet unit to someone else.

Membership can be cancelled if cadets:

- a. behave in a way that is a risk to the safety and wellbeing of another person.
- b. breach the ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Youth).
- c. fail to complete your youth safety training requirements.
- d. display inappropriate interaction with other young people under the age of 18.
- e. display insufficient commitment to the program or are consistently absent without explanation.

If membership is cancelled, the unit OOC/IOC will expect the return of Defence issued identity card, name badge, uniform and/or any other property/equipment owned by Defence or the ADF Cadets program.

12. ENROLLING IN A DIFFERENT CADET ORGANISATION

If membership has been cancelled individuals may not be able to enrol in any other cadet organisation. Check the requirements with the relevant cadet program before submitting an application. The application will be treated as a new application and applicants will be asked to have an interview with OOC/IOC of the new cadet unit before your application is considered.

13. CEREMONIAL

As a cadet your unit may participate in ceremonial parades such as those held on days of national significance such as ANZAC Day and Freedom of the City marches.

14. PERSONAL SECURITY

When attending cadet unit parades/activities cadets must sign the attendance sheet. Cadets are covered under the Government Insurer Comcare while participating in ADF Cadets activities, signing in and out is a critical component of keeping cadets safe.

15. WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

Under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (the Act) everyone associated with ADF Cadets activities, regardless of whether they are Defence personnel, or ADF Cadets members, both adults and cadets, are considered as workers.

16. DRESS CODE AND UNIFORM GUIDELINES

The behaviour and appearance of cadets reflects not just on the cadet organisation but also the cadet organisation's parent Service; this is because 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 cadets, present and act appropriately, particularly when in uniform in public. This means wearing:

- a. a uniform that fits well, not too tight and not too loose, clean, neat and tidy.

Uniforms are supplied at no cost to cadets or families.

17. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Learning and Development opportunities in the ADF Cadets program are provided on the CadetNet system and include specific topics relevant to cadet organisations. As cadets progress through the program they will be provided with ongoing learning and development opportunities. During the course of a cadets participation they will be required to complete certain mandatory training. such as:

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

18. ISSUES AND COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT

Cadets are encouraged to resolve disagreements and issues as early as possible. However, they can raise issues with the unit OOC/IOC; this ensures that the right policies procedures will be followed.





Resources are located on [YOUTH HQ](#).

19. HEALTH MANAGEMENT

Cadets and the family are responsible for ensuring that cadets have an appropriate level of health and fitness to participate in activities and that any health condition is able to be managed properly. Although not every activity may be suitable for, the adults in the program are committed to ensuring that so far as reasonably practicable cadets will be able to participate in activities and enjoy a positive and safe experience.

Prior to enrolment or as required, cadets, parents/guardians should meet with the unit OOC/IOC and discuss individual health condition(s). Parents/guardian may be asked to give their permission for the unit OOC/IOC to inform other responsible adults in the unit about specific health condition/need(s).

This is important to help minimise the risk of having an incident. For example, if a cadet has an allergy that needs special management such as an EpiPen, parents/guardian will be asked to give permission for other adults to know this information.

If cadets wear a medical alert bracelet or other medical alert ID this must be worn whilst at cadet unit parade nights, activities and events.

20. ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

To keep you safe Defence expects all approved ADF Cadets activities where cadets are present are free from alcohol, tobacco and prohibited substances. Cadets are not allowed to consume, possess, supply, buy or use alcohol, tobacco or drugs at cadet activities.

21. ACCEPTING PERSONAL GIFTS

Giving and receiving gifts are often commonplace in everyday life, but a general rule is that adult members of the program must not accept gifts from cadets. They are also not allowed to give a gift because this may be seen as inappropriate behaviour. There may be times that a cadet or cadets family would like to give a token gift of appreciation to an adult volunteer for example a badge, card or chocolates, however these should not become the 'norm' and before giving a gift think about the questions below.

- has the gift been offered publicly or privately?
- is it a 'token' of appreciation or is it a highly valuable item?
- how would others view giving or receiving this gift?

22. PRIVACY AND DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN PERSONAL INFORMATION IN RELATION TO YOUTH SAFETY INCIDENTS

Defence gathers and retains personal information about its members and program participants. This personal information is regulated by the [Privacy Act 1988](#).

The [YOUTH POLMAN policy on The Disclosure of Certain Personal Information in Relation to Youth Safety Incidents](#) provides information about how Defence manages your information and the situations that Defence might decide to disclose information about you to protect your interests or your safety.





RESOURCES

[YOUTH SAFETY GUIDES](#)

- Incident Reporting
- Incident Management guide
- Incident Management – State and Territory Contact Information 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 Youth Safety Privacy Fact Sheet
- Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office (SeMPRO) Tools

Notice:

Cadets are not members of Defence and therefore cannot give any approvals 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 cadets 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 Defence Youth Directorate:
defence.youth@defence.gov.au

