

CHAPTER 1

YOUTH PROTECTION ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Defence has a duty of care to ensure the health, protection and wellbeing of youth. Hazards and risks to the health, protection and wellbeing of youth are to be eliminated or minimised so far as reasonably practicable (SFARP). This includes hazards and risks associated with unacceptable behaviour of adults, other youth, or the youth themselves.

1.1.2 The youth protection requirements of the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework (CCSF) align closely with the elements of a safety management system. Hence, youth protection is managed as a specialist Safety Domain within the Defence Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS).

POLICY INTENT

1.1.3 The intent of this policy is to ensure that the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for youth protection management and resources are defined, communicated and accepted.

1.1.4 Defence youth protection roles, responsibilities and accountabilities policy is consistent with the following [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#):

- a. Principle 1: *Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture*
 - (1) Key Action Area 1.3: *Governance arrangements facilitate implementation of the child safety and wellbeing policy at all levels*

1.1.5 Other Defence publications which may be relevant to this policy include, but are not limited to:

- a. [Defence Instruction Administrative Policy](#), which defines the generic roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of an Accountable Officer and Policy Owner
- b. [Defence WHS Governance Policy](#), which defines the organisational-level WHS roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of Safety Domain Owners, Group Heads and Service Chiefs, commanders, managers, supervisors and workers.

POLICY

YOUTH PROTECTION ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

1.1.6 **Chief of Joint Capabilities.** The Chief of Joint Capabilities (CJC) is appointed the [Accountable Officer](#) and is the [Safety Domain Owner](#) for youth protection. CJC is accountable to the Secretary and Chief of the Defence Force (CDF) for:

- a. providing enterprise-level youth protection policy, guidance and tools for implementation within Group/Service WHSMS
- b. ensuring, in conjunction with Group Heads and Service Chiefs, that adequate resources are provided for effective youth protection management
- c. providing youth protection governance and assurance that Defence meets youth protection obligations.

1.1.7 **Head Joint Support Services Division (HJSSD).** The HJSSD is appointed the [Policy Owner](#) for youth protection. HJSSD is responsible to CJC for:

- a. developing, maintaining and issuing enterprise-level youth protection policy, guidance and tools that are compliant with the CCSF
- b. monitoring and reporting on the implementation of youth protection policy by the Groups/Services.

1.1.8 **Group Heads and Service Chiefs.** Group Heads and Service Chiefs are accountable to the Secretary and CDF for:

- a. extending application of the Group/Service WHSMS where practicable to include youth protection management
- b. contextualised implementation of youth protection policy and guidance defined in this manual within the Group/Service WHSMS where practicable
- c. ensuring, in conjunction with CJC, that adequate resources are provided for effective youth protection management.

1.1.9 **Commanders, managers and supervisors.** Where youth are employed or engaged by or on behalf of a Group or Service, commanders, managers and supervisors must:

- a. extend the scope of their [WHS roles, responsibilities and accountabilities](#) to include youth protection
- b. effectively manage youth protection in accordance with policy and guidance defined in Group/Service youth protection orders, instructions and publications (OIP) and this manual as applicable
- c. ensure that adult workers are aware of their WHS/youth protection responsibilities and comply with youth protection OIP
- d. ensure that youth workers¹ are aware of their WHS/youth protection responsibilities, and consider their age, maturity, understanding, behaviour and ability to make good decisions when conducting WHS/youth protection risk assessments and implementing risk controls.

¹ In the Defence context, Defence members and ADF Cadets under the age of 18 are considered workers under the WHS ACT

Accountable Officer: Chief of Joint Capabilities (CJC)

Policy Owner: Head Joint Support Services Division (HJSSD)