

2022 DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE ANNUAL CHILD SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT AND STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMMONWEALTH CHILD SAFETY FRAMEWORK

Defence does not tolerate abuse or neglect of children and is committed to taking all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of youth with whom it comes into contact through supporting a youth safety culture and the promotion of individual and collective responsibility for youth safety and protection. Defence's commitment is demonstrated in its capstone youth policy manual known as YOUTHPOLMAN and encapsulates parts 1, 2 and 3 which are relevant to the Department, ADF Cadets and the Defence Work Experience Program.

The Department's primary engagement with youth is through participation in the Service Cadet programs that includes 27,800 cadet youth participants and 4400 adult volunteers across 479 locations. Uniformed youth ADF members total less than 200. The majority of interaction is in person.

Defence has developed an enterprise level risk assessment identifying eight risks with the highest rating at medium. All risk controls are within the Departments capacity to address and are, or will be managed so far as reasonably practicable.

In 2022, Defence completed and issued the Defence Youth Protection Assurance Framework that builds on existing Defence WHS risk management and reporting processes to implement the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework and the National Principles of Child Safe Organisations. The framework outlines how Defence will undertake department wide assurance of youth protection and will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains current and reflects emerging requirements and leading practice.

Joint Support Services Division, the Groups and Services will deliver a risk based compliance and assurance model. The model is cyclical and designed for continuous performance monitoring, measurement, analysis, reporting and review to assist the Department in youth protection matters.

Taking into account the unique context of the Department's activities, Defence will:

- require all ADF members, Australian Public Service employees, volunteers including members of the ADF Cadets, and contractors to demonstrate their commitment to youth safety through their agreement to undertake their duties in accordance with the appropriate Defence or ADF Cadet youth safety code of conduct
- complete suitability screening for all adults working with youth in the Defence environment and require all ADF members, APS employees, volunteers including members of the ADF Cadets, and contractors to complete appropriate youth safety education and training
- engage proactively with parents, guardians, specified next of kin and other agencies involved in the protection of young people
- ensure we maintain compliance with Australia's international legal obligations related to children and armed conflict
- maintain clear processes for reporting and responding to disclosures, suspicions and allegations of abuse or neglect in accordance with state and territory legislation.



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