

CHAPTER 1**ADF CADETS MANAGEMENT OF
YOUTH PARTICIPATION****INTRODUCTION**

2.1.1 The effective management of youth in the ADF Cadets is critical to delivering a youth safe environment. The maintenance of accurate, up-to-date information on youth participants, such as health management plans and emergency contact details, is clearly related to good youth safety outcomes. Additionally, clear behavioural standards and expectations provides youth participants with an understanding of their responsibilities within the programs. The effective administration and management of youth participants underpins the Defence Youth Safety Framework (DYSF).

POLICY INTENT

2.1.2 This policy outlines the management and behavioural requirements for participating youth which are common to all ADF Cadets Programs.

2.1.3 Defence and the ADF Cadets fulfil their youth protection responsibilities by adhering to the requirements of the DYSF and the guidance contained in the [Defence Youth Manual](#).

PARTICIPATING IN ADF CADETS

2.1.4 Participating in ADF Cadets provides youth with opportunities to develop skills, leadership and teamwork and inculcate a sense of service to their communities. Qualified and experienced ADF Cadets Adults instruct cadets on the customs, traditions and values of their parent Service. ADF Cadets activities develop skills and behaviours that cultivate a socially responsible attitude to Defence and the Australian community. Participation in ADF Cadets and associated activities is voluntary and is not a prerequisite for acceptance into the ADF.

2.1.5 Defence supports the ADF Cadets in delivering coordinated, coherent and well governed youth activities that are safe, offer a positive experience for youth and are inclusive of all youth, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or ability. Director General Australian Navy Cadets (DGANC), the Commander Australian Army Cadets (COMD AAC) and the Director General Cadets - Air Force (DGCADETS-AF) are to manage restrictions limiting a cadet's involvement in activities, such as religious beliefs, medical condition(s) or any other consideration(s) as notified by the cadet's parent/guardian, in accordance with the guidance contained in the Defence Youth Manual. DGANC, COMD AAC and DGCADETS-AF must ensure that activities that require specific written parental or guardian consent are managed in accordance with the guidance contained in the Defence Youth Manual.

STATUS OF ADF CADETS YOUTHS

2.1.6 All cadets in the ADF Cadets are volunteers as defined in the [Defence Act 1903](#):

- a. Section 62 - the Australian Navy/Air Force Cadets consist of persons who have **volunteered** and been accepted by the Chief of the Defence Force as cadets
- b. Section 62C - 'a cadet is not a member of the Defence Force'
- c. Section 62D - no civil contract of any kind is created with the Crown or the Commonwealth in connection with the acceptance of a person as a cadet in the Cadets.

2.1.7 Youth participation in ADF Cadets is voluntary. Youth participants are not members of the ADF and are not subject to the *Defence Force Discipline Act 1982*.

2.1.8 ADF Cadets Youth participants are deemed to be workers under section 7 of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) (WHS Act) and Defence is deemed to be the employing authority.

2.1.9 Cadets are, under certain conditions, eligible for rehabilitation, compensation and support under the [Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation \(Defence-related Claims\) Act 1988](#) (DRCA) or [Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004](#) (MRCA) (see Section 2, Chapter 6).

JOINING ADF CADETS

2.1.10 The minimum age to apply as a cadet is 12, where the cadet would turn 13 in the calendar year in which they would be accepted. Registration is voluntary with each application processed in accordance with the applicable Service Cadet Program's enrolment process. Cadets may withdraw their application at any time during the enrolment process, in accordance with respective Service Cadet Program's processes.

2.1.11 DGANC, COMD AAC, and DGCADETS-AF or their delegates may waive the age restrictions for individual cadets or specific groups within their respective programs. They may also apply more stringent age limits (for example, a narrower age bracket) to meet specific program requirements and/or outcomes.

2.1.12 A youth must only be a member of one cadet organisation at any time. A cadet whose participation is cancelled may apply to enrol in another ADF Cadets program. In this circumstance, the cadet must indicate in the new application the reason why their participation in the ADF Cadets had been cancelled. Enrolment decisions must

be made by DGANC, COMD AAC, the DGCADETS-AF or their delegates with the decision informed by reviewing the cadet's:

- a. application and the reasons they have ceased participation in their previous cadet organisation
- b. record on CadetNet, including the cadet's attendance and commitment to the previous cadet organisation.

2.1.13 DGANC, COMD AAC or DGCADETS-AF may also apply additional or more stringent restrictions to the cadet's participation (for example, training or supervision).

2.1.14 DGANC, COMD AAC or DGCADETS-AF will provide all parents/guardians with information relating to the requirements of their child's participation including the behavioural expectations of the participant and any family obligations to the respective ADF Cadets program.

2.1.15 Military-Like activities (MLA) are a distinguishing feature of the ADF Cadets program. DGANC, COMD AAC or DGCADETS-AF must take reasonable steps to ensure that all prospective applicants and their parents/guardians are aware that MLA are conducted as part of the cadet program and that participation is voluntary.

2.1.16 DGANC, COMD AAC or DGCADETS-AF are to ensure that on completion of the enrolment process, the young person receives a confirmation of approval of participation.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

2.1.17 DGANC, COMD AAC or DGCADETS-AF will ensure that individuals accepted into a Service Cadet Program are provided with a CadetNet logon identification and that members use the CadetNet system in accordance with the guidance contained in the Section 4, Chapter 4.

2.1.18 DGANC, COMD AAC or DGCADETS-AF will ensure that all members are aware of and adhere to the Use of Social Media in ADF Cadets policy (see Section 4, Chapter 5) and relevant Service Social Media policy.

YOUTH PROTECTION EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2.1.19 DGANC, COMD AAC or DGCADETS-AF must ensure that all cadets under the age of 18 complete the mandatory Defence Youth Protection - Cadet training package as follows:

- a. **Timeframe:** no later than 60 days following the cadet's receipt of their notification of approval of participation
- b. **Delivery:** training can be completed on-line or in a group training setting

- c. **Expiry:** the training package must be completed every three years
- d. **Record of Completion:** training completions are to be uploaded by the cadet's unit into CadetNet within the 60 day timeframe.

2.1.20 ADF cadets aged 18 or over are not required to complete the mandatory Defence Youth Protection – Youth Adult unless their Defence Youth Protection Cadet Course proficiency expires. 2.1.21 **Compliance:** All ADF Cadets Youth are required to complete the relevant Youth Protection training package within the required timeframe. A cadet may attend parade nights/other activities to enable completion of this training. In normal circumstances, a failure to complete this training will exclude a cadet from participation in ADF Cadets activities. By exception, DGANC, COMD AAC or DGCADETS-AF may make risk informed decisions to permit program participation where the training requirement is unable to be met as a result of the individual circumstances relating to the cadet. In consideration of an exemption from completion of youth safety training, DGANC, COMD AAC or DGCADETS-AF should consider all relevant factors to ensure the safety of the Program, which may include the safety of the individual involved, other youth they may interact with, any non-ADF Cadets Adults that may attend in a carer capacity or any other relevant matters to assess any associated risks to youth safety. An exemption may necessitate alternate risk mitigations to be put in place in the form of training, supervision or processes. Where an exception is made, it is to be reported to HRCSD to inform Defence's youth safety understanding.

2.1.22 DGANC, COMD AAC and DGCADETS-AF will establish appropriate procedures for the:

- a. dropping cadets at cadet units;
- b. collecting cadets from cadet units; and
- c. action to be taken for uncollected cadets.

ADF CADETS STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

2.1.23 Defence and the ADF Cadets are committed to promoting the wellbeing of youth and protecting them from unacceptable behaviours with a focus on promoting youth safe behaviour. This will be achieved through:

- a. supporting cadets to behave in a manner that is safe, inclusive and respectful of others and promotes the goals of the ADF Cadets program;
- b. promoting appropriate cadet behaviour through positive and proactive role models and access to appropriate learning and development opportunities; and

- c. ADF Cadets ensuring all youth protection complaints are taken seriously and effectively managed including listening to the youth, responding appropriately/sensitively to the needs of the youth and acting on the information in accordance with relevant Defence Youth Manual guidance.

2.1.24 When participating in ADF Cadets activities, all cadets are encouraged to develop an understanding of the balance between personal freedoms and choices and the responsibilities associated with being a member of the ADF Cadets.

2.1.25 ADF Cadets encourages all members to feel confident to speak up against, and report incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

2.1.26 The ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Youth) is a component of the organisation's approach to youth safety. It describes the behaviour standards to be observed and demonstrated by all cadets. DGANC, COMD AAC or DGCADETS-AF are to ensure that all cadets:

- a. understand, sign and adhere to the ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Youth) and that the signed document is recorded on CadetNet; and
- b. are made aware that the standards of behaviour set out in the ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Youth) apply during ADF Cadets 'contact' hours and whenever a cadet's behaviour has the potential to impact on their ADF Cadets Program or the broader Defence organisation. This includes, but may not be limited to social functions involving fellow ADF Cadets participants and social media activities.

2.1.27 Behaviour exhibited by cadets is to be consistent with the behavioural requirements stipulated in the ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Youth), Defence Youth Manual guidance and relevant ADF Cadets organisation procedures. Failure to comply with this guidance and procedures may result in:

- a. a report being made to the cadet's parent/guardians;
- b. participants being withdrawn from involvement in activities;
- c. cancellation of the cadet's acceptance in the ADF Cadets program; and/or
- d. a report to the police and/or the relevant State or Territory child and youth protection authority.

2.1.28 DGANC, COMD AAC and DGCADETS-AF are to ensure that all activities are to be led by trained OOC and/or IOC.

2.1.29 All adults working with cadets are acting in a position of trust and cadets are likely to view these adults as role models. As such they have a responsibility to behave:

- a. with the best interests of cadets in mind at all times;
- b. with integrity – acting honestly, respectfully and courteously at all times and not allowing mateship and/or familiarity to be misused to cover up unacceptable behaviour or bring the organisation into disrepute;
- c. in a way that encourages young people and adults to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviours considered unacceptable and/or unsafe.

2.1.30 The ADF Cadets will ensure that interactions and relationships between adults and youth are managed in a manner consistent with the requirements of the DYSF and the guidance contained in the Defence Youth Manual.

2.1.31 Unacceptable behaviour in the youth protection context is behaviour that, having regard to all of the circumstances, would be considered unlawful, offensive, belittling, abusive or threatening to youth and/or adverse to their morale, health, safety and wellbeing or otherwise not in the interests of Defence. Unacceptable behaviour has the potential to adversely affect individuals, team morale, discipline and/or cohesion.

2.1.32 Unacceptable behaviour is not tolerated by Defence or the ADF Cadets. Unacceptable behaviour is considered a breach of the ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Youth) and will be managed in accordance with [Part 1, Section 3, Chapter 3](#).

2.1.33 Incidents of unacceptable behaviour will be addressed by the supervising Unit Commander, IOC/OOC and may be reported to the relevant ADF Cadets organisation headquarters.

MANAGEMENT OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

2.1.34 DGANC, COMD AAC and DGCADETS-AF must ensure all unacceptable behaviour is reported and managed in accordance with [Part 1, Section 3, Chapter 3](#).

2.1.35 DGANC, COMD AAC and DGCADETS-AF are to inform all participants of the policy and process for reporting all unacceptable behaviour.

2.1.36 DGANC, COMD AAC and DGCADETS-AF are to provide parents and guardians with information about complaint handling and resolution. This will equip parents/guardians to act as effective advocates for the cadet, who may prefer that an adult makes a complaint on their behalf.

2.1.37 All reports of unacceptable behaviour made by young people or their parents/guardians are to be taken seriously and managed fairly, transparently and equitably in accordance with policy contained in [Part 1, Section 3, Chapter 3](#).

2.1.38 DGANC, COMD AAC and DGCADETS-AF must ensure that all Defence, Cadets Adults and cadets (including cadets over the age of 18) are aware of their responsibility to report any disclosures or concerns of harm relating to any young person in accordance with [Part 1, Section 3, Chapter 3](#).

2.1.39 Part 1, Section 3, Chapter 3 and Guide 8: Defence Youth Protection Event or Incident Management provides information and contact details regarding the types of support and counselling services available to cadets including the Sexual Misconduct Prevention Response Office ([SeMPRO](#)) or the Employee Assistance Program ([EAP](#)).

CEASING PARTICIPATION IN THE ADF CADETS

2.1.40 Ceasing participation in the ADF Cadets may be requested by the cadet or by the respective Service Cadet Program, cancelling the cadet's acceptance.

2.1.41 Cadets may request cancellation of participation in the ADF Cadets at any time, in accordance with respective Service Cadet Program processes, but a cadet is required to cease participation as a cadet no later than 31 December in the calendar year in which they turn 18. The ANC, AAC and AAFC have specific arrangements in place for cadets transitioning into other roles within their cadet organisations.

2.1.42 Cancellation of participation can be initiated by a cadet organisation if a cadet

- a. poses an immediate risk to the safety and wellbeing of another person;
- b. fails to display behaviours in accordance with this policy or breaches the ADF Cadets Code of Conduct (Youth) or the respective cadet organisation parent Service values;
- c. fails to complete youth protection training requirements;
- d. displays unacceptable behaviour outlined in [Part 1, Section 2, Chapter 2](#);
- e. displays a lack of commitment to the program or is consistently absent without notification;
- f. misrepresents Defence or the ADF Cadets; and/or
- g. fails to comply with any reasonable direction given by an IOC or OOC.

2.1.43 Cancellation decisions must be made by DGANC, COMD AAC and DGCADETS-AF or a designated delegate. While there is no legal or policy obligation

to provide procedural fairness, it is important to manage the process of ceasing participation well. Prior to a cadet's participation being cancelled and where appropriate and reasonably practicable, the cadet will be afforded a level of procedural fairness commensurate with their volunteer status. Procedural fairness is characterised as - a decision-maker should not be biased, that the person who is adversely affected by a decision should not be surprised by the decision or by the information that the decision-maker has relied on, and that they have an opportunity to be heard in relation to the matter before the decision is made.

2.1.44 On cessation of participation in the ADF Cadets, the cadet must return their Defence issued identity card, uniform and/or any other property/equipment owned by Defence or the ADF Cadets on or before the last day of their participation.

PRIVACY

2.1.45 While conducting its activities and programs, ADF cadets gathers and retains personal information about its members and participants. Sharing of youth personal and sensitive information relevant to this policy is to be managed in accordance with [Part 1, Section 1, Chapter 2](#) and the [Defence Privacy Policy](#).

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 of Personnel

Policy Owner: Head Reserve and Cadet Support Division