

DEFENCE RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INQUIRY INTO THE LEARNING CULTURE IN ADF SCHOOLS AND TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS

Overview

Defence agrees with 46 of the 47 Learning Culture report recommendations.¹ The focus of the Learning Culture report is on cultural change, a process which will take years to implement. Many of the recommendations address the need to embrace changes in attitudes and outlooks which take time and careful implementation to achieve. A key finding is that “The inquiry team did not find evidence of a culture that supports bullying or harassment.” (Executive Summary paragraph 12). The report indicates that there is substantial room for improvement, but for the most part endorses the existing strategies for changing attitudes and behaviour in Defence.

The report judges: “The Inquiry Team was impressed with the effort being placed on improving the learning culture, and considers that the ADF is a highly professional organisation staffed by committed, loyal and extremely hardworking people. We were also impressed by the emphasis evident across all the ADF training establishments of a values-based approach... There is clear evidence of improvements in behavioural standards in all the training establishments we have visited and of universal knowledge of ADF policies of zero tolerance of bullying and harassment.” (para 104.)

The way ahead: Defence’s implementation strategy for the Learning Culture Inquiry

This Defence implementation strategy for the Learning Culture report sets out how we will give effect to the 47 individual recommendations and how we will address the underlying issues the report highlights. The report’s recommendations necessarily focus on areas the authors believe require improvement, but it should be noted that the recommendations build on a platform that the review team considered to be broadly positive.

Implementing cultural change requires engagement and commitment from senior leaders, a constant focus on making practical change and a willingness to regularly review progress and reassess priorities. To drive home the recommendations outlined in the Learning Culture report Defence proposes to adopt the following eight-step strategy:

- 1. The Chief of the Defence Force (CDF) has directed the Head of the Military Justice Implementation Team (HMJIT), Rear Admiral Mark Bonser, to be the principle coordinator of Defence’s implementation of the Learning Culture report.**
- 2. RADM Bonser will convene a senior working group across the three Services and the wider Defence Organisation to ensure that strategies are being developed**

¹ We do not agree with recommendation 7 which called for one set of articulated values across the organisation. Defence will continue to use the current Defence and single-Service values as the basis for values-based training in the ADF. It should be noted that there is an over-arching set of Defence Values known as PLICIT (an acronym for Professionalism, Loyalty, Integrity, Courage, Innovation, Teamwork), which is endorsed by all elements in the organisation.

against each recommendation of the report and to provide a top-level focus for implementing the recommendations.

3. These implementation strategies, including milestones for achievement, method to promote changes and measures of success, will be agreed by the Chiefs of Service Committee (COSC) early in 2007.

4. HMJIT will provide an abbreviated monthly progress report to COSC in the form of a ‘traffic light’ assessment of our achievement against each recommendation.

5. In addition COSC will take a more detailed six monthly report on achievement of results against the recommendations, with the first such report being provided in the third quarter of 2007.

6. In some cases reports against specific objectives have been commissioned and these are set out below in the responses to the 47 recommendations.

7. Defence achievements against the recommendations will be reported in a specially commissioned section of the Defence Annual report.

8. CDF will commission a more detailed assessment of our assessment against the recommendations in the second half of 2008.

A record of continuous improvement

Defence has actively pursued cultural change in our training system for some years. Even as the Learning Culture Inquiry was underway, Defence had begun a range of programs that reflected the ‘best-practice’ culture encouraged by the Inquiry. Portfolio level training strategies are reflected in Chapter 4 of the *2005/2006 Defence Annual Report*. These strategies address aspects of the Learning Culture Inquiry’s recommendations.

In July 2006, Defence adopted an overarching Defence Workforce Development Framework to ensure that all Defence training and development strategies are coherent, consistent, aligned with capability priorities and make efficient use of resources. This, together with Australian Defence Force Publication (ADFP) 7.0.2 ‘The Defence Training Model’ and Australian Defence Doctrine Publication (ADDP) 7.0 ‘Doctrine and Training’, provides the framework for the oversight, planning and delivery of single-Service training.

Principle 5 of the endorsed Defence Workforce Development Framework – that “*Defence training will be accessible and equitable, and be conducted safely, ethically and in accordance with Defence values*”, addresses the general thrust of the Inquiry’s principal recommendations.

Chapter 2 of ADDP 7.0 further articulates the principles of Defence training under a philosophy of Defence as a ‘Learning Organisation’.

The Learning Culture report and its recommendations are focussed on changing the culture of learning in Defence, and changing an entire culture is a generational process. This means that

proper implementation of many of the agreed Inquiry recommendations will take more than a 'quick-fix' solution, and Defence is making a long-term commitment to these recommendations as a result. This is demonstrated by the specific milestones for implementation actions, particularly those planned or being undertaken in respect of implementing the Government response to the 2005 Senate Committee report on military justice.

THE LEARNING CULTURE

Recommendation 1

The ADF endorse the optimal learning culture outlined at paragraphs 38 to 43, (in dot points below) recognising its complementarity with the desired operational culture for the ADF.

- **Learner orientation.**
- **Technical and personal skills**
- **Training for lethal force and compassion for community.**
- **Team effectiveness.**
- **Trainers skilled in instruction and mentoring**
- **Trainers continuously learning technically and in enhancing their leadership**
- **Defence broadly accepts the recommendation.**

AGREED

Defence agrees to more fully embrace a learning culture, rather than just a training culture, that maximises the capabilities of trainees to the specific training activity or training environment.

Defence will implement a learning culture as part of a continuous improvement program across our training system. In addition to continuing command and unit-level measures directed at continually improving training outcomes, this will include major reform programs, such as the Air Force Learning Futures project that will form the foundation of a reinvigorated Air Force learning culture, and the Navy's Sea Change programs already underway. This will also be augmented by our implementation of the recommendations set out in the Learning Culture report.

The agreed characteristics of an optimal learning culture for Defence will be incorporated in the Defence Workforce Development Framework (which is scheduled for review mid 2007), and in the next revision to ADDP 7.0, as the basis for the subsequent development of single-Service policy and guidance.

Recommendation 2

The ADF's education and training policy, doctrine, delivery and evaluation embrace a learning culture rather than a teaching culture. This should involve:

- **an effective mix of 'why', 'what' and 'how' ensuring an appreciation of when to obey an order instinctively while also educating for thinking, initiative and judgement;**
- **greater mutual respect and trust between trainers and trainees (learning together as coaches and players);**

- **highly qualified trainers who want to do their jobs because they have pride, and confidence in the quality of the young people they are grooming for their future jobs with the ADF; and**
- **treating the trainees as adults.**

AGREED

Defence agrees to adopt a learning culture rather than a teaching culture. ADF education and training policy, doctrine, delivery and evaluation already encourages thinking, initiative, judgment, mutual respect and trust between trainers and trainees. Initiative and judgment have long been hall-marks of the ADF, going back to our military experiences in the First World War. We will work further to adopt a learning culture that maximises the capabilities of trainers and trainees, tailoring these to specific training activities and environments as required.

The agreed characteristics of an optimal learning culture for Defence will be incorporated in the Defence Workforce Development Framework (which is scheduled for review mid 2007), and in the next revision to ADDP 7.0, as the basis for the subsequent development of single-Service policy and guidance.

Recommendation 3

ADF schools and training establishments firmly shift the focus to trainees, who feel valued and are considered to be a real asset to the ADF.

- **Their learning environment should recognise prior learning competencies, encourage and acknowledge excellence, involve more positive than negative reinforcement, encourage good personal relations as well as technical competencies, set graduated achievable levels of mastery to support trainee transition from civilian life, allow for progress, where possible, at each individual's own pace, and allow those who do not possess the skills and/or motivation to succeed, to leave with dignity.**

AGREED

Defence agrees to this recommendation.

- *Defence already recognises prior learning competencies in a number of areas and will expand this recognition to all appropriate training as appropriate. This gives the additional benefit of minimising the need for formal training within Defence for those with prior learning.*
- *Excellence is already acknowledged through verbal and written recognition, as well as commendations and other formal methods. Defence will continue to build on existing programs, and these current and future programs will involve more positive than negative reinforcement.*
- *Senior executive support to promote good personal relations will be reinforced throughout Defence and is underpinned by the expression of Defence values of professionalism, loyalty, integrity, courage, innovation and teamwork, which provides a strong professional and ethical foundation to support.*
- *The requirement for a graduated approach to training is reflected in ADFP 7.0.2 and graduated achievable levels of professional competence are already defined in a range of employment categories, particularly those that have equivalent levels of mastery in the*

private sector (for example electricians). These will be applied to other training as appropriate.

- *Self-paced learning is implemented through systems such as Defence's CAMPUS on-line program. While it is not possible to apply self-paced learning to all environments, where it is applicable we will encourage its use.*

Recommendation 4

Greater priority and improved rewards be given to COs and military instructors in ADF schools and training establishments to ensure the best and brightest as COs, trainers and role models.

- **Posting to a training establishment should be an essential element of the career progression of all the best servicemen and women.**
- **This will require a mix of youthful military role models with more limited tenure, and more mature longer tenure trainers and educators (where appropriate as contractors) who provide continuity, corporate knowledge and broader based expertise to the learning environment.**
- **COs of training establishments should have three year postings.**
- **Consideration should also be given to establishing visiting military fellows programs, modelled on 'Executive in Residence' programs in major university business schools.**

AGREED

Defence agrees the recommendation where practicable, noting that the tenures of Commanding Officers' (COs) postings must remain consistent with the overall posting and professional development cycle for officers.

Within the professional development cycle Defence will investigate making posting to a training establishment an essential element of career progression, varying tenure of trainers according to the recommendation, and three-year postings for COs of training establishments.

Defence has a strong relationship with a number of universities around Australia, particularly UNSW and ANU, and think-tanks such as the Lowy Institute and ASPI, and encourages visiting fellows and reciprocal lectures and learning with these universities and groups.

Recommendation 5

In addition to having Certificate 4 qualifications as instructors, trainers receive sufficient and appropriate induction training (at least 2 weeks and up to 6 weeks, based on shared learning and ownership of their training establishments' strategies and learning philosophies), and all standard NCO and junior officer promotion courses include values-based leadership and people management skills development, with more effort to validate the training and to ensure the skills are applied in practice.

AGREED

Defence agrees the recommendation.

All standard NCO and junior officer promotion courses already include values-based leadership and people management skills development. However, Defence will increase the emphasis on these elements of training implementing improvements as required. Continued support will also be given to the development of the coaching and mentoring program for instructional and other school staff.

Recommendation 6

ADF schools and training establishments be invested with best practice facilities, where possible being developed as centres of excellence, with technology based learning that allows for an appropriate blending of instructional ingredients to maximise learner performance, and the capacity for continued learning by staff as well as trainees.

AGREED

Defence will continue to invest in training infrastructure, organisation and training delivery systems, including delivering training within a nationally recognised quality framework and aligning ADF training with best-practice consistent with endorsed priorities as reflected in Principle 3 of the Defence Workforce Development Framework.

Each of the Services' training organisations are Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) which are audited against the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) Standards every year. To date Navy for example has been identified as having achieved best practice in 4 out of the 12 standards, and good practice over the majority of standards across many schools. Defence will continue to report on the Services' current best practice areas and identify areas for improvement.

Recommendation 7

Greater alignment of the ADF's values be pursued by adopting just one set of values across the ADF.

- **Each of the Defence values (Professionalism, Loyalty, Integrity, Courage, Innovation, Teamwork) could be embraced while accommodating differences in roles and responsibilities within the ADF by the detailed descriptions used.**
- **The common set of values should also be used to promote permeability and respect across and beyond the ADF, and genuine appreciation of diversity.**

NOT AGREED

Defence does not agree the recommendation. Considerable effort has already been expended developing APS, single-Service and in some cases Defence Group values and there is a clear link between individual organisational values and the Defence values. The current form of Defence and single-Service values remains valid, based on the different roles, size and professional skills of the three Services.

Defence will continue to use the current Defence and single-Service values as the basis for values-based training in the ADF. It should be noted that there is an over-arching set of Defence Values known as PLICIT (an acronym for Professionalism, Loyalty, Integrity, Courage, Innovation, Teamwork), which is endorsed by all elements in the organisation.

Recommendation 8

Consideration be given to strengthening the tri-Service nature of the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) education and training, including through a common initial training period at ADFA, followed by a period of single Service training, and through mixing midshipmen and officer cadets' accommodation and divisional officer arrangements across the Services.

AGREED

Defence agrees the recommendation. ADFA is widely regarded as a successful joint training institution. The Learning Culture report notes that ADFA Cadets will often form friendships within their particular Service. However, there is a strong commitment to 'jointery' and ADFA Cadets will be encouraged to form friendships with their peers in all of the Services.

Defence will strengthen the tri-Service nature of ADFA on the basis of the proposal developed by COMADC and presently being implemented. Principal amongst a number of changes to be introduced from Jan 2007 will be the introduction of mixed [tri-Service] divisions for 1st and 2nd year cadets. The effectiveness of these changes will be reviewed prior to considering other changes.

CDF will ask the Commander of the Australian Defence College (COMADC) to report to him on progress against this recommendation by mid-year 2007.

Recommendation 9

Particular effort be made to engage with the middle level management group, that is, the NCOs, WOs and junior officers in schools and training establishments, to ensure their understanding and support of the values and of the learning culture being promoted, and associated policies and procedures, and to address the genuine concerns some have.

- **WO and NCO promotion courses should place more emphasis on leadership development including self awareness and people management, and ethical awareness discussions that might assist deeper understanding of the optimal operational and learning cultures CDF wishes to pursue.**

AGREED

The officer and other rank training continuums in each Service are subject to continuous review to ensure currency and best-practice.

Defence will maintain its ongoing reviews into these matters. These reviews will continue to include theoretical and practical/experiential elements directed at promoting understanding and support of the values and the learning culture with the middle-level management group and encouraging trainers to build their own leadership and technical capacities during their posting to a training establishment.

Recommendation 10

While the ADF's change process should rely more on its agreed values and less on prescriptive processes, the ADF's values should continue to be supported for the time being by rules for a fair go, given the culture is far from mature and given the continuing risks of inappropriate behaviour.

- **These should include codes of conduct or behavioural compacts that are reasonable instructions and enforceable under the Defence Force Discipline Act 1982 (DFDA) if required but are also discussed openly with each cohort of trainees and trainers.**

AGREED

Defence agrees to the recommendation. The current approach to the maintenance of an appropriate culture within Defence incorporates a balance of values, rules and codes of conduct. This balance is currently effective and will remain.

Defence will maintain and build on its current balance of values, rules and codes of conduct, including the recent Army initiative for trainer and trainee codes of conduct, and the values-based mandated Navy codes of conduct, where appropriate across all ADF initial training.

CDF will ask HMJIT to coordinate policy development on codes of conduct and behavioural compacts and to report to COSC with options for consideration by the third quarter of 2007.

Recommendation 11

Other management strategies should reinforce the values-based approach, including:

- **direct trainee contribution to their own personal competencies assessment;**
- **performance management arrangements for staff (with 360° assessment of COs and other senior staff);**
- **more effective and less prescriptive approaches to E&D training (including gender diversity awareness); and**
- **greater authority for COs to match their responsibilities for matters that affect their peoples' morale.**

AGREED

Defence agrees to the recommendation and will implement the suggestions for further incorporating the values-based approach. Defence recognises that training needs to be culturally relevant, participative and behaviourally-based. Defence will reinforce its values-based training and education principles.

Recommendation 12

The style of leadership that the ADF should be encouraging is that, notwithstanding the command structure, everyone is a leader.

AGREED

Defence agrees. We will encourage the development of leadership skills and responsibility for behaviour amongst all members, and encourage opportunities for everyone to demonstrate leadership.

Defence will continue to ensure that leadership development opportunities are provided to all personnel, and that their leadership skills are appropriately recognised and rewarded. Promoting the leadership potential of all our people has been a feature of the Services since their inception. The ADF is a small force in global terms and we need to build on the leadership skills and capacities of all our people. Our experience in peacekeeping and other missions in recent years shows that we are particularly successful in promoting leadership skills in our personnel compared to the forces of other countries.

Recommendation 13

A culture of telling it how it is should be encouraged by all COs, such that trainers and trainees are prepared to state how they think and feel in an environment of mutual trust and respect: this should be assisted through the use of focus groups.

AGREED

Defence agrees to encourage openness in communications and mutual trust between trainers and trainees.

Defence will ensure an appropriate balance of open and directive communication in ADF training. There is a strong tradition of openness with our Services that is often seen to be a characteristic of the ADF compared to other defence forces.

CDF will ask HMJIT to coordinate policy development on focus groups and to report to COSC with options for consideration by the third quarter of 2007. Focus groups will however need to be balanced against the possibility that they are perceived or enacted as a means of subverting the chain of command.

MANAGING THE CARE AND WELFARE OF TRAINEES

Recommendation 14

Tough training be more clearly distinguished from all forms of bullying and harassment, and that the ADF acknowledge that the need for close bonding and teamwork presents real risks that need careful management. These risks include more subtle bullying such as social isolation, and risks relating to diversity and ‘group think’. The management of these risks requires reconsideration of the way teamwork is encouraged, and increased skills in people management amongst training staff.

AGREED

Defence agrees to clearly articulate the difference between tough training and bullying, noting that, given the unique operational environment in which the ADF operates, there is a need to ‘train as you operate’ in many circumstances.

Principle 5 of the endorsed Defence Workforce Development framework provides that “Whilst training needs to be realistic, unsafe or ethical training practices are unacceptable and are not tolerated”.

Defence is committed to providing a fair and safe environment, with a zero-tolerance policy on unacceptable behaviour². All Defence personnel and Defence contracted staff are covered by a number of provisions of Commonwealth human rights legislation that are relevant to unacceptable behaviour and procedures are in place and training and awareness is provided, that proscribe Commanders’ and individuals responsibilities and avenues for dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

Over the last twelve months reviews of various aspects of the management and reporting of unacceptable behaviour and the conduct of equity and diversity training of Defence personnel have been undertaken, including:

- *The Defence Force Ombudsman in an Own Motion Investigation into the Management and Reporting of Unacceptable Behaviour;*
- *DSPPR into the experiences of complainants and managers in making and managing a complaint;*
- *Diversity at Work into the Equity Adviser Network; and*
- *FR Branch in collaboration with Services and Groups into the effectiveness of annual awareness and through career training in equity and diversity.*

In addition to this, Fairness and Resolution Centres are being established in each of the Regions.

CDF will ask HMJIT to coordinate policy development on the most effective and practical means to articulate the difference between training and bullying and to report to COSC with options for consideration by the third quarter of 2007.

Recommendation 15

Trainees be case managed from recruitment inquiry through to posting to an operational unit supported by a computerised tracking system.

AGREED

Defence agrees to the approach of case managing initial trainees from recruitment through to posting to an operational unit, using suitable electronic systems.

This recommendation is largely already in place. Defence has an effective personnel management system based in:

- *A single unified people management system - the Project Management Key Solutions (PMKeYS) system - which holds personnel and organisational data, including on training accomplishments, awards, accreditation, postings and supervisors, on all ADF members and tracks members from enlistment through their entire career.*

² Defence Magazine, September 2005, at www.defence.gov.au/defencemagazine/editions/20050901/features/feature01.htm

- *A formal system of written trainee assessment throughout courses and on completion of courses.*

That said, Defence will investigate how to enhance case managing trainees and assess whether a new approach is required or whether further development of the current system is more appropriate. This is to be reported to COSC by mid 2007.

Recommendation 16

Breaks between different stages of training be minimised, and greater flexibility to change job categories be introduced.

AGREED

We agree this recommendation but note that in many cases breaks in the training continuum are a generally unavoidable factor in the ADF training system which is driven, in many cases, by higher priority operational requirements. A potentially avoidable delay relates to the timeliness of security clearance processing. Defence is examining ways to expedite security clearances and clear the current backlog. There has already been progress on this issue across both the military and civilian parts of Defence. Defence is also examining the broader initial training continuum to, wherever practicable, reduce or eliminate breaks between consecutive courses. Where breaks are unavoidable, specific Service programs will be developed which balance the requirements of the Service and interests of the individual whilst personnel are in holding platoons.

Change of category whilst under training is more problematic – such changes will result in breaks and delays in the training continuum as finite training resources are re-assigned. Defence will examine ways to address the issue which balance the interests of the individual with the operational imperative.

Recommendation 17

Potential recruits be provided access to accurate and complete information on working in the ADF, career choices, what they can expect and what is expected of them, so that ‘marching in’ presents no surprises.

AGREED

Defence agrees to provide more accurate career information to recruits.

Potential recruits are already provided with access to a wide range of up to date information encompassing conditions of service, course content, and comprehensive information for married applicants on life for married members in the military. This information is available in hard copy format, and also on the Internet. Potential recruits can also contact their local Defence Force Recruiting Centre or the Defence Recruiting Hotline. The Defence Careers website coupled with a recruiting process that adopts a customer relationship management philosophy reinforces all aspects of Service requirements and conditions.

Defence will continue to review the information provided to potential recruits – both at Defence Force Recruiting centres and on the Defence public Internet site to ensure its relevance and accuracy.

This will be a key focus of our enhanced plans for recruitment and retention, to be progressively rolled out in 2007.

Recommendation 18

Recruitment focus be on an employer of choice rather than allowing standards to drop, and broaden the target base to include more women, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and people from Sydney and Melbourne.

AGREED

Defence agrees that the recruitment focus be as an employer of choice and that the recruiting target base (where appropriate) be broadened.

Defence does market itself as an 'employer of choice' and, in the current competitive labour market, there is a focus on 'selling' military careers.

Recruiting targets are 'open' - there is no discrimination nationally or regionally, or on the basis of gender, ethnicity or geographical location. Targets remain flexible to changing requirements. As part of various reviews of recruiting all standards are open to scrutiny. Where these standards can be made appropriate to the demographic from which recruiting attracts applicants, and still retain the requirements for ADF service, they are changed.

Defence is currently developing or pursuing initiatives to better 'engage' with particular labour market segments, including: sponsorship of the Women's NBL and an Indigenous Engagement Strategy, agreed by Defence in March 2006, will involve research into gender and cultural specific impediments, and the development of plans to attract indigenous and women applicants.

This will be a key focus of our enhanced plans for recruitment and retention, to be progressively rolled out in 2007.

Recommendation 19

Initial training focus continue to be to help trainees reach the required standards rather than 'weed out' the unsuitable, and the training be long enough to do so.

AGREED

Defence agrees that helping trainees reach the required standard is preferable to 'weeding out' the unsuitable - wherever it is practical for training periods to be long enough to do so, noting that lengthening training periods would be counter-productive and a strain on both human and financial resources.

Initial entry training programs already cater for a reasonable degree of individually focused progression, particularly catering for varying standards of physical and emotional fitness. Support is provided by experienced and highly trained physical training instructors, social workers, chaplains, psychologists and other health care professionals and divisional staff. The focus of staff is not to 'weed out' but rather to facilitate progression whenever possible.

Recommendation 20

Initial training be conducted in a graduated way that acknowledges the wide gap many have to bridge, allowing trainees time to build up their fitness and to acclimatise, and giving them adequate time to adjust and to learn new skills. All training establishments also need to be conscious of the issue of distance from family and friends and ensure there is adequate means of communication.

AGREED

Defence agrees that training should be graduated where appropriate to allow initial trainees sufficient time to adjust and learn new skills.

Defence endeavours to build initial trainees up and also to reduce the culture shock of joining the military through preparation and gradual acclimatisation.

Many training establishments have access to mail, telephone and internet. Where possible and appropriate, Defence will confirm that trainees have access to these means of communication. Commanders will be responsible for facilitating communication to family members and may be assisted by the Defence Community Organisation, particularly in an emergency.

Recommendation 21

Induction processes for trainees and trainers include interesting and effective training that shifts the emphasis from awareness and compliance to attitudinal and behaviour change. This style of induction should be used particularly in the areas of suicide, alcohol, E&D, rights and responsibilities and discipline, and avenues for help; and be followed up with more effective guidance on handling personal relationships in the team environment being developed.

AGREED

Induction training in Defence will continue to include issues of suicide, alcohol, E&D, rights and responsibilities and discipline, and avenues for help. While there will always be an awareness and compliance element in this training, Defence will shift the emphasis as much as possible to interesting and effective training in attitudinal and behaviour change, and will monitor the effectiveness of this process as part of the ongoing continuous improvement of training delivery approaches.

Recommendation 22

Holding platoons, or their equivalents, should be used for trainees facing short gaps in their training, but for no longer than two months and usually no more than one month. Those facing longer delays should be given a range of options to accommodate their personal circumstances, such as: attachment to a unit that offers useful and interesting work and/or training, under suitable supervision; or being sent on leave particularly where family circumstances could contribute to losing the trainee.

AGREED

It should be noted here that operational requirements are an unavoidable priority, and this can impact on the training cycle. Defence has in place Service-specific programs for personnel in holding platoons which balance the requirements of the Service and interests of the individual as appropriate. Navy has already stated that it considers that holding platoons should only be used in extenuating circumstances, noting that it is neither in the interests of the member or the Service for trainees to be under training longer than necessary, and this attitude will be reinforced across Defence.

Recommendation 23

Supervisors of trainees undertaking on-the-job training be more formally recognised, supported and rewarded for the role they play.

AGREED

Defence agrees to the Principle of validating and rewarding best practice training skills.

A number of programs are in place through which best-practice training is recognised, including the Navy Peter Mitchell Prize scheme – the annual award for the Instructor of the Year (On the Job Training), the Army Recruit Instructor Badge and Air Force Military Skills Instructor Badge that formally recognises the vital role that instructors play at the Army Recruit Training Centre and Air Force Recruit Training Unit respectively and other similar schemes.

Defence will continue to reward best-practice training delivery.

Recommendation 24

Efforts be made to facilitate civilian recognition for experienced tradesmen and women who were trained prior to the current system which now provides civilian accreditation.

AGREED

Defence currently has a program of national recognition and accreditation of ADF training and qualifications; in some cases civilian qualification accreditation has been in place since 1972. This includes providing civilian recognition for experienced tradesmen and women who were trained prior to the current system that now provides civilian accreditation.

Recommendation 25

Trainees who decide the ADF is not for them be assisted to leave with respect and dignity, and as potential future employees or advocates for the ADF amongst their peers.

- **They should be removed from other trainees as quickly as possible and provided with access to career advice and any health and welfare support they need**

AGREED

Defence agrees that it is important to remove unsuccessful trainees or trainees who seek Discharge at Own Request (DAOR) with respect and dignity.

Defence will review existing single-Service procedures for managing the exit process, determine a best-practice procedure and introduce it across ADF elements as appropriate early in 2007.

Recommendation 26

Reporting of sickness and injury be firmly encouraged.

AGREED

*The Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991 (OHS (CE) Act) and the Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Regulations 1991 (OHS (CE) Regulations) as amended, require Defence members, civilian employees, ADF cadets, contractors and third parties to notify and report incidents and fatalities occurring in Defence to the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission through Comcare, and to keep records in Defence. Incidents can also include sickness, and where sickness is not covered by the OHS (CE) Act or Regulations, it **must** be reported to a person's supervisor. HMJIT will ensure that these instructions will be re-emphasised to all Defence personnel by DEFGRAMs and other means early in 2007.*

Recommendation 27

Greater effort be made by trainers to demonstrate respect for all trainees who report sick or injured, and trainee peers be strongly encouraged to show respect and not make adverse judgments or use derogatory terms, consistent with the overall priority to help trainees achieve competencies.

AGREED

See Recommendation 26 response on mandatory reporting of sickness and injury. Commanding Officers are responsible for ensuring staff consistently model appropriate attitudes to trainees, including those who may be sick or injured. This role will be reiterated across Defence, with the strong support of the Defence Executive.

Recommendation 28

Better practice in rehabilitation case management be replicated across all schools and training establishments, with opportunities for continuing their training program in the event that they need to be separated from their fit peers, and benchmark reports for successful rehabilitation be maintained.

AGREED

Considerable investment has already been made in this area, for example the Army Training Command Rehabilitation Wing which was formally established in December 2003, with significant positive outcomes in respect of return to training rate and longer-term retention of members. This approach will be encouraged across the Services.

Recommendation 29

Measures of attitudes and behavioural performance be made more robust and reliable, trainers be well trained in applying them, and trainees be fully informed as to how they operate, be involved through self-assessments, and have opportunities for review of assessments within the school or training establishment.

- **The measures should articulate the desired personality traits, personal behaviours and attitudes, and the related indicators of whether or not they are being exhibited.**

AGREED

Defence employs a range of assessment measures, in training and work environments, to measure behavioural and attitudinal performance. These include formal and informal training assessment and reports throughout courses and on completion. These assessments are made by individuals experienced in the training and work environments, who also have access to support in their role. The process is continually under review, and as part of this review Defence will incorporate the recommended aspects of personality trait, personal behaviours and attitudes and the applicability of self-assessments and in addition review training assessment/reporting approaches and templates across the Services. .

Recommendation 30

Trainees be counseled by divisional staff, and professional support staff, on how to relate to peers they feel are not contributing sufficiently.

AGREED

Specific guidance on use of peer-group discipline was included in Commanding Officers' pre-Command training and standing orders for training institutions as recommended by the 2001 Burchett 'Inquiry into Military Justice in the ADF' (recommendation 42). Defence will also ensure that adequate awareness training, including on 'inter-personal relationships', is included in new entry training courses.

Recommendation 31

Before trainees complete their initial training they be more robustly (validly and reliably) assessed on their behaviours and attitudes as well as their technical competencies, to reduce the risk of unsuitability not being identified until category school.

AGREED

Defence will establish more robust and reliable measures of attitudes and behavioural performance, including self-assessments as for Recommendation 29. These will be implemented in initial training as a priority in order to identify possible unsuitability as early as possible.

Recommendation 32

Those who are not successful be treated with respect and dignity, and considered as possible ambassadors for the ADF despite their personal lack of success.

AGREED

Defence will review existing procedures for managing the exit process, determine a best-practice procedure and introduce it across all ADF elements as appropriate as for Recommendation 25.

Recommendation 33

In light of the efficiency gains previously achieved in the area of training, schools and training establishments be fully resourced to their allocated levels, and be rewarded for improvements in productivity particularly to improve induction training of trainers and to help further evaluation of their programs and support arrangements.

AGREED

Defence will continue to invest in training infrastructure, organisation and training delivery systems, including delivering training within a nationally recognised quality framework and aligning ADF training with best-practice. Resourcing of training establishments will continue in line with Defence's overall resourcing policy, and Defence will investigate methods of identifying and rewarding improvements in productivity.

Recommendation 34

The ADF take more active steps to build a professional workplace culture and to counter excessive alcohol consumption, including through improved education programs about alcohol, changing mess arrangements to remove the focus on alcohol, promoting broader recreation and off-duty professionally-related activities, and a more consistent approach be adopted to handling poor behaviour.

AGREED

Defence-wide mess events are deliberately focused on social interaction, historical dates and events, meals, speakers of note and sporting events, with a clear shift away from alcohol-centred gatherings in the last 10 years. Defence will continue to encourage this attitude. Defence has strongly promoted the appropriate and responsible use of alcohol, including through the use of counselors and appropriate health facilities (such as the Alcohol Rehabilitation and Education Program), through Service specific and unit level strategies such as the Navy 'Drinksafe' program; and requires that bar staff adhere to the legislated requirements with respect to responsible service of alcohol, and to help counter excessive alcohol consumption.

Recommendation 35

DFDA be amended to reflect contemporary law so that it is comprehensive in covering all illicit drugs. (We understand this is being progressed as an element of the enhancements to the military justice system.)

AGREED

Defence is currently conducting a broad-based review of DFDA offences and punishments, which includes offences and punishments with respect to illicit drugs (DFDA S59) as required by the Government response to the 2005 Senate Committee report on Military Justice.

The initial review is due to be completed by the end of 2007 and in accordance with the Government response to the Senate Committee report there will be regular ongoing reviews.

Recommendation 36

The ADF introduce measures that not only ensure acceptance of women trainees but support and mentor them to maximise their capabilities and contributions and ensure they are widely valued, and consider some of the initiatives of other organisations such as the Victoria Police.

AGREED

Defence will examine and implement measures to maximise acceptance and development of women in the ADF, based on the extensive research and reporting completed over the last years. A Working Group on the recruitment of Women to the ADF is currently underway, with the aim of identifying strategies to address this issue.. Defence will investigate the initiatives undertaken by the Victoria Police, and the possibility of implementing as many of these as are relevant.

We highlight the overall positive assessment of the Learning Culture report with regard to the acceptance of women in the ADF, noting that there is more work to do in this area.

Recommendation 37

Fraternisation policies be realistic, and based on the Defence values, and complemented by practical advice about sexual relationships.

AGREED

The Defence values and various policies, including Defence Instructions and single-Service policies, provide guidance on the behaviours expected of ADF members. This guidance takes into account the unique operational environment of the ADF. The Defence Equity Adviser network and hotline provide support in addition to that available through the command chain.

Defence will ensure that ADF fraternisation policies and awareness training modules are appropriate against contemporary standards. Briefs will be provided to staff on a regular basis that provide the rationale behind expectations of behaviour, the practical realities of relationships that form in service, the codes of conduct, and the support agencies available and how to contact them.

CDF will ask the HMJIT to coordinate a report of progress in this area to COSC by mid 2007, setting out any proposals for new initiatives related to providing better policy guidance on fraternisation.

Recommendation 38

Suicide awareness continue to be included as an essential component of induction programs for all trainees in all schools and training establishments.

AGREED

Defence will continue to ensure that ADF suicide awareness training, including the context in which it is delivered/provided, is current, appropriate, and distributed as widely across Defence induction programs as possible, noting that this is one aspect of a comprehensive ADF mental health strategy that is continually being refined.

Recommendation 39

Security clearance processes be made more responsive to ADF and trainee needs with firm deadlines that limit time in holding platoons.

AGREED

In the past nine months Defence has developed a range of initiatives proposed to overcome the backlog of security clearances for processing. Defence has set internal benchmarks for processing each level of security clearance. Factors contributing to the delays include individuals not providing complete and timely information, complex issues arising during the vetting process, and high priority operational requests to support Defence operations overseas. Defence will continue to look at ways to improve the situation and limit time in holding platoons.

This is a matter that the Deputy Secretary for Intelligence and Security has under constant review and reports on progress to the monthly meeting of the Defence Committee.

Recommendation 40

Reporting of all incidents of bullying and harassment continue to be encouraged.

AGREED

Defence will continue to ensure that the ADF is a fair and safe environment, and that unacceptable behaviour is both reported and managed appropriately when and where it occurs. As noted previously, reporting of unacceptable behaviour is mandatory and there are a number of avenues for reporting. Defence is currently conducting research into the experiences of managers and complainants to identify barriers to the reporting and effective management of all unacceptable behaviour.

Recommendation 41

Decisions on complaints be made in a timely manner, and in the event a complaint is not sustained, follow-up action occur quickly to ensure a trainer is not unfairly penalised and demonstrably vexatious complaints are properly addressed.

AGREED

Defence agrees. Our approach is to, wherever possible, resolve all complaints at the lowest appropriate level; improve the timeliness and fairness of complaint management and to use mediation or other suitable Alternative Dispute Resolution processes to resolve complaints where appropriate.

Enhancements to improve the timeliness and rigour of dealing with complaints are being progressed in accordance with the Government response to the 2005 Senate Report, including: establishment of the Defence Fairness and Resolution Branch as the central management body, outside of normal line-management, for managing all complaints and implementation of the agreed outcomes of the 2005 Defence Force Ombudsman (DFO)/ADF Redress of Grievance Review.

Defence will continue implementation of the 2005 DFO/ADF Redress of Grievance Review and is currently reviewing the policy on the Management and Reporting of Unacceptable Behaviour.

Recommendation 42

Greater and earlier use be made of mediation to manage complaints and appeals.

AGREED

The response to recommendation 41 addresses this issue.

Recommendation 43

A less rigid and less process-oriented approach be undertaken to training in E&D and other welfare matters. This should focus more on the rationale and the skills required to work with young people, with case examples, scenarios and language directly relevant to the training environment, in addition to explaining the rules and procedures required to be observed.

AGREED

Defence will review Equity and Diversity (E&D) awareness training, incorporating appropriate case examples and scenarios. Defence will also focus on explaining the rationale behind the rules and procedures to trainees in language and a format they will understand and in which they will participate.

CDF will ask Head Personnel Executive to coordinate a report of progress in this area to COSC by mid 2007, setting out any proposals for new initiatives to enhance Equity and Diversity awareness.

Recommendation 44

A more client-orientated approach, that values individual trainees, be introduced by central personnel management, with specific benchmarks and measures of performance. This client-orientated approach should apply to all servicemen and women.

AGREED

Defence will investigate introducing a system for better case managing individual trainees, including specific benchmarks and measures of performance as for Recommendation 15. The rationale for this approach will be communicated across Defence and incorporated into general personnel management where appropriate.

Recommendation 45

Higher appeal rights for probationers be reconsidered. Until they are qualified and accepted as full members of the ADF there is a question as to whether they should have access to the full panoply of appeal rights available to others.

AGREED

Defence will clarify the appeal rights available to probationers before they become full members of the ADF. Where it is considered that these rights are inappropriate for probationers, Defence will consider methods to revise appeal rights for probationers.

MANAGEMENT OF MINORS

Recommendation 46

The development of a new Defence Instruction on the management of minors and other vulnerable people be expedited, along with the implementation of the other recommendations made by the Defence Force Ombudsman.

AGREED

Defence Instruction (General) PERS 33-4 'Recruitment and employment of members under 18 years in the Australian Defence Force' is being revised as an element of implementation of the 2005 DFO Own Motion Review of the Administration of Minors. Defence will continue to

develop the revised Defence Instruction and implement the agreed recommendations from the DFO report by Dec 2007.

Recommendation 47

In addition to ensuring legal responsibilities are known and fully met, a holistic and proactive approach be taken to the management of minors in line with the reasonable expectations of good parents. This should include:

- **Divisional staff knowing each person in their division who is under 18 years and paying them particular attention over and above that of others, and also knowing the background of other trainees to identify any vulnerabilities that warrant particular attention; and**
- **Providing regular feedback to the parents of minors about how the trainee is performing and coping with their adjustment to military life.**

AGREED

A number of new arrangements are being put in place as an element of implementation of the 2005 DFO Own Motion Review of the Administration of Minors. Defence will continue to implement the agreed recommendations of the DFO Own Motion Report with a completion timeframe of Dec 2007.

In addition to this, Defence will develop single-Service guidance as appropriate to:

- *ensure that divisional staff are aware of minors in their division, and any vulnerabilities they or other trainees may have;*
- *emphasise the importance of regular feedback both to minors and their parents; and*
- *incorporate responses from this feedback into the minor's training where appropriate.*

The Chief of Defence Force said in reporting to the DFO review, that our approach should apply to all young people joining the ADF, not simply those legally defined as minors.