



Australian Government
Defence

Women in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) 2021-2022 Ten Years in Review



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Requests and inquiries should be addressed to:

Head People Capability

Defence People Group

Department of Defence

Russell Office R1-1-C005

CANBERRA ACT 2600.

Directorate of People Intelligence & Research

Workforce Planning

Defence People Group

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¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C1968A00063>

² <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2021C00127>

³ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A03712>

⁴ <http://drnet/AssociateSecretary/security/policy/Pages/dspf.aspx>

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Executive summary

Ten years after the Broderick Review in 2012, the *Women in the ADF Report* (the Report) continues to report Defence's progress towards attracting, training, retaining and providing career opportunities for women. The Broderick Review set in motion a cultural reform journey for the ADF with the goal of increasing women's participation and integration into the force. The ADF has made significant progress in advancing gender integration through a wide range of organisational and cultural reform initiatives that are intended to create organisational change to benefit all members. Significant and urgent strategic and workforce challenges, the Defence Strategic Review and a new cultural strategy, the Cultural Blueprint (commencing 2023), shape the context of this report and will continue to do so.

In this decade, structural and policy based interventions have been a critical element of Defence's commitment to increase the participation and advancement of women. Some of these initiatives included removal of gender restrictions on combat roles, establishing recruitment targets for women, reduction in the Initial Minimum Period of Service obligations in certain categories, targeted mentoring and career development programs for women and building greater flexibility into career pathways.

Since 2012, the ADF has made significant progress in advancing gender integration. This conclusion is supported by findings in this year's Report. Overall the participation rate of women in the ADF is 20.1 per cent – an increase of 5.7 percentage points since 2012. Women's representation has improved across all ADF Workforce skills segments as has the proportion of women deployed. The uptake of flexible work has significantly increased in the last decade.

Despite significant progress, many challenges remain. The lack of a critical mass of women in the ADF, career structures that limit participation, occupational segregation, lack of flexibility and support for ADF families, and a culture still marked by gendered sexual misconduct⁵ continue to pose workforce risk. The findings in the report indicate that people system processes and personnel policy settings of the past decade must continue to be modified if it is to address current and future workforce challenges and support women's contribution to workforce growth out to 2040.

The Report indicates that efforts should be targeted to women's well-being, morale, safety, talent performance and career management, recognition of Service through promotions, honours and awards and cultural change in acceptance of flexible work. The report findings underline the evidence that feeling valued, supported and respected shapes positive outcomes for the workplace. Individual women feeling that they belong in the ADF is foundational to any efforts to achieve change. Long term retention efforts of women needs to focus on safety, inclusion and flexibility over the course of an ADF career to drive lasting equity outcomes for women.

⁵ Where women consistently experience unacceptable behaviour at a higher rate than men. See Table 8, p.61.



Introduction

Defence will further increase the participation and advancement of women through strategies focussed on leadership, targeted mentoring, education, training and career development. The Women in [the] ADF Report will continue to be prepared annually to provide government, and the Australian public with a measure of their progress...A more diverse workforce and inclusive culture will enhance Defence's capability and effectiveness as an organisation, and support our continuous improvement efforts by ensuring that our workforce profiles reflect the Australian community that we serve.

Lead the Way: Defence Transformation Strategy, 2020

The first Women in the ADF Report in 2013 presented information on women's participation and experience, access to flexible work and sexual harassment and abuse. This report was intended as a baseline to allow Defence to measure progress over time and identify areas of concern using extant data collections. In 2016 a review of the report content was conducted and recommendations made for gender diversity metrics on the basis that indicators are an effective way to drive behavioural change. The Chiefs of Service Committee (COSC) approved a suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) to measure gender diversity in the ADF. These KPIs have formed the basis for reporting since then. It has become a collection of workforce and workplace data disaggregated by gender.

This report marks a critical juncture for Defence to consider where progress has been made and where gaps exist in actions to remove barriers and support women to fully participate and advance and gaps in recognition and value of the contribution of women to the ADF. Does the ADF see women's contributions and value them as equal to men? Does Defence provide women with standing and choices at critical life junctures? What are the everyday experiences that tell women that they are not accepted as equal partners? What can be done to accept women as contributing to the Defence mission? What else could be done to accept women as equal partners?

The report reviews the status of women in the ADF in 2013 and assesses changes a decade later. Defence responds to broader societal changes and shifts in prevailing community expectations as does any organisation. The report examines where progress has been made and where progress may still need to be made. It looks at the measures currently in use, and drawing on current literature examines whether the KPIs provide useful information to support Defence to achieve its gender equality goals. Where they do not, some new sub-indicators have been developed. A new KPI for inclusion is proposed with some preliminary sub-indicators.

The intent of the report has historically been to quantify gender composition of the ADF workforce and women's experiences in the ADF. The refreshed intent of the report is to study the patterns of behaviour that affect women's lived experiences in the ADF. Where possible the question of whether organisational practices sustain inequality and constrain opportunities for women will be addressed. The focus of this 2022 report is to go beyond counting women in the ADF to engage more deeply with gendered power relations and inequalities in the workplace.

KPI 1: Progress towards women's representation targets

Representation targets are the simplest measure of women's participation in the ADF. These are a point in time headcount of women in the ADF at 30 June of the reporting year. This indicator also looks at net flow of women. Net flow refers to the proportion of people joining the ADF compared with those separating. A positive net flow means that a greater number of people have joined than separated from the ADF. A negative net flow means that more people have separated than have joined the ADF. Negative net flow may be an early signal of factors within the organisation affecting retention.

Key Findings for KPI 1

In 2022 women are more visible (represented) in numerical terms than in 2012. A greater number of women leaving than joining may indicate that they do not feel recognised and valued.

In 2021-22 women represented 20.1% of ADF members compared with 14.4% in 2012-13.

Women's participation in the ADF increased by 5.7 percentage points between 2012-13 and 2021-22.

In 2021-22 more women participate in the ADF than in 2012-13 but more women leave in 2021-22 than join.

Women's participation in the Australian Defence Force

Each Service has set women's participation targets to be achieved by 2023.⁶ These are:

- 25% for Navy with an internal stretch goal of 35% by 2035;
- 15% for Army (achieved). Army has set targets to further support their efforts with an target of 18% by 2025 and 20% by 2035; and
- 25% for Air Force (achieved) with a revised target of 35% by 2030.

⁶ Defence (2022). *Women in ADF Report, 2020-21*. <https://www.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-05/AR-2020-21-sup1-women-in-adf.pdf>

The overall participation rate for women in the ADF was 20.1% in 2021-22 (Figure 1). This is an increase of 5.7 percentage points since 2012-2013. This rate of participation is comparable to the Australian mining industry rate of 19.1% women and represents a greater increase than the mining sector’s increase since 2014 of 3.4 percentage points. It falls significantly short of the national participation of women across all Australian industries of 51% (which increased from 48.5% in 2014).⁷

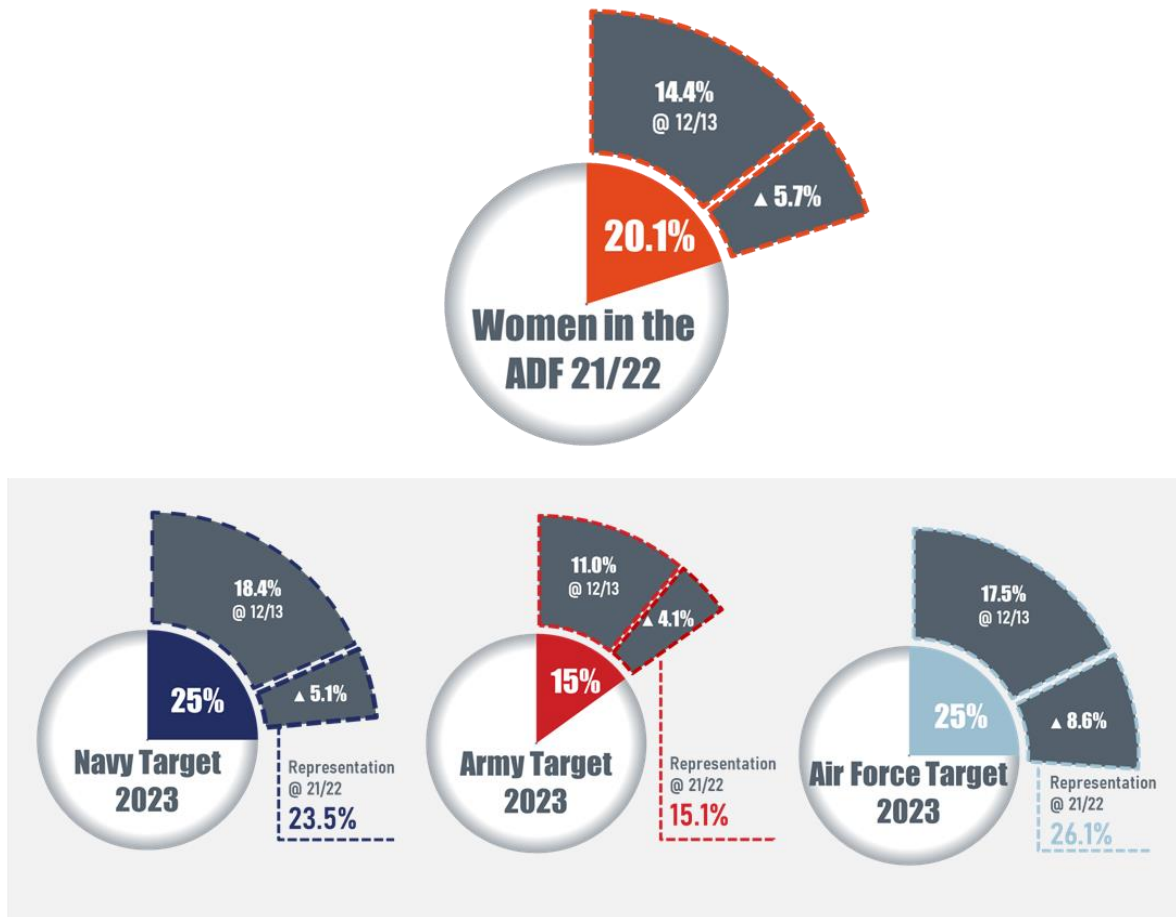


Figure 1. Progress of women’s representation in the ADF from 2012-2013 to now, compared to 2023 targets by Service⁸

In 2021-22 Navy achieved a representation of 23.5%, Army 15.1% and Air Force 26.1%. This means that Navy is the only Service not to have yet reached its participation target. Navy has however increased its women’s participation rates by 5.1 percentage points over the previous ten years and contributed to an overall increase for women in the ADF of 5.7 percentage points. For Navy, achieving a participation rate of 35% by 2035 remains an ambitious target based on current rates of increase.

⁷ Women’s Gender Equality Agency Data Explorer. <https://data.wgea.gov.au>. Accessed 8 September 2022.

⁸ Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse. data 2012/13 and 2021-22 extracted as of 30 June 2022.

In 2021-22 Army met its target but has the lowest target and the least increase of the three Services. As the largest Service, the low participation rate of women in Army significantly affects overall participation. In addition, given an increase of only 4.1% in the previous ten years the effect that Army is seeking to achieve may prove difficult. Achieving this would require an increase of 2.9 percentage points in the next three years. An increase of 4.8 percentage points in the next thirteen years (20% by 2035) may be more achievable (based on previous increases) however may present difficulties when considered in conjunction with underachievement of critical mass in occupational groups (KPI 2).

Air Force has achieved an increase of 8.5 percentage points since 2012-2013 and makes the strongest contribution to increased participation of women in the ADF. Having achieved an 8.6 percentage point increase in participation in the previous ten years, an increase of 8.9 percentage points by 2030 remains an ambitious target, however having achieved critical mass may contribute to increased rates of participation, as discussed later in the report.

International representation

Australia performs well for overall participation by women for the Permanent force in comparison with our Five Eyes partners (Table 1). The United States and New Zealand have more women Reserves than does Australia. The New Zealand Navy has the highest representation of women among the five nations. The United States has the highest proportion of women in Army. Australia leads the way for Air Force women’s participation.

For comparison, the data available for 1 January 2014 Permanent force only, shows that increase in participation for New Zealand has been 3.4 percentage points, the United Kingdom 1.4 percentage points, Canada 1.9 percentage points and the United States 2.2 percentage points. In the same period Australia has achieved a 5.4 percentage point increase in women’s participation.

Table 1. Women’s representation in 5 Eyes Defence Service as of 21/22*

	AU	NZ	UK	CAN	US
Total Permanent	20.1%	19.0%	11.3%	16.0%	17.2%
Total Reserves	18.1%	19.0%	15.6%	17.0%	21.1%
Navy	23.5%	26.5%	12.4%	20.5%	20.4%
Army	15.1%	14.5%	10.0%	13.8%	15.5%
Air Force	26.1%	20.7%	15.4%	20.1%	21.1%

*Comparison data for 2013 is not available for Five Eyes partners.



Rank group representation

The impact of different levels of participation between Services becomes more evident when the proportion of women by rank is examined. In Navy and Air Force women are visible in both Officer and Other Ranks (higher proportion of women than the ADF average).

Women are less visible in both Army Officer and Other Ranks. Army Officer Ranks are 4 percentage points below the ADF average and lag behind the Air Force by 7.1 percentage points. The discrepancy is higher for Other Ranks with Army at 5.1 percentage points lower than the ADF average and lagging behind Air Force by 12.4 percentage points.

The hypothesis that the Army results are affected by the differential participation of women in combat and non-combat roles is supported by the data (Figure 2). Army performs at par when comparisons are made between Army with combat corps excluded and other Services.



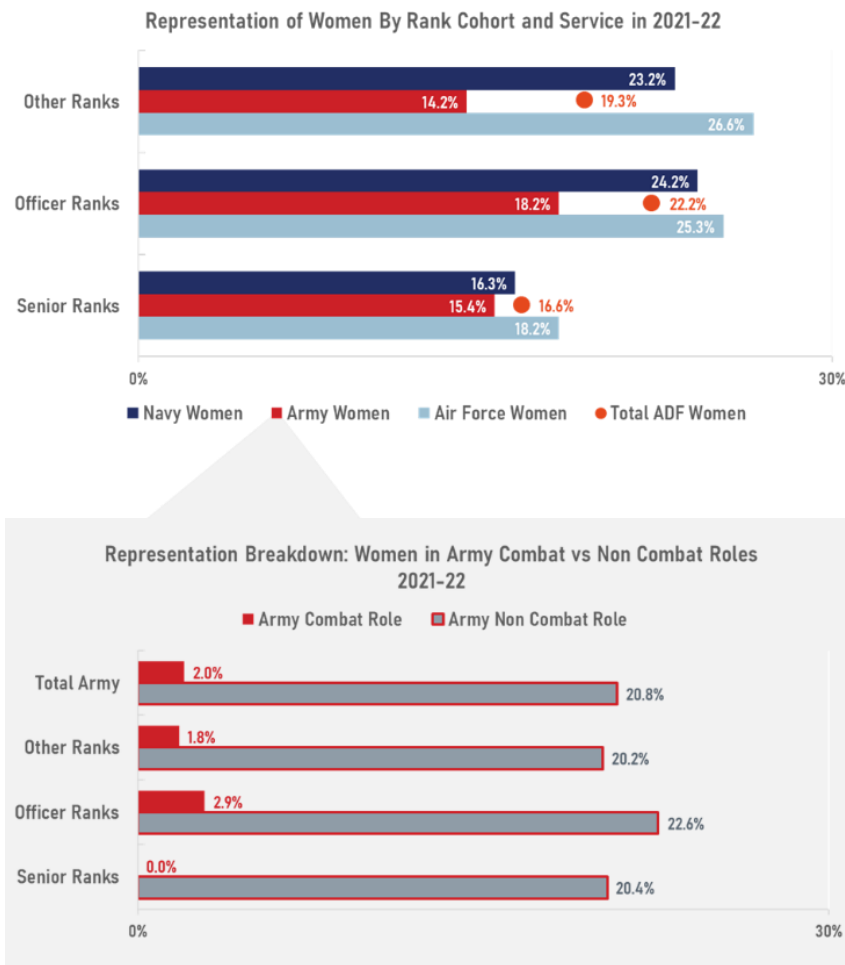


Figure 2. Proportion of women by rank in 2021-2022 and Army Combat and Non-Combat roles⁹

Net Flow of Permanent ADF members

Based on numbers alone, more women are separating from the ADF in 2021-22 than in 2012-13 (Figure 3). This is most pronounced for Other Ranks. A significant change from 2012-13 to 2021-22 is the shift for women Other Ranks from 24% positive net flow to 11% negative net flow. More women enlisted in Other Ranks in 2020/21 than in 2012-2013 but many more separated. Across the decade more men enlist and leave than women. In 2021-22 the net flow remains positive for women Officers although lower than in 2012-13. This suggests that focus should not simply be on the recruitment of women but also on their working life in the ADF in order to increase retention. Women Officers are the only category for men and women that had a positive net flow in 2021-22.

Overall, there is a total negative net flow of women in 2021-22 which contrasts with a positive net flow in 2012-13, that is, in 2021-22 more women are leaving the ADF than enlist although more

⁹ Source: Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse.

Officers commission than separate. Significantly more men left the ADF than joined in 2021-22 with a strongly negative net flow for both men Officers and Other Ranks (where net flow is the percentage difference between number recruited and number separating).

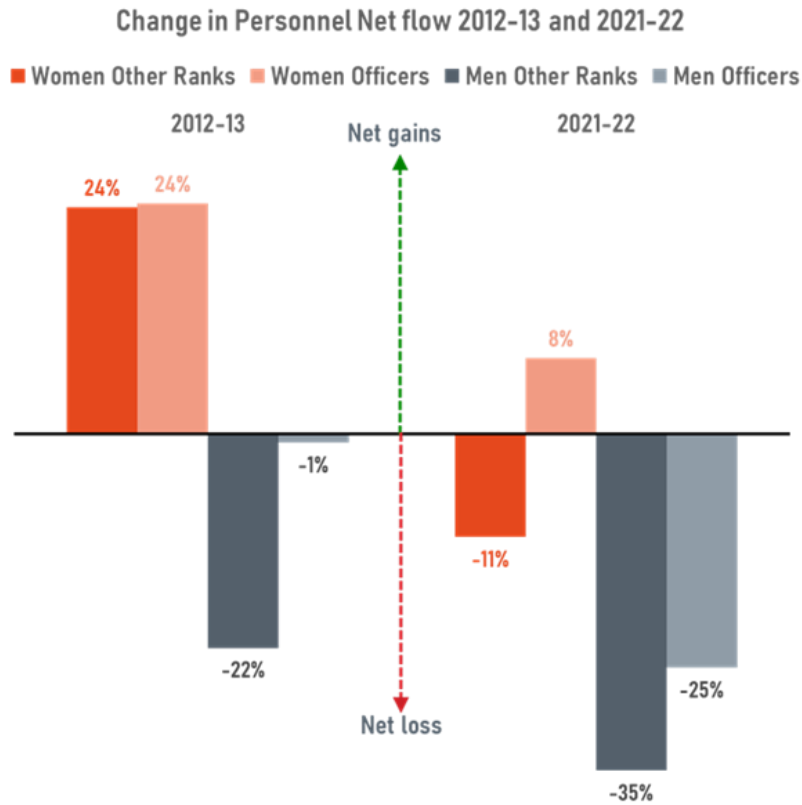


Figure 3. Proportion of personnel gains or losses in 2012-13 compared to 2021-22, as obtained from rate of enlistment and separation ¹⁰

¹⁰ Source: Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse.
8

KPI 2: Progress towards reaching critical mass in identified employment categories

Critical mass is a theoretical concept that draws on the 1977 work of sociologist Rosabeth Moss Kantor to suggest a point at which there are sufficient women to affect policy and make change.¹¹ Having critical mass suggests that women are seen, recognised and valued as a substantive part of an organisation. This set-point varies theoretically between 25 and 30%. Critical mass was included as a KPI for measuring the progress of women in 2016 without specifying a set-point. For the purpose of this KPI, following industry practice, critical mass is defined as being 25% of a specified occupational group.¹² It is important to note that none of the Services set specific representation or critical mass targets for occupational groups. Instead critical mass is used as a tool to start to examine occupational segregation. There are eight workforce skills segments in the ADF (Figure 4) which makes analysis of segments a crude but functional analytical tool.

Key Findings for KPI 2

In the last ten years women are seen more in all workforce segments. Four segments have achieved critical mass (enterprise and command support, health, intelligence and logistics). This means that in these four segments women are routinely seen.

- Navy has achieved critical mass in five of eight workforce segments.
- Army has achieved critical mass in two of eight segments and has two segments that can be categorised as hyper-masculine, that is, with fewer than 5% women.
- Air Force has achieved critical mass in four of eight workforce segments.
- There are no hyper-feminine segments. The health workforce segment has the highest overall proportion of women at 53.2% (ADF total).

¹¹ Kanter, Rosabeth Moss (March 1977). "Some effects of proportions on group life: skewed sex ratios and responses to token women". *American Journal of Sociology*.82(5): 965.

¹² Women in Male-Dominated Industries and Occupations: Quick Take. February 05, 2020

Occupational Segregation

Since 2012-13 all workforce segments have increased their proportion of women. There has been significant improvements in Aviation, Combat and Security and Engineering and Construction segments although these segments have not yet achieved a critical mass of women (Figure 4). Four segments have both increased their proportion of women and achieved critical mass: Enterprise and Command Support, Health, Intelligence and Logistics (Figure 4).

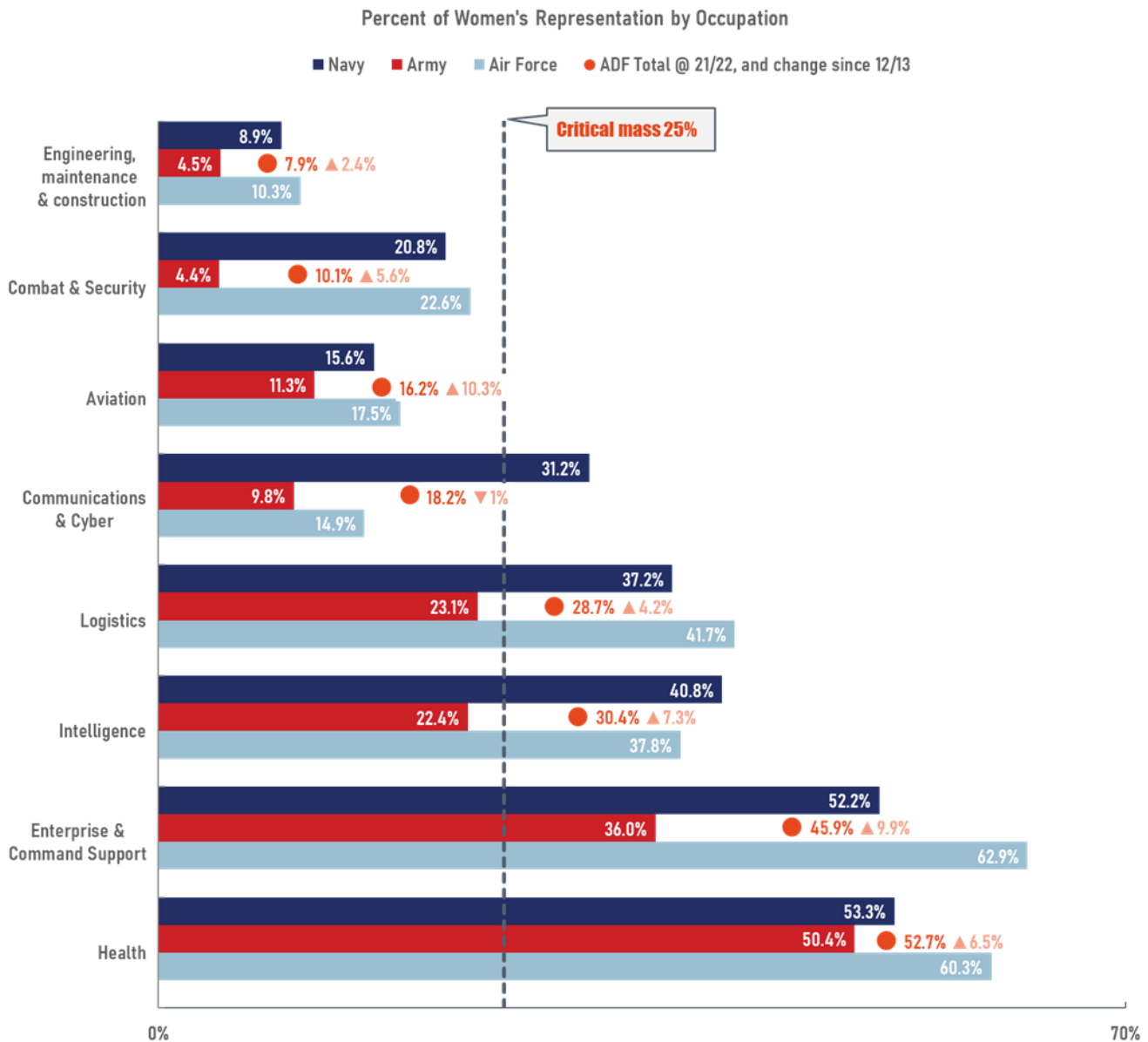


Figure 4. Representation of women in workforce segments in the ADF and by Service for 2021-22¹³

¹³ Source: Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse.

Navy

Navy has achieved critical mass for women in five of eight workforce segments. Although there is a critical mass of women in Communications and Cyber there has been a decrease in the percentage of women since 2012-13 (see Figure 5).

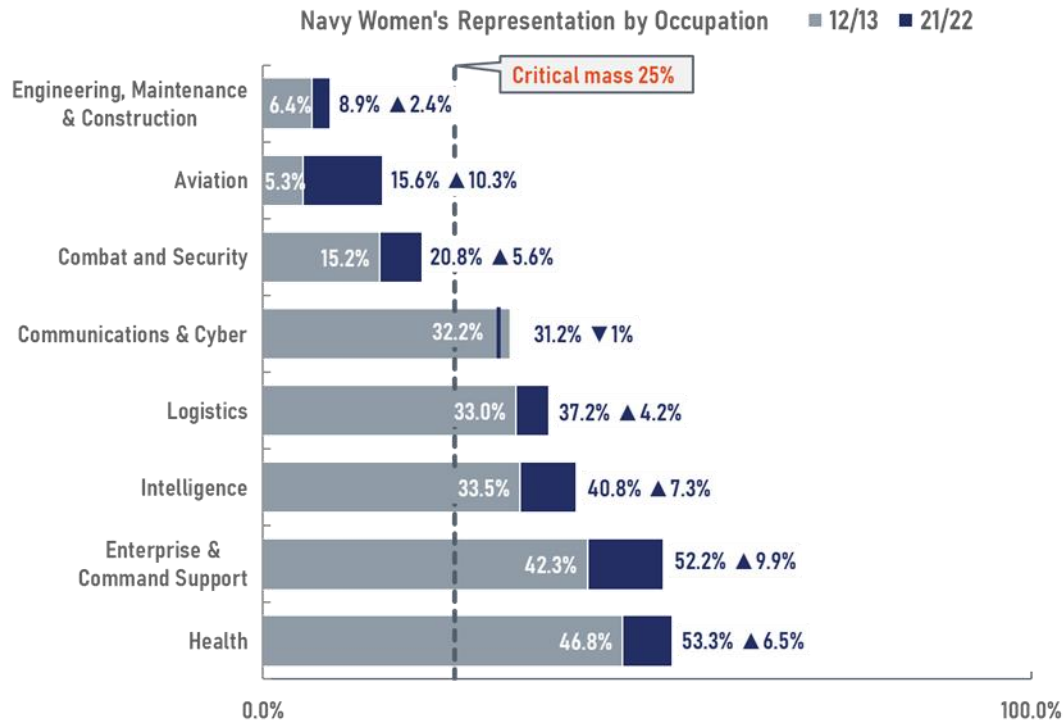


Figure 5. Women’s representation across workforce segments in Navy, 2012-13 and 2021-22¹⁴

An example of a strategy being used to deliver future workforce in critical segments is Navy’s Mastery Career Pathways. It has an aligned intent to improve the representation of women in segments. It involves an approach to professional competence, career development and individual growth, regardless of profession, gender, experience or rank. As part of the implementation of Navy Mastery into the career continuum, from Mar to Aug 22 the Navy Workforce Strategy and Futures team held a series of Mastery Career Pathways (MCP) workshops for Warfare Community workgroups. 150 participants from 31 workgroups designed Mastery Career Pathways, high level competencies and exposure and experience opportunities for their workgroup.

The MCP is a systemic intervention which provides a higher level of flexibility for personnel to see and plan their futures, than the current career continuums. MCPs are not designed to be gender specific, however they provide individuals with the ability to have more informed career conversations with their supervisors and career managers. This goes some way to recognising family/personal requirements and work/life balance and may balance gender bias in organisational

¹⁴ Source: Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse.

planning. MCPs also encourage and enable diversification of careers into the Joint streams, by providing achievable targets outside of the core tactical and technical pathway.

Army

Army has achieved critical mass in two of eight segments: Enterprise and Command Support and Health. In the large majority of segments women are not seen in significant numbers. There have been improvements in women’s participation in Intelligence and Logistics since 2012-13. This suggests continued occupational segregation as a result of male dominated workforces in the majority of categories (Figure 6). When Army segments are examined by combat and non-combat roles, only two combat segments, Aviation and Combat and Security, have any women (10.4% and 1.9% - figures are different from table the which does not show a combat/non-combat breakdown).

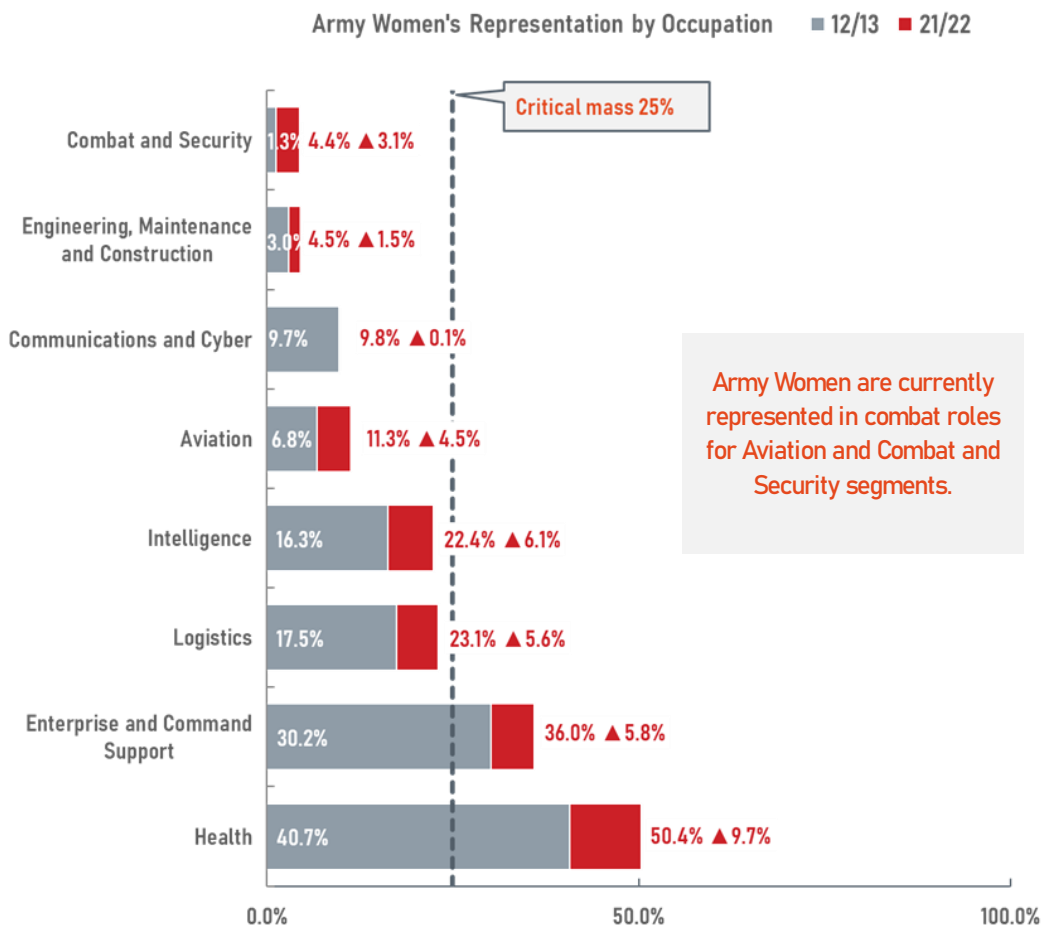


Figure 6. Women’s representation across workforce segments in Army, 2012-13 and 2021-22¹⁵

¹⁵ Source:
12

Air Force

Air Force have achieved critical mass for women in four of eight segments and are close to achieving critical mass in Combat and Security (22.6%). Since 2012-13 significant improvements in participation have been achieved in the Communications and Cyber and Enterprise and Command Support workforce segments (see Figure 7).

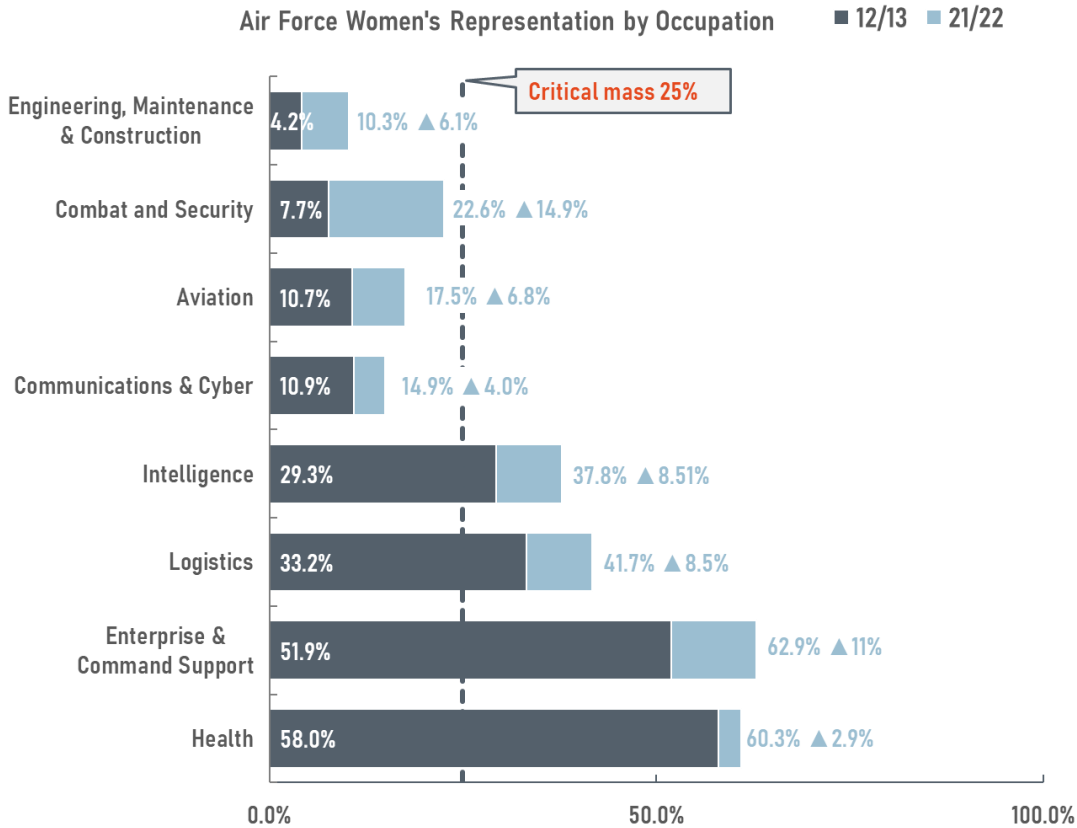


Figure 7. Women’s representation across workforce segments in Air Force, 2012-13 and 2021-22¹⁶

Occupational segregation is easier to identify than to address. Internationally, best practice guidelines suggest defining clear lines of accountability for monitoring and overseeing initiatives to address the issue, having transparent reporting of regular audits and set equality outcomes all drive change.¹⁷

¹⁶ Source: Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse.

¹⁷ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Accountability for addressing the occupational segregation and closing the gender wage gap. <https://www.oecd.org/gender/governance/toolkit/public-administration/gender-wage-gaps/accountability-structures/>. Accessed 17 November 2022.

KPI 3: Increased acceptance of flexible work

Flexible work is a formal arrangement between an employee and workplace to change the standard working agreement. It does not include accommodations made for caring, compassionate or parental leave as these fall within the category of regular leave arrangements. In most workplaces flexible work includes flexible hours of work, compressed working weeks, time-in-lieu, telecommuting, part-time work, job-sharing, purchased leave, unplanned leave, flexible careers and other ad hoc arrangements.¹⁸

The ADF introduced the Total Workforce System (TWS) in 2016 to support and allow different ways of working for members. Both formal Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) and informal arrangements are offered. Formal arrangements include part-time service in SERCAT 6. Informal arrangements include the range of other types of work listed above and are managed locally (meaning that the level of their use is difficult to account for).

A 2021 evaluation of TWS found that pandemic working has demonstrated that physical proximity is not a requirement for all military work and that flexibility can be valuable professionally and personally. However, “further evolution in both processes and member views would be required before the TWS is seen to be achieving its full potential” and “despite flexible working being embraced by those who can access it, there is a little more reticence when thinking about flexible Service and changing SERCAT levels for some.”¹⁹

The evaluation further noted that “cultural attitudes towards flexible Service appear to be slowly changing, however, the stigma of working less than full-time is perceived to remain strong in many units” and “there still remains some degree of stigma and bias against SERCAT 6 members.”²⁰ The evaluation of TWS revealed that SERCAT 6 has a gendered component in being seen by many to be a category for working mothers and as a means of transitioning women from maternity leave to full-time Service. These perceptions may hamper uptake by people with other incentives for flexible work.

Contemporary workplaces need to be able to offer flexible work opportunities in order to attract and keep employees. The Women’s Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) refers to them as “key enablers of attraction, retention and optimal utilisation of gender diverse talent.”²¹ Provision of flexible work opportunities is one way for an organisation to recognise the different needs of employees and support their continued contribution. It is a way for organisations to see, value and retain employees and members who may not be able, or wish, to work in traditional ways.

¹⁸ Workplace Gender Equality Agency, <https://www.wgea.gov.au/flexible-work>. Accessed 14/09/22

¹⁹ EY Sweeney (June 2021), TWS Evaluation Year 3 Qualitative Component, p.5.

²⁰ EY Sweeney (June 2021), TWS Evaluation Year 3 Qualitative Component, pp.45-46.

²¹ Workplace Gender Equality Agency (2019) [Gender Strategy Toolkit: A Direction for achieving gender equality in your organisation](#). Accessed 13/09/22.



Progress against increased acceptance of flexible work will be measured against the following sub-indicators:

- a. Equal use of flexible work arrangements by men and women.
- b. Equal access to flexible work.
- c. Similar perceptions of the impact of flexible work on careers.

Key Findings for KPI 3

Ongoing cultural perceptions of the negative impact and de-valuing of flexible work alongside women carrying the responsibility of child and other caring responsibilities affect how women are recognised and valued in the workplace.

Use of flexible work has significantly increased in the last decade.

- Use of FWA is highly gendered with more than twice the percentage of women using it than men (except for Officers over the age of 60 where there are three times as many men using FWA).
- Both men and women report that their units would not support use of FWA.
- Men and women have similar perceptions of the impact of flexible work on careers – that pursuing flexibility will have negative career outcomes. This perception is particularly strong in Army.

Flexible Work

In 2021-22, 7.8% of women in the ADF accessed formal FWA compared with 3% of men (Figure 8). This is a significant increase on the average use of FWA across the ADF in 2012-13 of 0.03%. Across the Services in 2021-22 slightly more than twice the percentage of women used FWA than men. Army has traditionally had the lowest levels of flexible work available (0% in 2012-13). This has increased to 1.8% over the decade (3.7% of women and 1.5% of men).

Formal FWA are by their nature bureaucratic. Anecdotally many members prefer to use informal arrangements which makes it difficult to access data and monitor uptake. Informal flexible work arrangements are often made between individuals and their immediate chain-of-command. One of the few data sources is the ADF Census which reports that 14% of Permanent ADF members had used some sort of FWA in the 12 months prior to the Census. This is much higher than the 4% reported use of FWA in 2021-22 (see Figure 9) that may suggest that the workplace may be more open to flexible working than formal monitoring reveals. The most common flexible work arrangements included variable working hours used by almost four in five (79%) Permanent ADF

members; and up from 61% in the 2019 Census.²² Other common arrangements are Home Located Work and Alternate Located Work.

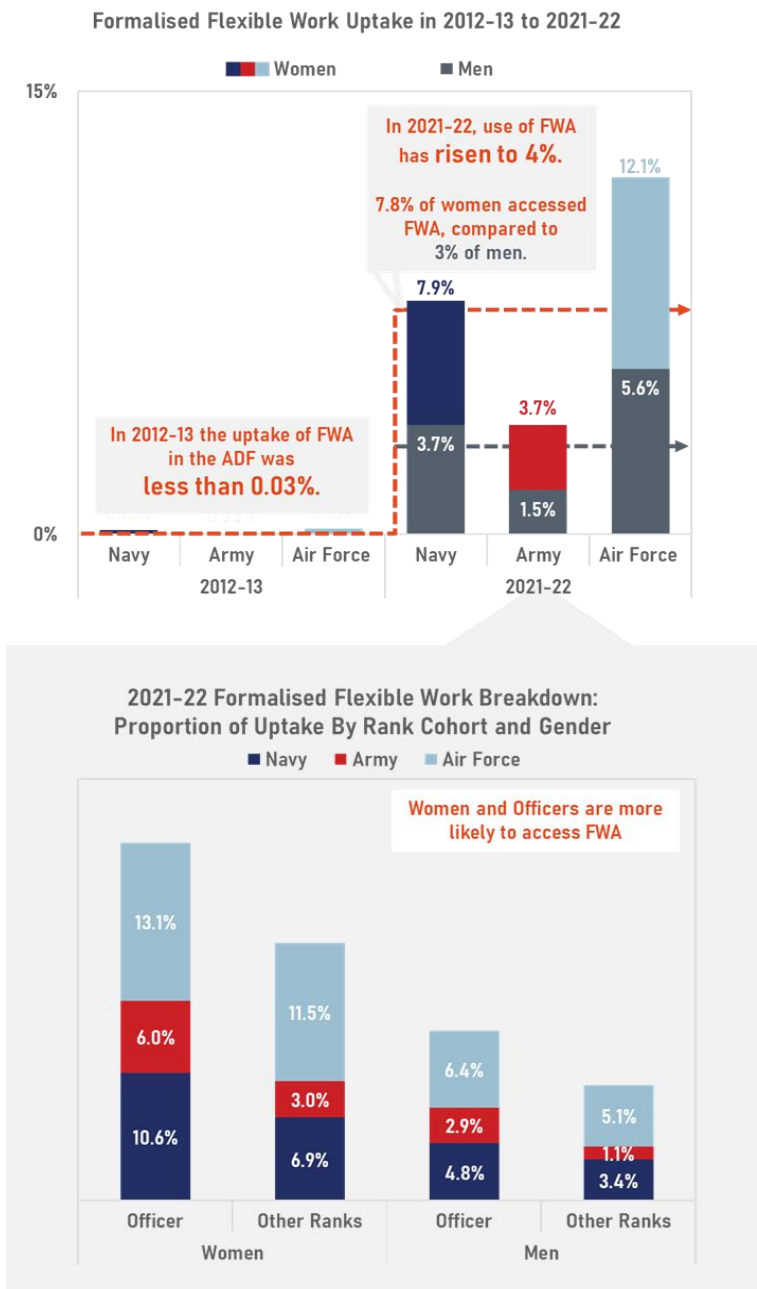


Figure 8. Use of FWA by women and men by Services as a percentage of total uptake, 2012-13 and 2021-22²³

²² ADF Census 2019, [Fact Sheet 4 - Work and Life Balance](#)

²³ Source: Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse.

Impact of flexible work on careers

Fewer than half of men and only slightly more than half of women report that their unit would support them to undertake flexible Service. (Your Say 2021)

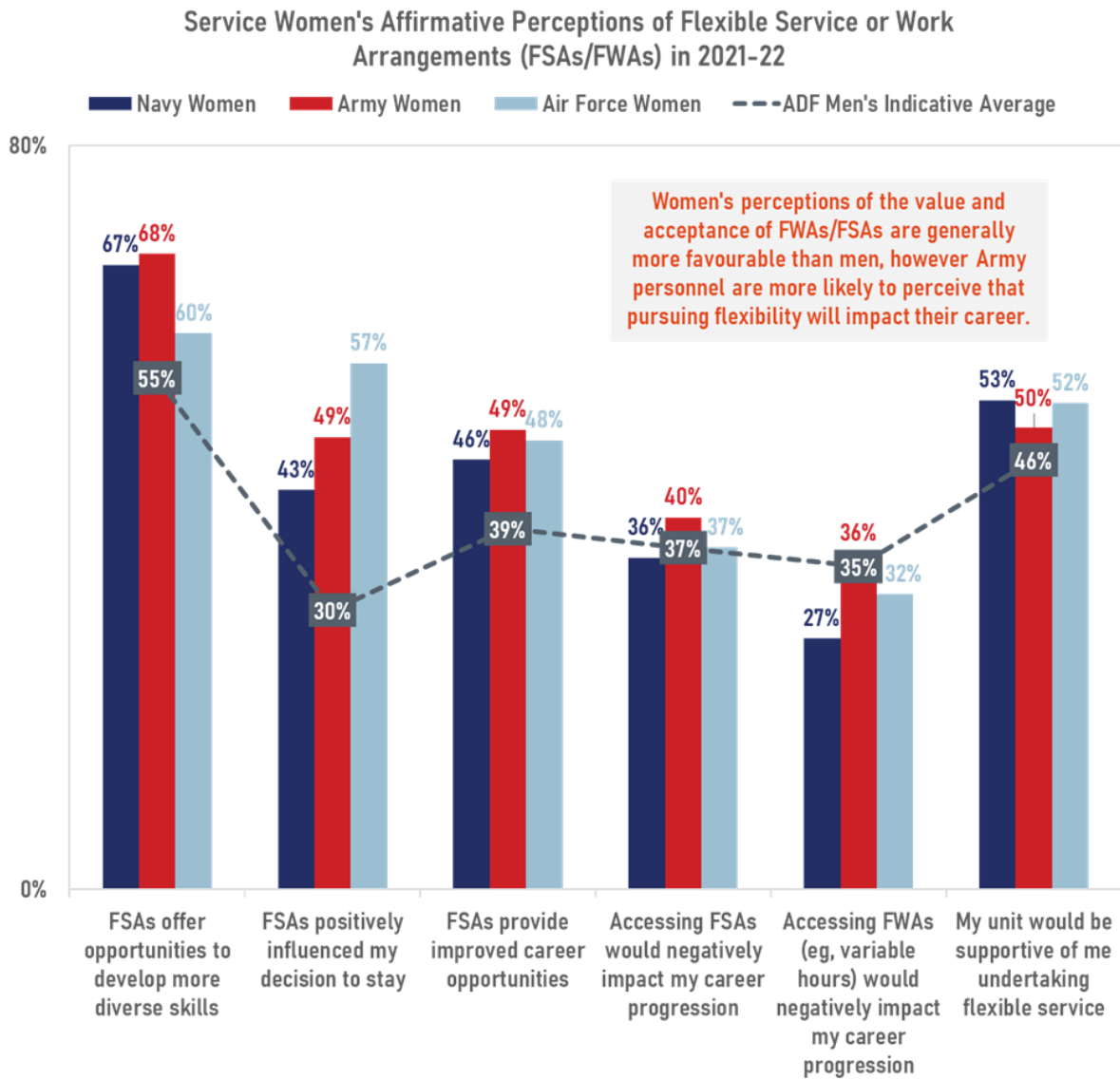


Figure 9. Reported perceptions of Flexible Service impacting career, 2021-22²⁴

²⁴ Source: Defence Your Say Survey data sets, June 2021-June22.



In 2013, there is YourSay data for two of the items “My CO/Branch Manager actively supports work-life balance and flexible work arrangements” and “If I accessed flexible working arrangements (such as working part time) my career progression would be negatively impacted.” 63% of women and 57.9% of men agreed that they had active support for flexible work arrangements. This suggested a significant decrease in organisational support of flexible work and warrants investigation.

In 2013, 41.6 % of women and 44.4% of men ADF members considered their career would be negatively impacted by accessing flexible working arrangements. This figure is comparable with 2021-22 (Figure 9) and indicates enduring non-recognition of the value of flexible work.

Women report seeing flexible Service as a development opportunity and access to this influenced decisions to stay and improved career opportunities (Figure 9). Both men and women however, share the perception that career progression will be affected by use of flexible arrangements. In the ADF the timings and patterns of Service are integral to career progression. For example, in Army the eight year career progression from Captain to Lieutenant-Colonel occurs between approximately the ages of 30 and 38. Deviance from this normative pattern, for example, for maternity or other family leave, interrupts and resets progression affecting women’s advancement to seniority. The assumptions underpinning this model of progression should be revisited to find ways to give women standing and demonstrate recognition for achievement and skills. Minimising interruption leads to better outcomes for inclusion and for capability.

Flexible work arrangements are widely agreed to be vitally important enablers of diverse and committed workforces. The 2012 Broderick Report recommended that “The ADF should therefore increase the availability of formal flexible working arrangements to its members.”²⁵ This Report has reported since 2013 against an ADF target of 2% use of FWA. While this may be a historical artefact, it provides a benchmark for this comparison of 2013 and 2021-22.

The discrepancy between the target (2%) and the actual use of FWA (4%) indicates that there is a greater subscription to flexible work than the organisation anticipated. Attention must focus on changing negative perceptions of flexible work and individuals who access these arrangements. Associated structural impediments for both women and men to accessing flexible work are likely to affect both recruitment and retention. The Defence Gender Research Program intends to conduct a detailed analysis of the use and access to flexible work with the intention of producing a discussion paper on flexible work in the upcoming financial year.

²⁵ Australian Human Rights Commission (2012). Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force, Phase 2 Report, p.228.



KPI 4: Efforts to ensure more women have opportunities to reach leadership positions

Leadership positions are an important way for organisations to demonstrate that women are recognised and valued, that their contribution is seen. Historically progress towards efforts that ensure more women have opportunities to reach leadership positions has been measured against the following sub-indicators:

- a. An increasing proportion of women are involved in mentoring, sponsorship and networking programs. There is a working assumption that mentoring, sponsorship and networking are valuable. This may hold true at the level of individual benefit but not at an organisational level.
- b. Women participate in Defence-sponsored education at a proportional rate to men.
- c. Women are represented on all promotion boards
- d. Women are represented on all senior committees.
- e. The contribution of women and men is valued and recognised equally (through representation across Defence Honours and Awards).

This KPI does not address the question of whether accessing these opportunities ensures the achievement of leadership positions or whether there are other factors that enable access to leadership positions. Evidence from the wider community shows that while women participate in and graduate from education programs at higher rates than do men this does not translate into leadership roles. Research suggests that for the ADF, factors such as occupational segregation, social and historical norms, judgements of merit, structural impediments and networks of influence appear to interact to make it difficult for women to reach leadership positions.

Key Findings for KPI 4

Over the past decade women’s participation in Defence-sponsored education has increased significantly. This has not translated to equality through valuing and recognition in leadership roles, promotion boards and honours and awards.

- Women are not yet represented on all promotion boards. The only Service that has been able to achieve this is Navy.
- ADF women’s representation on senior committees has increased significantly since 2012-13 but continues to fall short of either proportional or aspirational representation (Government target of women holding 50% of Government board positions).
- Women received honours and awards (including non-operational honours) at a lower rate than their participation in the ADF.

Mentoring, Sponsorship and Networking

Compared to 2020/21 many fewer Navy women participated in mentoring or leadership programs in 2021-22 (fewer than half the numbers). Numbers of Army women reported as participating in these programs remained steady (8 in 2020/21 and 9 in 2021-22). Air Force more than doubled its numbers of women participating in these programs (110 in 2020/21 compared to 241 in 2021-22). Mentoring participation was not collected in 2012-13 although the report indicated that this data would be collected in future.

Table 2. Single Service programs that support mentoring, networking and sponsorship and number of women attending, 2021-22

Navy		Army		Air Force	
Program	No.	Program	No.	Program	No.
Navy Women Mentoring	94	Chief executive women's leadership program	5	Art of Mentoring Cohort 1	127
Advanced Leadership Program	2	Group individual executive coaching program	2	Art of Mentoring Cohort 2	114
Executive Ready Program	4	Great leaders are made (GLAM)	2		
Leading Edge	3				
Women and Leadership Australia symposiums	26				

In the context of the size of the ADF, these numbers do not provide clarity or significance in monitoring access to leadership.

Access to Professional Education

All Services have achieved a significant increase since 2012-13 in the percentage of women participating in ADFA Post-Graduate Study (Table 3). Army has seen the greatest increase in both ADFA Post-Graduate Study and use of the Defence Assisted Study Scheme over the decade. More than half of members using the Defence Assisted Study Scheme are women with Army women using the scheme at the highest rate. This aligns with national figures on the representation of women in completed undergraduate and postgraduate higher education courses of 60.4%.²⁶ Although women continue to access and succeed in education this is not yet mirrored by workplace equality in the wider community or in the ADF.

Table 3 Women's participation rate in Professional Education schemes, 2012-13 and 2021-22²⁷

Education Scheme	Navy		Army		Air Force	
	2012-13 %	2021-22 %	2012-13 %	2021-22 %	2012-13 %	2021-22 %
ADFA Post-Graduate study	16.9	47.8	9.7	68.3	25.4	50
Defence Assisted Study Scheme	27.6	50.3	23	79	30.3	52
Long Term Civil Schooling	--	76.5	--	--	--	--
Chief of Defence Force Fellowship	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sir Richard Williams Research Fellowship	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100

Representation of Women in Promotion Boards and Senior Committees

Representation of women on promotion boards

It is ADF policy to have women represented on all Promotion Boards. In Navy and Air Force, this policy also applies to Selection Boards for command and charge appointments as well as Warrant Officer Tier selections. All three Services were close to achieving this goal (Table 4). The Services report that significant effort was made to ensure all boards had greater representation of women however last minute changes due to COVID restrictions prevented a 100% success rate.

²⁶ Department of Education and Training (2020), Higher Education Statistics Data Cube (uCube). 28 April 2021.

²⁷ Navy, Army and Air Force training and education data.

Table 4. Number and proportion of promotion boards (for permanent force - SERCAT 7-6) with at least one female board member by Service and rank group, 2021-22

	Navy			Army			Air Force		
	No. of Boards	No. with at least one woman	% with at least one woman	No. of Boards	No. with at least one woman	% with at least one woman	No. of Boards	No. with at least one woman	% with at least one woman
Officers	25	25	100%	5	5	100%	67	64	96%
Other ranks	54	54	100%	144	129	90%	139	117	84%
Total	79	79	100%	149	134	90%	206	181	88%

Representation of ADF women on Defence senior decision-making committees

The Australian Government has committed to a gender diversity target of women holding 50% of Government board positions overall, and women and men holding at least 40% of positions at the individual board level.²⁸ The Department of Defence’s achievement towards this target is reported annually to Government.²⁹

It is difficult to make direct comparisons to the 2012-13 data as the names of the senior committees has changed. In 2021-22 the proportion of women on senior committees was 25% (see Table 5). Two committees, Strategic Policy Committee and Defence Committee, had no representation of women. ADF women represented only 19% of the total and were not represented on five of twelve committees, compared to ADF men who held 81% of the committee roles.

In 2013 one committee had no women on it (Defence Audit and Risk Committee) and the overall representation of women was 12.25%. ADF women were not represented on seven of twelve committees and represented only 2.72% of the total (compared with 9.5% representation by APS women). (2013 Women in the ADF Report)

²⁸ <https://www.pmc.gov.au/office-women/leadership/gender-balance-australian-government-boards>.

²⁹ Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Report 2018-19. Retrieved from <https://www.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/gender-balance-report-2018-19.pdf>

Table 5. 2021-22 committee representation³⁰

Tier	Name of Committee	No. ADF Men	No. ADF Women	No. APS Men	No. APS Women	Proportion of Women (ADF and APS)	Proportion of Women (ADF only)
1	Defence Committee (DC)	3	0	4	0	0%	0%
1	Defence Audit & Risk Committee (DARC)	1	0	3	2	33%	0%
2	Chiefs of Service Committee (COSC)	9	4	1	1	33%	31%
2	Enterprise Business Committee (EBC)	7	0	5	3	20%	0%
2	Investment Committee (IC)	6	0	5	3	21%	0%
2	Defence Strategic Policy Committee	4	0	5	0	0%	0%
3	Defence People Committee	5	2	2	5	50%	29%
3	Defence Finance and Resourcing Committee	6	1	6	3	25%	14%
3	Defence Communication & IS Capability Committee	7	2	8	3	25%	22%
3	Defence Security Committee	6	2	3	2	31%	25%
3	Defence Joint Warfare Committee	7	3	0	0	30%	30%
3	Intelligence Enterprise Committee	8	2	6	0	13%	20%
Totals		69	16	48	22	25%	19%

In conclusion, ADF women’s representation on senior committees has increased significantly since 2012-13 but continues to fall short of either proportional or aspirational representation (Government target of women holding 50% of board positions). The longstanding argument that appointment on these boards and committees is determined by position fails to support gender equity goals and Defence’s commitment to Government. The introduction of charters has gone some way to improving the representation of women on these senior committees.

Honours and Awards

Comparison of honours and awards is difficult between time periods owing to the different contexts existing in given time periods and opportunities to participate in actions that may lead to awards (for example, whether there have been warlike or non-warlike deployments in a given period of time). Table 6 offers a straightforward comparison of honours and awards to women as a proportion of all honours and awards. In 2021-22 17% of all honours and awards presented were given to women. This is a lower rate than the proportion of women in the ADF (20.1%) (Table 6).

Army presented the greatest number of honours and awards overall followed by Navy and Air Force. Navy presented honours and awards to women at a higher rate than their overall participation rate (26.73% compared with 23.5%). Army presented honours and awards at a lower rate than women’s

³⁰ Permanent committee members only. Other attendees include permanently invited guests (e.g. Associate Secretary, Deputy Secretary Defence People) and strategic advisors, some of whom are women.



participation in Army (13.46% compared with 15.1%) and Air Force presented honours and awards to women at a rate commensurate with their overall participation in Air Force (26.24% compared with 26.1%) (Table 6).

These differences are not explained by examining operational and non-operational honours and awards separately. The conventional explanation that women deploy at a lower rate than men and thus receive operational honours and awards at a lower rate is not supported by the fact that women are recognised for non-operational honours and awards at a lower rate than for operational awards.

In 2021-22 women received 18% of all Operational awards
and 16.05% of Non-Operational honours and awards.

As a proportion of awards and honours given, women are less likely to receive honours and awards in Army and more likely to be recognised in Air Force and Navy (Table 6). Formal recognition is a symbolic and tangible way to demonstrate that women are valued. A commitment is needed to improve the likelihood of women being recommended for awards and to assessing criteria for bias that may create barriers for women.

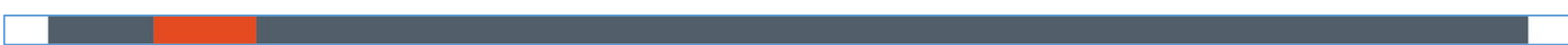


Table 6. Formal Honours and Awards by Service 2021-22 of awards to women as a proportion of all awards³¹

		Navy	Army	Air Force	Total to ADF Women
Operational Service Awards	Distinguished Service Cross and Medal (28 awards)	0 of 0 awards (0.0%)	0 of 25 awards (0.0%)	1 of 3 awards (33.0%)	1 of 27 awards (3.6%)
	Conspicuous Service Cross Medal (17 awards)	1 of 2 awards (50.0%)	4 of 13 awards (31.0%)	0 of 2 awards (0.0%)	5 of 17 awards (29.4%)
	Operational Service Medal (2,180 awards)	95 of 351 awards (37%)	180 of 1,315 awards (1.5%)	131 of 514 awards (34.2%)	406 of 2,180 awards (18.6%)
	TOTAL Operational Service Awards	96 of 353 awards (27.1%)	184 of 1,353 awards (13.6%)	132 of 519 awards (25.43%)	412 of 2,224 awards (18.3%)
Non-Operational Service Awards	Order of Australia, Officer member and Medal (81 awards)	4 of 24 awards (16.6%)	7 of 40 awards (17.5%)	6 of 17 awards (35.2%)	17 of 81 awards (21.0%)
	Conspicuous Service Cross and medal (108 awards)	5 of 27 awards (18.5%)	7 of 45 awards (15.5%)	9 of 36 awards (25%)	21 of 108 awards (19.4%)
	Australia Day Medallion (210 awards)	20 of 55 awards (36.4%)	19 of 102 awards (18.6%)	17 of 53 awards (32.1%)	56 of 210 awards (26.7%)
	Service Tenure Medals (3,152 awards)	222 of 1,194 awards (18.6%)	254 of 1,958 awards (13%)	0 of 0 awards (0.0%)	476 of 3,152 awards (15.1%)
	TOTAL Non-Operational Service Awards	251 of 1,300 awards (19.3%)	287 of 2,145 awards (13.4%)	32 of 106 awards (30.19%)	570 of 3,551 awards (16.05%)
Percentage of women receiving a Honour and Award from all awards		442 of 1,653 awards (26.73%)	471 of 3,498 awards (13.46%)	164 of 625 awards (26.24%)	982 of 5,775 awards (17.0%)

³¹ Source: Defence Directorate of Honours and Awards.



KPI 5: Retention of women is equal to men

Retention is a particular focus given the ADF's substantial strategic and workforce needs. Retention is impossible to separate from the other KPIs as the indicators interact to form a complex web of incentives, disincentives and experiences. This chapter must be read in conjunction with the whole report to understand how the KPIs interact and influence each other and how recognition, value and "seeing" create push and pull factors that influence women's experience in the ADF and decision to stay or leave.

Retention is assumed to be a function of recognition and value. An organisation that includes women on an equal basis and not as unusual or "guests" should have a retention advantage with women. It may also have a retention advantage with men in a diverse and inclusive environment.

Progress towards retention of women is measured against the following sub-indicators:

- a. Women are retained in the ADF at the same rate as men.
- b. The gap between women's and men's time in Service (at separation) is reduced.
- c. Women and men are retained at the same rate after maternity and parental leave.
- d. Childcare meets family needs.

Key Findings for KPI 5

Women are serving longer in the ADF than they did a decade ago, but only a third of women come back to Service after a long career break. A lack of recognition of different ways of serving and de-valuing of Service breaks means that the ADF is not retaining valuable members in whom significant investment has been made.

- Women Officers across all three Services are now serving longer when compared to median time in Service in 2012-13.
- Only a third of women are retained after a long career break.
- Childcare is not meeting family needs with close to 10% of members reporting that they would not find childcare once posted. Over 90% of those reporting this were women.

Separation rates and types

ADF separation rates are regularly monitored and measured to track the outflow of personnel and its impact on workforce diversity. ADF separation rate³² in 2021-22 was 11.1% with men having a slightly higher separation rate (11.4%) than women (10.2%). In 2012-13, there were no significant gender differences between women’s and men’s separation rates (see Figure 10). Overall ADF men tend to have a higher separation rate than women. Similarly across the Services, men’s separation rate was higher than women’s, except in Army where and men separate at the same rate.³³

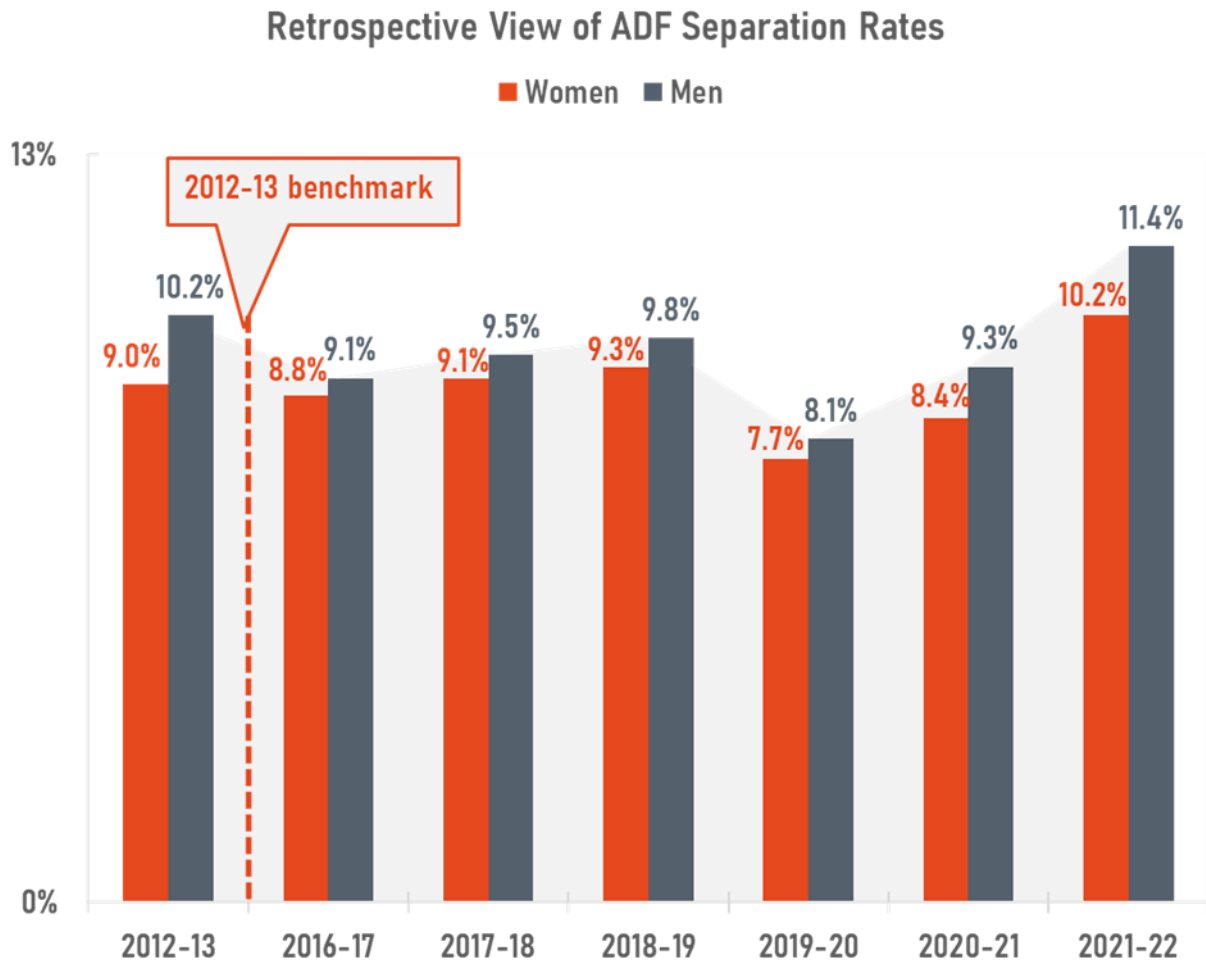


Figure 10. Total ADF Separation rates for women and men, 2012-13 and 2021-22³⁴

³² Separation rate is defined as the sum of separations divided by average 12 month rolling headcount for the financial year.

³³ Defence Monthly Workforce Report as at 1 July 2022.

³⁴ Source: Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse.



Time in Service when separating

Time in Service is measured by the median length of Service (years) at separation. Overall, men serve for longer than women. This has been the case since 2012. In 2021-22, men serve longer in Air Force than in Navy and Army (Figure 11).

When compared to 2012-13, Other Rank women continue to have lower median years of Service at separation. In 2021-22, Army Other Ranks women have the shortest Service time (4.4 years) compared with Other Ranks men (7.5 years). When compared to 2012-13, both Army and Air Force women in Other Ranks have a shorter serving time in 2021-22. Since 2012-13 Navy women in Other Ranks have had a slightly higher median time in Service on separation. However, women officers across all three Services are now serving longer compared to their median time in Service in 2012-13.

Differences in separation rates are likely to reflect the family-work conflict dynamics that affect decisions to stay or leave.³⁵ The gendered gap between women's and men's time in Service upon separation will continue to widen if current ADF employment and career management frameworks fail to strike the right balance between individual member's needs and those of the workplace. This finding is further confirmation of the conclusions in KPI 3 and suggests that delivering capability through an engaged and committed workforce requires workplace flexibility allowing women and men in the ADF to better balance their military careers with their personal lives.

³⁵ Defence, Defence Veterans Australia & Australian Institute of Family Studies. Australian Military and Veteran Families Study (forthcoming)

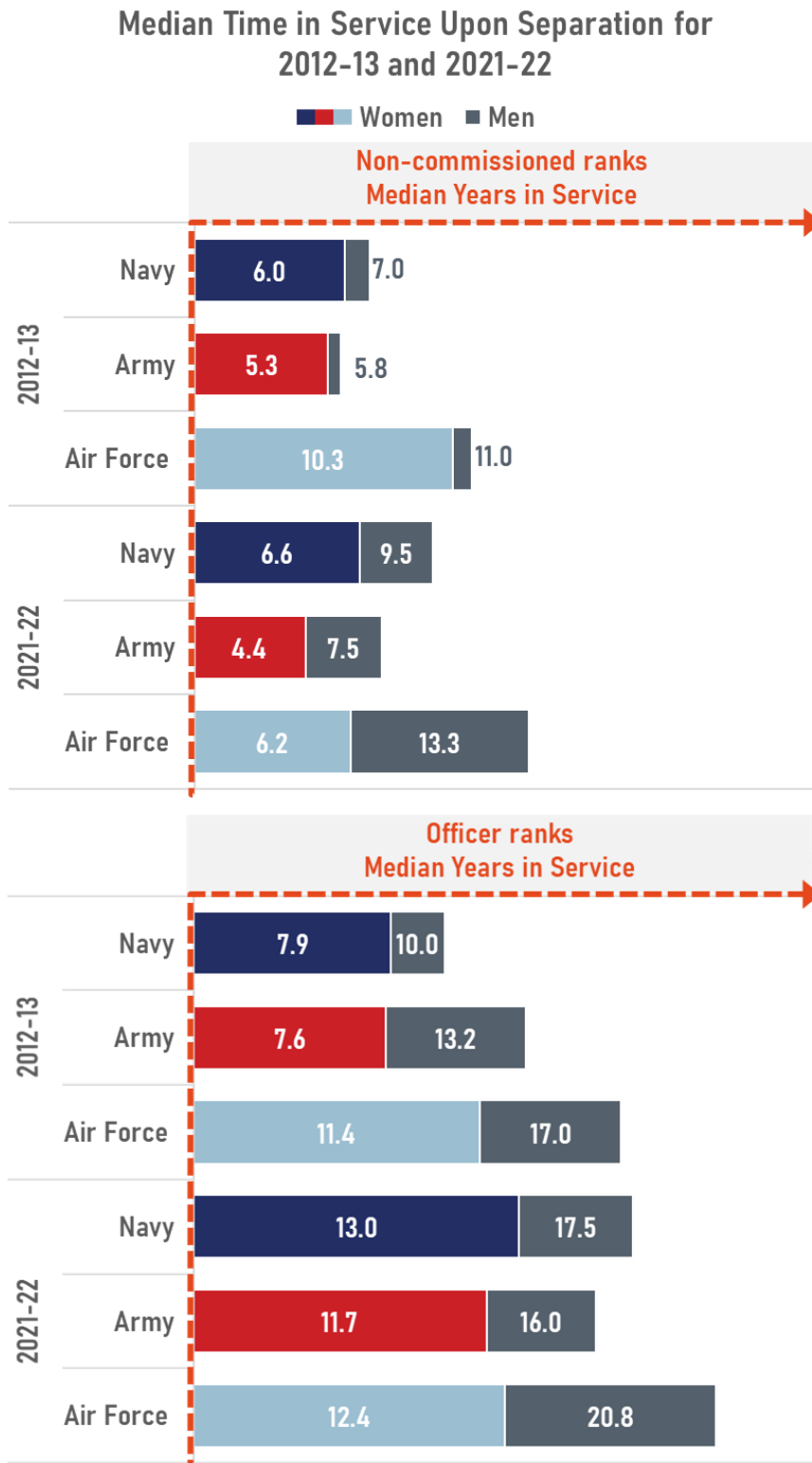


Figure 11. Median Time in Service when members separate, by Rank, Service, and Gender 2012-13 and 2021-22³⁶

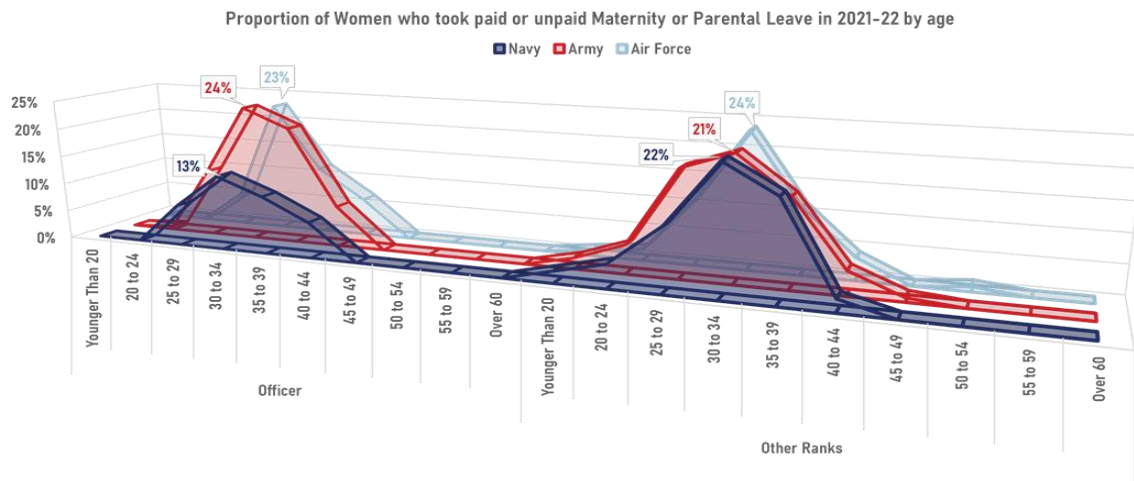
³⁶ Source: Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse.
29

Use of maternity and parental leave

In Australia, most employers offer paid parental leave, such as primary carer’s leave, secondary carer’s leave or parental leave which replaces an employee’s regular salary following the birth or adoption of a child.³⁷ Defence parental leave policies are changing to accommodate society and family structures as well as increasing participation of women in the workforce. These changes include access to, and use of, parental leave. Parental and maternity leave entitlements in Defence encourage and support ADF families as both carers and members. Defence’s maternity and parental leave provisions allow ADF members to take an absence of 52 weeks consisting of a combination of 18 weeks of paid maternity leave and parental leave.³⁸

In 2021-22, ADF women and men used a mix of paid or unpaid maternity leave and paternity leave (parental leave). Across all three Services, women were most likely to take maternity leave aged 30 to 34. The pattern of age groups across the Services taking maternity and/or paternity leave is positively associated with the ADF women’s life cycle and shows that women delay starting a family when they join the military (see Figure 12).

Men aged 30-34 across all Services also have the highest uptake of parental leave. For men Officers aged 30-34, Army has the highest uptake of parental leave (18 %), followed by Air Force (17%) and Navy (13%). Similarly, aged men across all Services have a similar uptake of parental leave (13%). However, the use of parental leave by ADF men remains relatively lower than ADF women. This confirms the Workplace Gender Equality Agency’s findings that employer-funded parental leave in Australia is largely used by women.³⁹



³⁷ Workplace Gender Equality Agency (2017) [Towards gender balanced parental leave: insight paper](#). Accessed 28/09/22.

³⁸ ADF Pay and Conditions Manual. [Part 6: Maternity leave | Pay and Conditions \(defence.gov.au\)](#) Accessed 28/09/22.

³⁹ Workplace Gender Equality Agency (2019) [Designing and supporting gender equitable parental leave](#). Accessed 05/10/22.

Figure 12. Proportion of ADF women who took paid or unpaid Maternity or Parental Leave by age cohort, 2021-22.⁴⁰

Organisational support and availability of paid parental leave is also linked to increased job satisfaction and attraction and retention of talent. A higher proportion of ADF women than men are retained 18 months after taking maternity or parental leave (Figure 13). However, more ADF men than women are retained three years and five years after taking maternity or paternity leave. This indicates that support may be needed for childcare and other responsibilities beyond provision of initial parental leave.

Childcare has an impact on ADF women well beyond maternity leave and this impact increases as children reach school age.

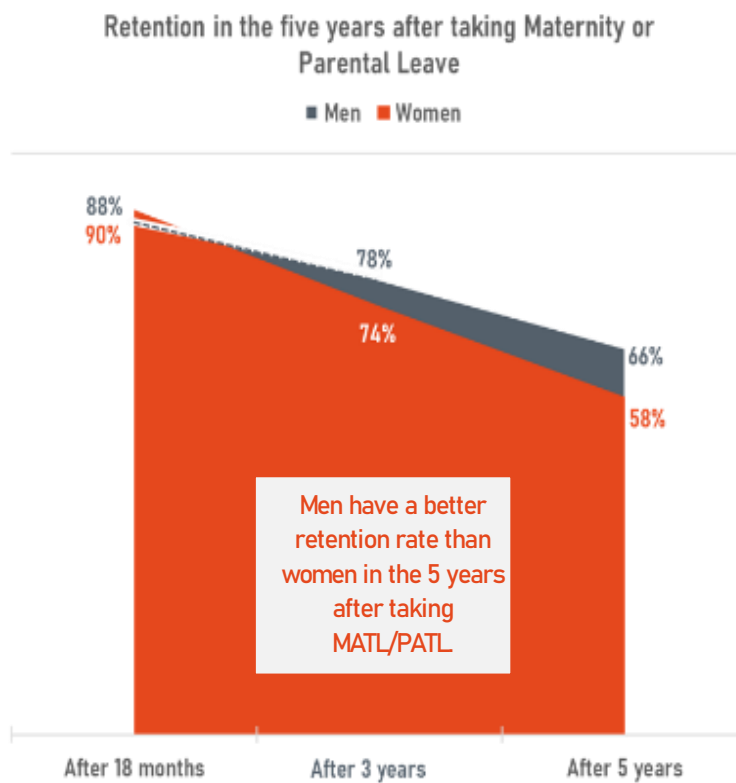


Figure 13. Retention of ADF women and men in the 18 months, 3 years and after 5 years of taking maternity and/or parental leave, 2021-22⁴¹

⁴⁰ Source: Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse.

⁴¹ Source: Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse.

The impact of paid maternity and parental leave on retention of ADF women and men after 18 months, three years and five years of taking the leave are similar across the three Services. Navy and Army have similar retention rates for women in the five years after taking either maternity or paternity leave. Overall, Air Force has a better retention rate for both women and men in the five years after taking either paternal or maternity leave, with 63.5% of women retained after five years. 44.7% of Navy and Army women will separate in the 5 years after taking maternity and/or parental leave. Air Force has a slightly lower rate of separation for women (Figure 13). Women and men not considered to be retained include those who have discharged, and those who have transferred from the permanent forces to serve in a Reserve capacity. In the last decade, an increasing number of women across all three Services are retained in the 18 months after taking maternity and/or paternity leave.

Career break

Retention of women and men in the ADF is not equal after they have taken a career break of 3 months or more. Since 2012-13, more men than women across all three Services are retained after a career break (see Figure 14). Only a third of women are retained after a long career break. In 2012-13, Air Force had the highest proportion of women retained after a career break, followed by Navy and then Army. Navy women were retained at a higher rate than Army and Air Force in 2021-22, with 47.2% of women retained after a long career break. Overall, retention of women in Army is lowest and has declined by 0.2% since 2012-13.

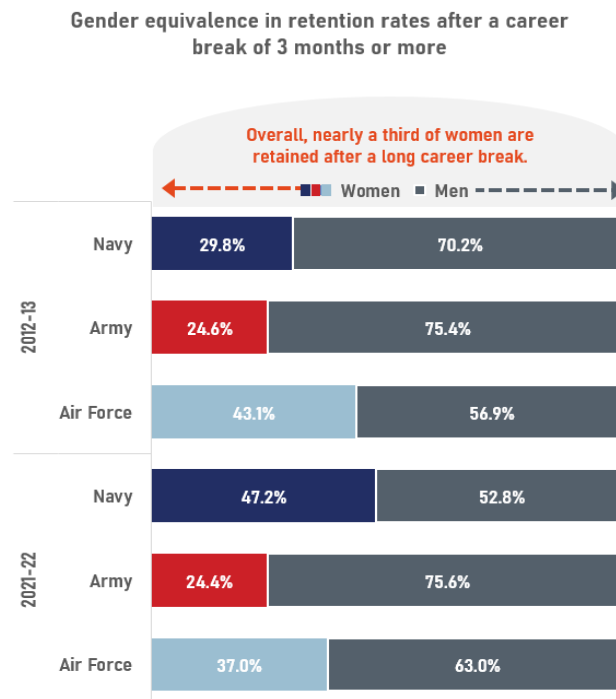


Figure 14. Retention rates of ADF personnel after taking a career break of 3 months or more, by Service and Gender, 2012-13 and 2021-22⁴²

⁴² Source: Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse.
32



Maintaining a work-life balance is a challenge for many families in Australia. This may be particularly true for ADF families, where at times, an imbalance is a requirement, especially during operations and deployments. For ADF members, juggling family and a military career is even a greater challenge, especially for women. Research suggests that despite efforts to improve women's representation in the military, mid-career women officers tend to separate at twice the rate of men officers in order to start a family.⁴³ Women's short term career perceptions are often associated with women's decisions to leave the military. Women's separation intentions often intersects strongly with work and family factors. There is a need to explore gendered patterns of Service and family life-course intersections to better understand factors impacting mid-career ADF women's retention decisions.

It is well established that family support and work-life balance are key influences in the retention of Service members, especially in the mid-career and later stages of Service. While Deliberately Differentiated Packages aim to mitigate some of the factors that influence a Service members' decision to leave, there is a need to improve its Employee Value Proposition that factors in conditions of Service (leave), work life balance and flexible work practices, workplace culture and work environment.⁴⁴

These findings are consistent with research that workplace culture supporting parental leave and flexible working conditions is a key driver of employment decisions for both women and men, especially young parents.⁴⁵ As such, focus on enabling access is likely to have a positive impact on retention. This would include ensuring provisions for and access to parental leave after the initial period of 18 months and identifying if any gaps in policy exist.

Challenges of retention are complex given the competition for skilled personnel is rapidly increasing across the labour market in Australia. A continuously improving organisational culture that adapts to evolving societal expectations is important in attracting and retaining women and men in the ADF.

Family needs: Members with Dependents and Childcare

Defence recognises that families support ADF member well-being and capability. For example, the *Defence Mental Health and Well-being Strategy 2018-2023* recognises families as "one of the most important contributors to the capability of Defence personnel"⁴⁶ and specifically discusses a need to support and engage with families. The need to support Defence family's well-being has also been highlighted by the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Interim Report and is a

⁴³ Erika King, Diana DiNitto, Christopher Salas-Wright and David Snowden (2020) 'Retaining Women Air Force Officers: Work, Family, Family, Career Satisfaction and Intentions', *Armed Forces & Society*. Vol.56 (4): 677-695.

⁴⁴ Defence Strategic Workforce Plan 2021 – Part Two.

⁴⁵ Workplace Gender Equality Agency (2019) [Designing and supporting gender equitable parental leave](#). Accessed 28/09/22

⁴⁶ [Defence Mental Health and Well Being Strategy 2018-2023](#)



government election commitment.⁴⁷ To do this effectively, Defence must understand the characteristics of ADF members' dependants and structure mechanisms to sustain and support.

Defence assigns ADF members one of three categories to understand ADF members' family responsibilities and support needs: Member with Dependants (MWD), Member with Dependants Unaccompanied (MWD(U)) and Member without Dependants (MWOD). These are based on Defence recognised relationships and dependants, and may not reflect ADF members actual self-reported relationships and responsibilities, or all family types.

Social norms have historically given women the primary caregiver role, however this idea is changing and men are taking up more household and caring responsibilities. Nevertheless, data from the 2019 Defence Census suggests that permanent ADF women are less likely to have dependants. In 2019, 52% of women in the permanent ADF workforce were classified as MWOD, 41% as MWD, and 6% as MWD(U).⁴⁸ Compared to men, a smaller proportion of women have dependent children (women 26.7%; men 40%) or other dependants (women 8.1%, men 21.7%).⁴⁹ Women are less likely to take MWD(U) status than men (5.9% and 8% respectively), and a larger proportion of women on MWD(U) do not to have dependent children or other dependants (women 3.7%, men 2.9%).⁵⁰ While there has been a general decrease in use of MWD(U) status between FY2011/12 and FY2021-22 in both men and women, MWD(U) is consistently used more by men and Officers (Figure 15). Women and Other Ranks are less likely to use MWD(U).

Childcare is an ongoing issue for ADF families. The partners of ADF members take on significant proportion of the child responsibilities due to ADF Service demands, so access to childcare becomes important to allow the partner to work. In many cases, individual serving couples decide to prioritise family over career for one member. The 2019 ADF Families Survey found that 8% of families with an ADF member who was MWD(U) within the last 4 years said that access to childcare was a consideration in the decision to go MWD(U).⁵¹ Similarly, for families who said partner employment was a reason for the ADF member being MWD(U) in the last 4 years, 9.3% indicated they wouldn't be able to access suitable childcare arrangements in the new posting location, which would impact ability to work. The majority (92.5%) of these partners were women.

⁴⁷ [Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide \(2022\) Interim Report](#). Accessed 14/10/22.

⁴⁸ [2019 Defence Census Report: Fact Sheet 9- Members with Dependents](#).

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ 2019 ADF Families Survey Report

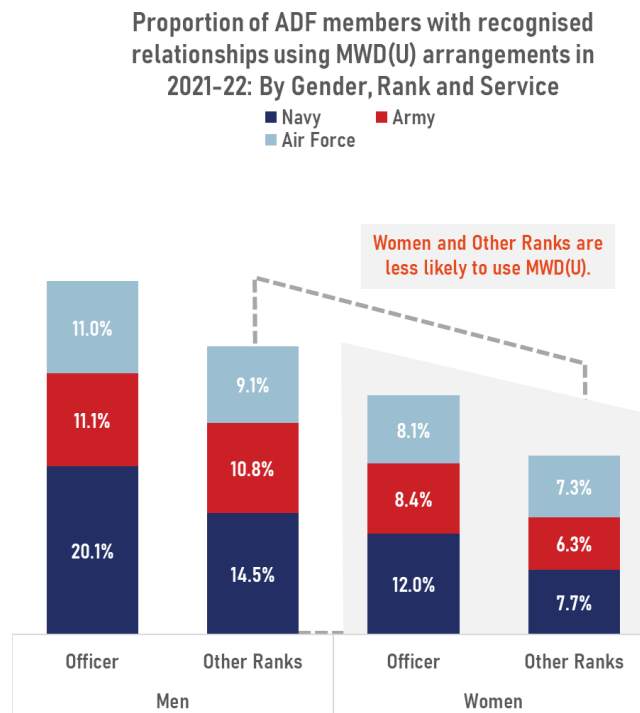


Figure 15. Distribution of Recognised Relationships using MWD(U) arrangements, 2021-22⁵²

The 2019 ADF Families Survey found that 16% of Permanent members who required childcare Services experienced difficulty securing childcare in a new location.⁵³ More than one in three (38%) had secured childcare Services in less than one month of moving to a new location—highest amongst Air Force (41%). Compared to other Services, Navy were the most likely to indicate that it took them more than 6 months to secure childcare (8%, compared with 5% for Air Force and 4% for Army). In practical terms for dual Service couples, this indicates that one partner is likely to have had a career interruption of up to six months following a posting in order to care for children. The continuing gendered nature of caregiving in Australia suggests this is likely to be the woman partner. In the family context this means that posting a dual Service couple may lead to a family income cut and disrupt work (and potentially career outcomes due to interruption of Service) for the partner providing care. In 2019 21.3% of couples (members with partners or a spouse) were dual Service and 19% of these couples had dependent children.

Senior Officers and SNCO/WO members were most likely to have secured childcare Services in less than one month (43% and 42% respectively), compared to Junior Officers and OR/JNCO members (38% and 35% respectively).⁵⁴ In addition, for those who live with the ADF member, 9.8% had difficulty finding meaningful employment in their current location because childcare options were unsuitable. This may relate to the scarcity of childcare. A 2022 report from the Mitchell Institute for

⁵² Source: Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ 2019 ADF Families Survey Report



Education and Health Policy at Victoria University⁵⁵ investigated accessibility of childcare in Australia and found that 35.2% of Australians live in a ‘childcare desert’. Preliminary mapping of Defence bases against the childcare accessibility map (Figure 16) from this study places approximately 60% of Defence bases in a childcare desert, however this drops to around 40% when considering directly surrounding ‘neighbourhoods’ (as some bases are an entire neighbourhood or are not included as inhabited). Nevertheless, it suggests that a large portion of Defence families are likely to be posted to a childcare ‘desert’ at some time. This may be why 55.4% of families with children not yet at school who relocated in the last 4 years, and said that it was difficult or very difficult to re-establish childcare in their new location (2019 ADF Families Survey).

72% of ADF members have dependents
[Couple + Single with dependent children + Single with other dependants]
(Defence Census 2019)

⁵⁵ Victoria University, Australia, [Deserts and oases: How accessible is childcare in Australia?](#) (March 2022).

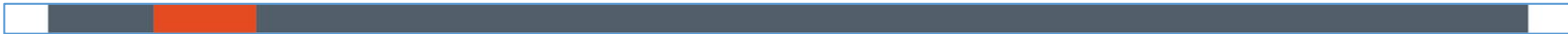




Figure 16. ADF Childcare deserts^{56 57}

Childcare should be accessible, sufficient, high quality and equitable. If Defence families face greater challenges than the Australian population in accessing childcare this degrades the social advantage of Service and affects ADF’s ability to attract and retain members with dependents. Given the gendered nature of childcare in Australia, access to childcare affects participation and makes it difficult for women’s value to be recognised in the workforce.

⁵⁶ With thanks to Claire Harris, Innovate Communicate for directing attention to this work and its potential application for Defence.

⁵⁷ Mapping has used postcode of the base, with classification based on the childcare need of those living within the postcode. Bases with no classification in the Australian childcare availability map are not included. Some bases have higher availability of childcare in the directly surrounding suburbs or within a 15 minute drive. Further investigation with advice from the researchers at Mitchell Institute (Victoria University) is needed to better understand how ‘childcare deserts’ should be understood and the real world implications of these shortages.

KPI 6: Number of women recruited against Service targets

Like KPI 1, recruitment of women against Service targets is a straightforward headcount. However, it can be seen as an indicator for how the ADF is perceived in the community and its attractiveness as an employer. The concepts of recognition and value of women as part of the ADF are integral to its attractiveness in the marketplace.

Progress towards recruitment of women against Service targets is measured against the following sub-indicators:

- a. The number of women recruited at or above the number required to meet each Service's annual women's recruitment target.
- b. Use of targeting initiatives for attraction and recruitment.

Key Findings for KPI 6

Since 2012-13, the Services have introduced a number of recruiting initiatives to meet their annual recruit targets and increase the proportional representation of women in the ADF. Significant shortfalls in meeting the recruit targets across all three Services suggests community perceptions of the ADF affect assessment of the ADF as a preferred employer.

- In 2021-22, the ADF met 54.2% of the recruitment target for women.
- The proportion of women recruited into the individual Services was 24% for Navy, 13.9% for Army and 31.1% for Air Force.
- More women are recruited against Officer Entry targets than General Entry across all three Services.
- All three Services achieved their Gap Year target for women.

Targets for women’s recruitment

The ADF shapes recruitment strategies for each of the three Services to achieve gender balance. Attraction and Recruitment is a critical function under the Defence People System because recruit targets sustain current workforce capability across the Services.

In 2021-22, the Services set a total recruit target of 2,573 women across the Permanent and Reserve forces, against which 1,395 women were recruited. This represents a target result of 54.2% for total ADF, which is a 7.1% decrease from 2020-21. This is however, set in the context of overall ADF Permanent recruiting declining from 90% of target in FY 2020-21 to 75% in 2021-22.⁵⁸ In 2021-22, women comprised 21.9% of the overall recruit targets for ADF women and men. The proportion of women successfully recruited into the individual Services was 24% for Navy, 13.9% for Army and 31.1% for Air Force.

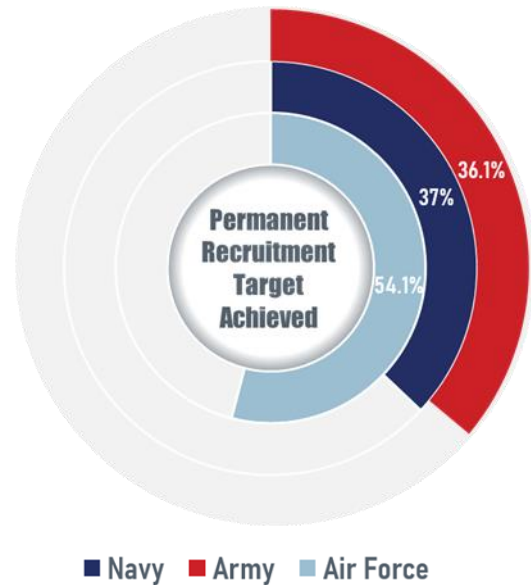


Figure 17. Percentage of women recruited against the Service target of 2021-22

Officer recruitment continues to be an area of success. More women are recruited against Officer Entry targets than General Entry across all three Services. Overall, Air Force is performing strongly in achieving a higher proportion of women’s recruitment targets than Navy and Army for both Officer and General entry, followed by Army and then Navy. This underperformance suggests that the ADF will face increased difficulty in meeting future recruiting goals.

■ Navy ■ Army ■ Air Force

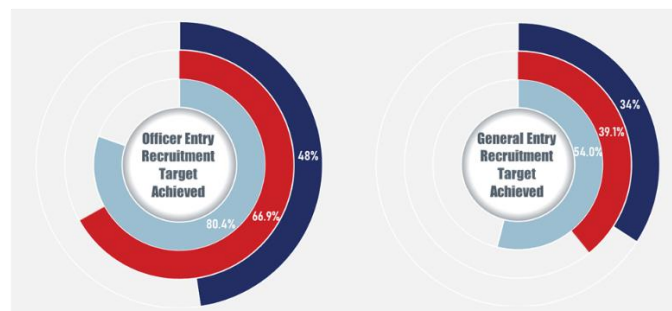


Figure 18. Percentage of women recruited against the Service targets, 2021-22

⁵⁸ Defence Monthly Workforce Report, 1 July 2022. Accessed 22 November 2022.

Across all Services, the recruitment of women into full-time roles has decreased in the last year while the recruitment of women into part-time roles and Gap Year has increased by 8% and 12% respectively. All three Services have achieved their Gap Year recruitment target for women in 2021-22 (see Figure 19).

Increasing the representation of women in the ADF will require greater inflow of women than Defence has historically achieved, over a sustained period. Contemporary societal expectations and labour market dynamics will continue to have an impact on the ADF's appeal – and in particular, women's propensity to serve. An external review of the recruitment of women into ADF study in 2020 suggested that just under 11% of women from 17 to 34 years who were also Australian citizens had an interest in the ADF and only a very small proportion (2.5%) of the target age groups are interested in the ADF.⁵⁹

Defence Force Recruiting (DFR) advertising aims to reduce the barriers that women may perceive in their pursuit of an ADF career. Evaluation of the *Do What You Love* campaign shows a sustained 5% upward trajectory in propensity for women to consider a career in the ADF over the past 12 months. DFR also has 19 positions for women recruiters who form the Specialist Recruiting Team – Women (SRT-W). The aim of SRT-W is to:

- source, attract, and engage prospects and influencers to consider the careers available within the Australian Defence Force.
- advise on, and implement, targeted strategies to progress female candidates in specific stages of the recruitment pipeline.

This is achieved through the delivery of influential and strategically planned mentoring, presentations, workshops and events. The teams provide subject matter advice to commanders on the status of women's recruitment in the pipeline as well as opportunities for improvement in the delivery of recruiting Services. However, fitness is perceived to be one of the major barriers to women's recruitment. SRT-W members focus much of their time on fitness programs and initiatives for candidates. A recent Australian Human Rights Commission report suggested that women's anxiety about the fitness test drives many women to withdraw. This report made a number of recommendations about applicability and use of the Pre-Fitness Assessment specifically for those moving into non-physical roles and mid-career entrants.⁶⁰

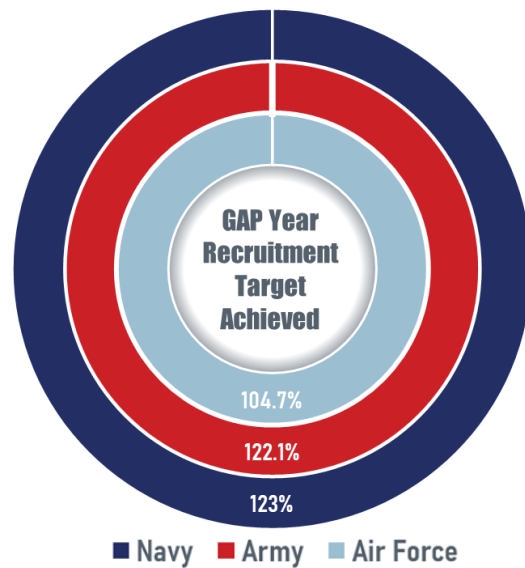


Figure 19. Percentage of women recruited against the GAP year target of 2021-22

⁵⁹ Australian Survey Research (2020) *Defence Force Recruiting: External review of recruiting women to the ADF*.

⁶⁰ Australian Human Rights Commission (February 2022). *Recruitment of Women to the ADF: Opportunities for process improvement in the DFR recruitment pipeline*.

Attention needs to be paid to ensure that recruiting bias does not disadvantage women over men in ADF processes. Significant shortfalls in meeting the recruitment targets across all three Services suggests the need to address some of the gender differentiated outcomes observed in the recruitment process. Not doing so may negatively affect Defence's ability to achieve critical ADF workforce profile to serve future capabilities. It is essential that women feel they are being recruited based on their strengths, capabilities and skills and not just to meet recruitment and participation targets.

Service initiatives to attract and recruit women

Following the Broderick review in 2012-13, all Services committed to a goal of increasing the representation of women in the ADF. There were no gender-based recruit targets set by the Services in 2012-13. Almost a decade since the review, Navy, Army and Air Force have introduced a number of recruiting initiatives to support ADF's recruitment growth rates and increase the proportional representation of women. Initiatives such as, Recruit to Area, Recruit when Ready, Army Pre-Conditioning Course, Reduced Initial Minimum Period of Service for both women and men only came into effect in 2013. The Services continue to develop and implement recruiting initiatives aimed at attracting and recruiting women to achieve their recruitment targets.

KPI 7: Completion rates for initial-entry training are equal between women and men

If women are to participate fully in the ADF, completion rates for initial entry training should be monitored. Where there are differences, this may point to areas requiring further examination to ensure that structural or policy barriers are not encountered on the basis of gender. The key challenge is to recognise and develop the value women bring to the Services while assuring standards are upheld.

There is no point of comparison with 2013 as this data is not available in the HR Data Warehouse.

Key Findings for KPI 7

Evidence suggests that there are no significant gendered differences in Initial Entry Training and that gendered obstacles are more likely to be encountered during recruitment and later Service.

Gendered analysis is not available for the 2012-13 period.

Initial Officer and Other Rank training completion rates and ADFA

Women have comparable completion rates to men across the Services for Initial Entry Officer Training in 2021-22.⁶¹ Pre-enlistment fitness support such as the Army Pre-Conditioning Program (APCP) are intended to assist women to meet the general entry-level fitness standard before they enlist. Overall women across all three Services tend to have slightly higher completion rates for Initial Entry Other Ranks training. Similarly, ADFA completion rates for women across the three Services is higher than for men. Navy, Army and Air Force completion rates for ADFA are 7%, 5% and 1% percentage points higher for women.

⁶¹ 2012/13 Women in ADF report did not report data on initial entry training completion rates or women and men.

Gender equivalence and percentage of initial entry and ADFA intake training completion as of 2021-22

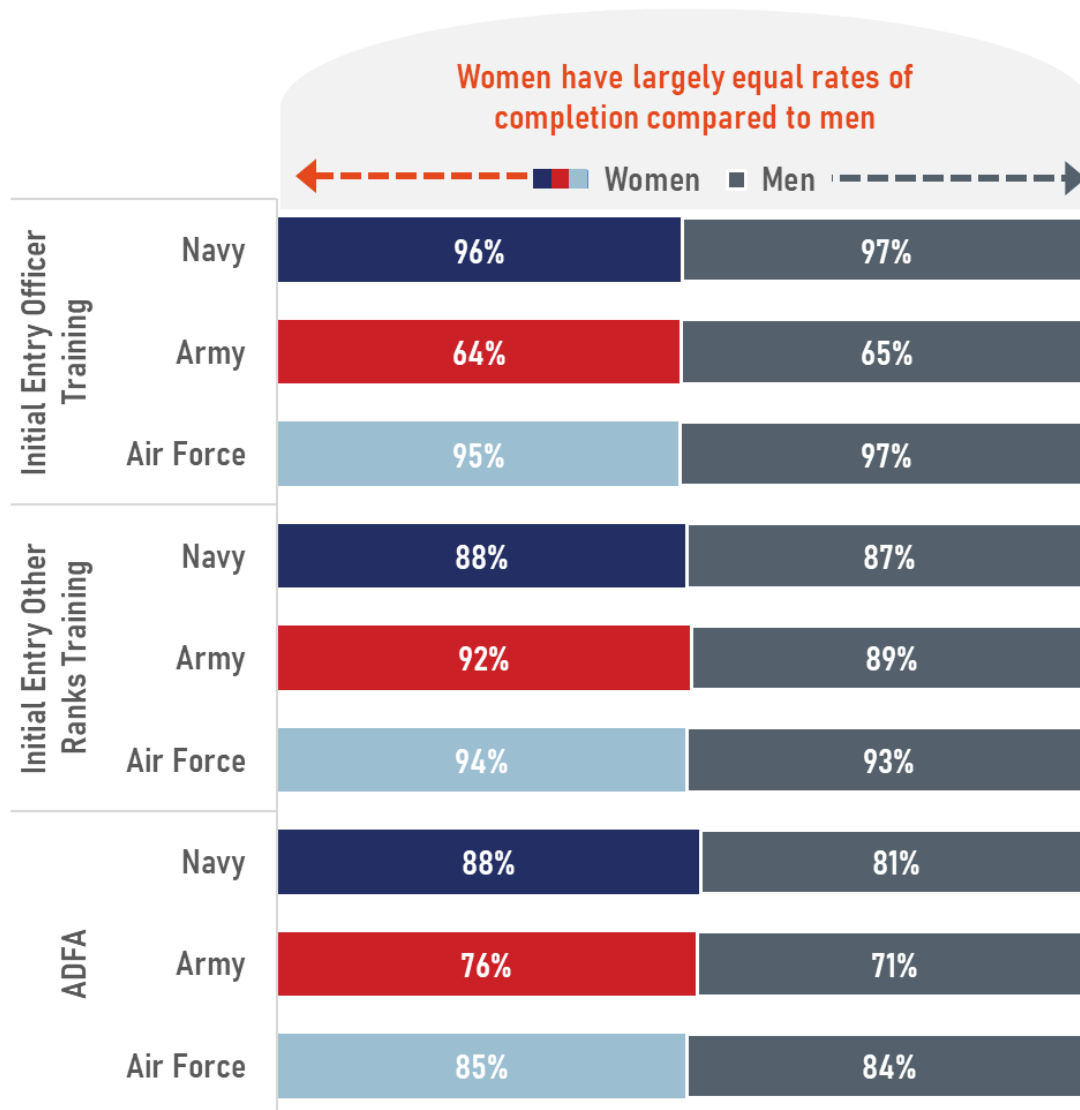


Figure 20. Proportion of women’s and men’s initial entry training completion rates, by Service and Ranks, 2021-22

KPI 8: Women are retained in the recruiting pipeline at a similar rate to men

Progress towards retention of women in the recruiting pipeline at a similar rate to men will be measured by the following sub-indicators:

- a. Similar conversion ratios for women and men from Your Opportunities Unlimited (YOU) introduction session to Enlistment (i.e., the number of women and men who attend YOU sessions for one enlistee).
- b. Proportion of women enlistments in each Service for General entry and non-Technical.
- c. Proportional numbers of women and men with prior Service are enlisting in the ADF.

Successful recruitment of women is a function of women being recognised, valued and seen by the organisation and also women seeing themselves as recognised and valued in the organisation. This goes beyond an advertising problem to a representation and value proposition. Women need to see women represented and valued as staff and other recruits at the recruiting centre, during information sessions, during testing and other processes.

Key Findings for KPI 8

Since the removal of gender restrictions in 2012 for women's direct entry into the ADF, retention of women in the recruitment pipeline shows improvement.

- The proportion of women enlisting is still lower than men. Women generally have a lower conversion ratio than men.
- Air Force has the highest proportion of women enlisting in technical and non-technical roles. Army has the lowest proportion of women enlisting into technical and non-technical roles.
- The proportion of women enlisting into Officer roles is still lower than men across all Services. Navy and Air Force shows an increase in the number of women appointing into Officer roles since 2012-13. Women's appointment into Army Officer roles has declined.
- 24.8% of women enlist into Permanent Service with prior Service (including re-enlistment).



Conversion ratios from YOU to Enlistment

In the recruiting pipeline candidates undertake a series of activities including physically attending an initial Your Opportunities Unlimited (YOU) session at a DFR Centre or conduct such a session online, including Online Aptitude Testing and an over the phone Careers Coach Interview.⁶² Conversion ratios from YOU sessions to enlistment measure the number of candidates who attend YOU sessions for every one enlistee.

Not all candidates who attend a YOU session subsequently enlist. High ratios of conversion can reflect factors such as effective marketing campaigns for specific employment categories, roles where there is greater attrition during the latter stages of the recruiting process, and seasonal effects. Low ratios can reflect unpopular employment categories, a smaller than average candidate pipeline, and/or a high frequency of intake. Factors that may contribute to the loss of women in the conversion process can include their inability to meet role-specific entry standards.

There are some gender differences across conversion ratios (Figure 21). Women and men are retained at different rates depending on Service and job role. Women generally have a lower conversion ratio than men. On average 1 in 6 women and 1 in 4 men are converted to enlistment after attending a YOU session. For ADFA, 1 in 5 women are converted to enlistment compared with 1 in 6 men after attending a YOU session. Conversion ratios from YOU to appointment to Officer is overall similar for women and men but for General Entry women have a lower conversion ratio than men. For Army, conversion ratios for women are better than men though conversion ratios for women are the lowest of the Services. On average 1 in 7 women and 1 in 4 men enlist or are appointed after attending a YOU session. Generally, pilot pathways have much lower conversion ratios for both women and men. There are some gender differences in the conversion ratios for women and men across the Services. For Air Force, conversion ratios for women and men are comparable (1 in 5 women and men enlist in Air Force). For Navy, women have a slightly lower conversion ratio than men: 1 in 4 women and 1 in 3 men enlist.

⁶² More information about the ADF recruitment process is available at defencejobs.gov.au/joining/how-to-join/recruitment-process.

2021-22 Ratio of enlistments after YOU session attendance

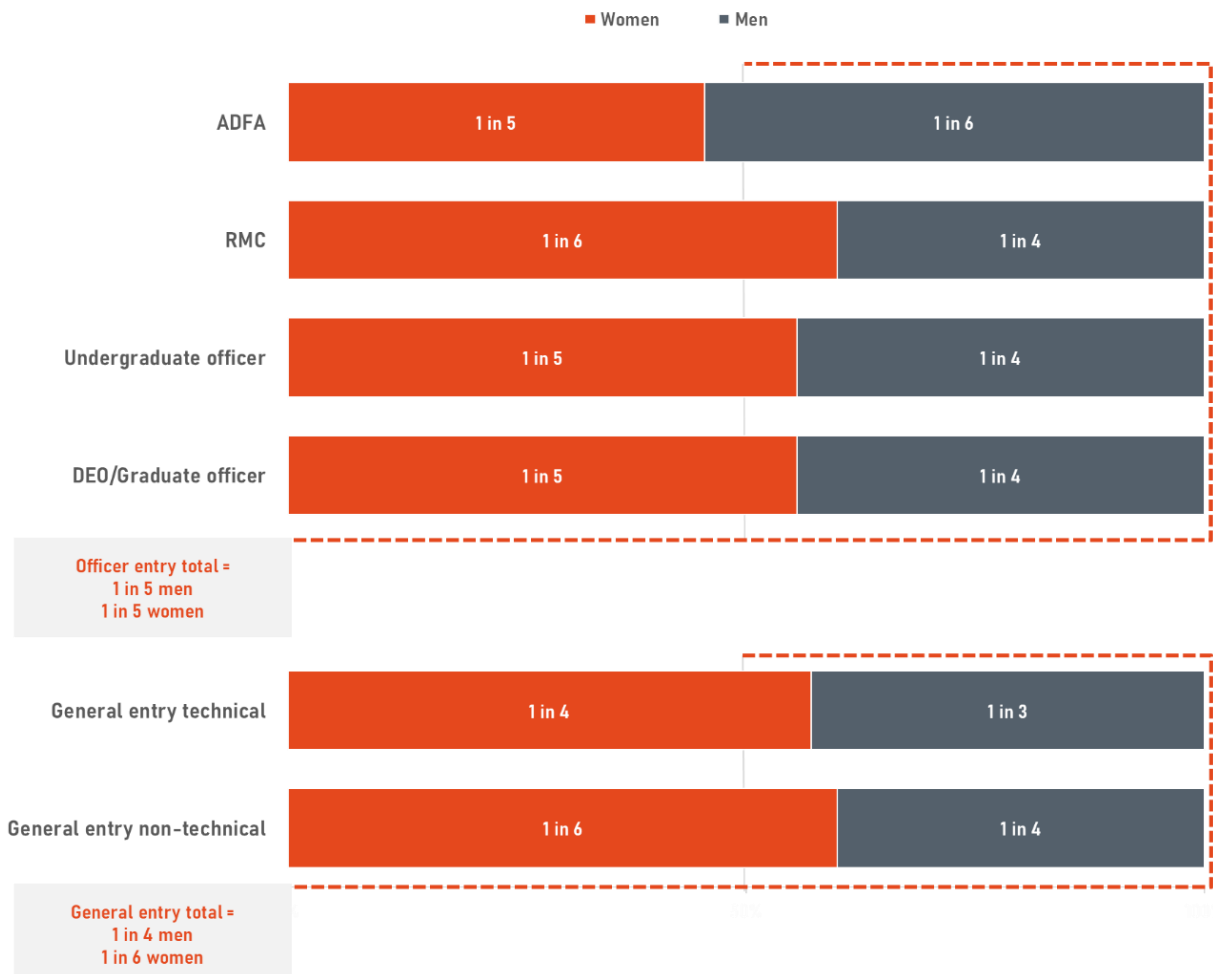


Figure 21. Conversion ratios from YOU to enlistment

Enlistment into ADF Permanent Force

In 2011, gender restrictions in combat roles were removed but it was not until 2016 that women were allowed direct entry into combat roles. All gender-based restrictions against women serving in the military were removed in 2012. Women were then able to apply for all positions other than Special Forces roles in the Army. Special Forces restrictions were removed in 2014. Since 2016, women have been able to directly enlist into the ADF in all front line combat roles or combat-related positions.

Since 2012-13 of the three entry types: Officer, General Entry (technical) and General Entry (non-technical) women’s enlistment into General Entry has not been at a similar rate to men. Overall, there is a higher representation of women in non-technical enlistments than in technical enlistments. The proportion of women enlisting in Air Force technical and non-technical roles is higher than in Navy and Army. Air Force non-technical enlistments of women (44.1%) are in near-equal proportion

to men (55.9%) and has significantly increased since 2012-13. Army has the lowest proportion of women enlisting into technical and non-technical roles. While enlistment of women into Army non-technical roles has decreased by 1% since 2012-13, enlistment into technical roles has increased by 2.2%. Enlistment of women into Navy technical and non-technical roles shows improvement since 2012-13 (see Figure 22).

The proportion of women enlisting into Officer roles are still lower than men across all Services. When compared to the proportion of women enlisting through General Entry (technical and non-technical), fewer women enlist into Officer roles. The percentage of women enlisting in Navy and Air Force has improved since 2012-13. However, women’s enlistment into Army Officer roles has declined from 24% in 2012-13 to 21% in 2021-22.

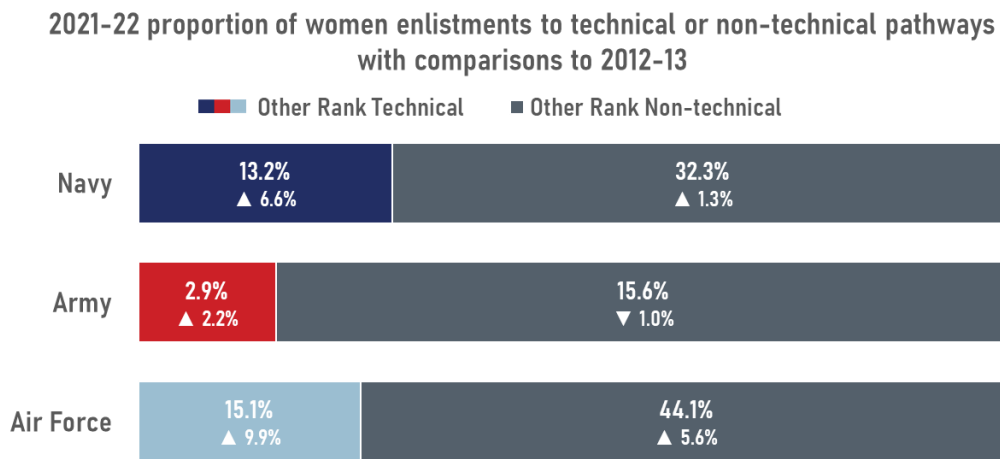


Figure 22. Enlistments into the ADF permanent force: women and men in Other Rank technical and non-technical roles, 2012-13 and 2021-22

The findings suggest that removal of gender-based restrictions on ADF occupations does not automatically lead to increasing number of women enlisting to serve, nor contributes to increases in women’s participation targets in the ADF nor necessarily make ADF an attractive employer. Nor does it change how currently serving women members are treated.⁶³

Prior Service Enlistment

The representation of women with prior Service into the ADF is still lower than men. 24.8% of women enlist into the Permanent Service with prior Service (overseas recruitment, re-enlistment, Service transfer and transfers from Reserves). Since 2012-13, the representation of women as

⁶³ Megan MacKenzie and Eda Gunaydin (2021) ‘Does raising the combat exclusion lead to equality? Measuring the recruitment, retention and promotions of women in Canada and New Zealand’s Defence Forces’, *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*. Vol 21(2): 108-152.

overseas entrants, re-enlistment and Service transfers has increased. For reserve transfers, the proportion of women shows a decline of 3 percentage points since 2012-13 (see Figure 23).

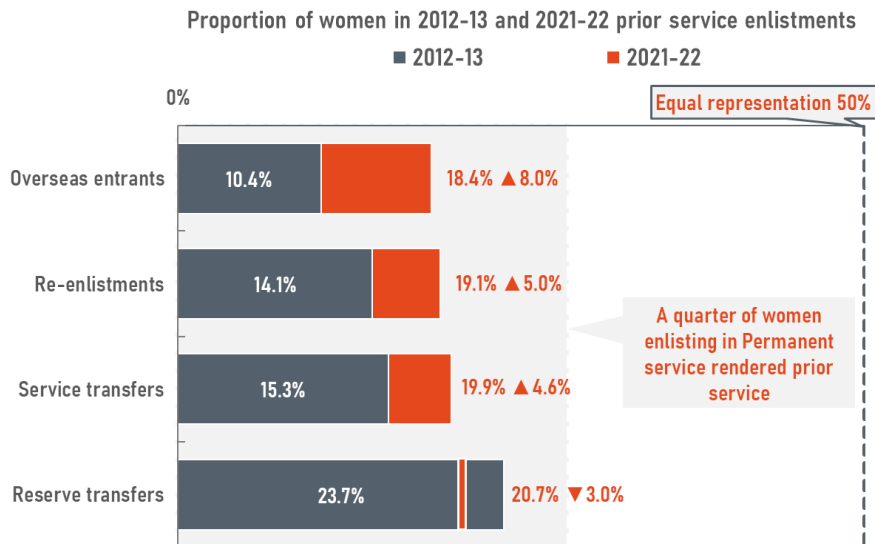


Figure 23. Proportion of women with prior Service enlistment, 2012-13 and 2021-22

The ADF will require a sustainable inflow of women to meet the projected workforce growth. Current efforts to recruit more women into the ADF will continue to be hampered by community perceptions about the culture and climate of the military and women’s lived experience. Despite the lifting of gender restrictions on roles, all three Services have struggled for a decade to meet their recruitment targets and some occupations have not yet reached critical mass.

In many ADF occupations, specifically combat roles, will continue to recruit largely from the younger demographic of the Australian labour force. Women’s representation remains low in Australian secondary and tertiary education programs in STEM subjects and this is likely to negatively affect Defence’s ability to achieve critical category requirements for enlistment into technical roles. The physically demanding nature of combat roles will continue to pose recruitment challenges for younger women. Research suggests that there were different levels of interest in the military between male and female students and reasons for interest were highly gendered amongst students in Australian schools.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Jennifer Gore, Leanne Fray, Claire Wallington, Kathryn Holmes and Max Smith (2017) ‘Australian School Student Aspirations for Military Careers: Traditional Perceptions in Shifting Contexts’, *Armed Forces & Society: Special Issue Women in the Military*. Vol 43(2): 238-259.

KPI 9: Women transfer to the reserves and use reserve and Total Workforce System options at a similar rate to men

Progress towards transition and re-engagement of women and men in the ADF will be measured against the following sub-indicators:

- a. Equal proportion of women and men transfer to the Reserves.
- b. Equal proportion of women and men transfer to the Reserves and continue to provide Service to the ADF after transition from the Permanent Force.
- c. Equal use of SERCAT 6 by women and men.

The first two sub-indicators are a function of representation in the Services and experience during Service. The third indicator is related to cultural attitudes around parental leave and flexible work being valued and having value to the workforce. Defence needs to understand how best to use the skills of individuals using flexible working patterns. It is as much education of the system as for those using it and involves upskilling of managers across the enterprise.

Key Findings for KPI 9

There are gendered differences in the type of flexible and reserve work undertaken. This suggests that the system is able to recognise the need for different ways of working. It remains to be seen if this recognition can move to valuing and rewarding different patterns of Service.

- Navy and Army women transfer to the Reserves at similar rates to men while Air Force women transfer at significantly lower rates than Air Force men.
- SERCAT 6 has low uptake across all Services and continues to be used predominantly by women. Low usage of part-time and other flexible work options presents opportunities for intervention and education to drive uptake of these options.

Background to TWS

The ADF Total Workforce System (TWS) was implemented in 2016 to provide Defence with flexibility and agility to meet current and future workforce demands. To help individuals achieve the right balance between their personal commitments and Service responsibilities, the TWS introduced the Service Spectrum to offer more options in the way people can serve. It is intended to support commanders and managers to be able to draw on a wider workforce to meet variations in demand.



The TWS has been designed to achieve the following effects, for individual members and the Defence Organisation:

- Sustainment of capability by attracting and retaining the right people
- Diversity and inclusiveness within the Services
- Provision of flexible Service paths
- Organisational agility by designing flexibility into current and future workforce structures.

Transfers to Reserves

In 2021-22 Navy women transferred to SERCAT 5 to 3 at a similar, but slightly higher, rate than men (39% to 36%). Army women transferred at the same rate as did men (33%). Air Force women transferred at a lower rate than men (48% to 56%). This discrepancy can indicate dissatisfaction with Service, or may be a function of the types and range of Reserve roles available for Air Force women.

Reserve Service

In 2013 women rendered Reserve Service in equal or higher proportions to their representation in the Service. In 2021-22 women served in the Reserves at equal or lower proportions to their representation in the Service. Navy women serve in the Reserve at a slightly lower proportion than their participation in the Permanent Force. Army SERCAT 5-3 women serve at a similar rate to the Permanent Force. Air Force women serve in the SERCAT 5-3 at a significantly lower proportion than their Service in the Permanent Force.

Table 7. Reserve Service by Gender and Service, 2013 and 2021-22

	2013						2021-22					
	Navy		Army		Air Force		Navy		Army		Air Force	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Reserve (SERCAT 5-3)	1,043	4,030	2,188	14,046	868	3,258	961	3,267	3,303	17,465	1,349	4,680
	<i>Total (5,073)</i>		<i>Total (16,234)</i>		<i>Total (4,994)</i>		<i>Total (4,228)</i>		<i>Total (20,768)</i>		<i>Total (6,252)</i>	
Women as % of Permanent	18.40%		11%		17.50%		23.50%		15.10%		26.10%	
Women as % of Reserve	20.5% ▲		13.5% ▲		17.4% ■		21.7% ▼		15.9% ■		21.6% ▼	

▲ Greater than Service representation in Permanent Force
 ■ Equivalent to Service representation in Permanent Force
 ▼ Less than Service representation in Permanent Force

Use of SERCAT 6

As illustrated in Figure 24, SERCAT 6 (Permanent Force but rendering a pattern of Service other than full-time) continues to be a category predominantly used by women (2.9% compared to 0.3% of men). As discussed in KPI 3 (increased acceptance of flexible work) cultural factors continue to influence low uptake of options such as SERCAT 6.

For Navy 0.4% use of SERCAT 6 is a total of 20 Navy members. Army (the largest Service) also has a 2021-22 total of 20 members in this category. Air Force has the highest uptake of SERCAT 6 with 95 members using it. Using numbers rather than percentages highlights the very small proportion of use of this SERCAT.

There are gendered differences in the type of flexible work undertaken. Men’s uptake of flexible work options is greatest for the categories of variable work hours and home located work in older age brackets and for Officers, suggesting where agency and authority allow use of flexible work without impact to career. Navy had five times as many Officer men as women in the 55 to 64 age bracket using these flexible work options (Other Ranks: nearly 3 times as many men as women) . In 2022 there was a single male Army Officer in SERCAT 6 compared with 104 doing variable hours or home-located work (and 47 female officers). For Other Ranks ten times as many men in the 55 to 64 age bracket used these options compared with 4 men of any age in SERCAT 6. Air Force had three

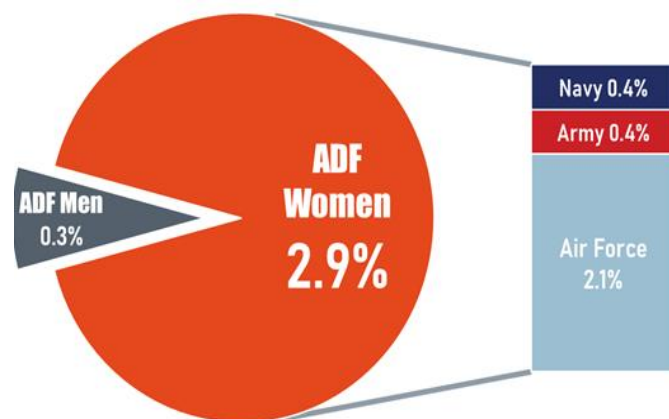


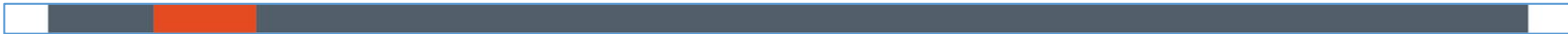
Figure 24. Proportion of men and women Serving SERCAT 6 as of June 2022



times as many male Officers than women using variable hours or home-located work in the 55-64 age bracket. For Other Ranks twice as many men took up these options compared with women.⁶⁵

In conjunction with the evidence for KPI 3, this indicates that gender and rank influence access to, and use of, flexible work and provides the opportunity to drive availability and education for more flexible working across the Services.

⁶⁵ See Supplementary tables for a detailed flexible work arrangements by age banding.



KPI 10: Women are represented proportionally in postings and deployments

Access to command appointments, non-operational overseas postings (such as attaché roles) and deployment provide opportunities for visibility and to deliver the skills and experience necessary to progress. Command appointments and overseas postings are a demonstration that individuals are valued by the organisation.

Progress towards proportional representation of women in postings and deployments will be measured against the following sub-indicators:

- a. Women are equally posted to command appointments;
- b. Equal posting to non-operational overseas posting.
- c. Women are equally deployed on operations.

Key Findings for KPI 10

In 2021-22, the proportion of women in command, sub-command roles and non-operational overseas posting did not reach gender parity. More women deploy than in 2012-13.

- The representation of women in command roles across the Services are comparable— the proportion of Air Force women in command roles is slightly higher than Navy and Army.
- Navy has the highest proportion of women in sub-command roles. Overall, Army has the lowest proportion of women in command, sub-command and Non-Operational Overseas Position (NOOP) postings.
- Since the removal of gender restrictions, the proportion of women deployed has increased over time across all Services – an increase of 5.8 percentage points since 2012-13.
- Deployed occupational gender-segregation persists and is consistent with occupational gender-segregation in the ADF.



Command Appointments

Since Australia's first National Action Plan was adopted in 2012, Defence continues to meet Australian government commitments to the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. UNSCR 1325 calls on Australia and other international Member States to integrate a gender perspective into all peacekeeping operations, peace processes and resettlement programs. In 2012, the Australian Government launched its first *National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018* establishing a whole-of-government commitment to WPS. Director National Action Plan Women, Peace and Security (DNAP WPS) was established in 2013 by the Chief of Defence Force to mainstream the implementation of NAP across Defence. A new NAP was endorsed in 2021 outlining the Women, Gender and Peace agenda 2021-2031.

The NAP specifically outlines the requirement to increase the proportion of women in representational, operational and non-operational roles for both civilian and military.⁶⁶ The removal of restrictions on combat arms in 2016 has increased opportunities for women to deploy. Over the past decade, Defence has made significant efforts to increase the representation of women in operational environments, and increasingly more women continue to be deployed across a range of non-traditional operational roles.

In 2021-22, the proportion of women in command, sub-command roles NOOP⁶⁷ did not reach gender parity. However, the representation of women across Services in deployed roles at command and sub-command roughly reflects the participation rate of women in each of the Services. The representation of women in command roles across the Services are comparable— the proportion of Air Force women is slightly higher than the proportion of women from Navy and Army. Navy has the highest proportion of women in sub-command roles than Army and Air Force which situates them well for pipeline to command positions. Overall, Army has the lowest proportion of women in command, sub-command and NOOP postings. Women in Army combat roles are yet to be represented in command roles. In 2021-22, NOOP representational roles across Services were: Navy (31), Army (45) and Air Force (35). Out of the total Representational (Attachés, Assistant Attachés and Attachés Administration) roles, only Air Force women were deployed in Non-Operational and Overseas postings at almost gender parity with men (42.9% of roles). Navy and Army posted women to these roles at a far lower rate than their participation in the Service and ADF overall (6.5% and 4.4% respectively).

⁶⁶ Department of Defence (2018) [Defence Implementation of Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018: Local Action, Global Impact](https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/second-australian-national-action-plan-on-women-peace-and-security-2021-2031). Accessed 04/10/22. <https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/second-australian-national-action-plan-on-women-peace-and-security-2021-2031>

⁶⁷ This data was previously obtained from Services. Workforce Planning Branch generates a Non Operational Overseas Positions (NOOP) report which reports on Representational (Attachés, Assistant Attachés and Attachés Administration roles across the Services). When the 2020-21 Women in ADF data from the Services was examined, it was clear that Navy was reporting on all Representational roles while Army and Air Force were not. NOOP 1 July 2022 report shows Representational roles as: Navy (39), Army (45) and Air Force (36). In last year's Women in ADF report, Navy reported 44 positions, Army 17 and Air Force 4. For reporting on Defence Attachés, this year we will be reporting on the proportion of women in representational roles across the Services.

Proportion of Women in Command Roles and Non-Operational Overseas Postings (NOOP) 2021-22

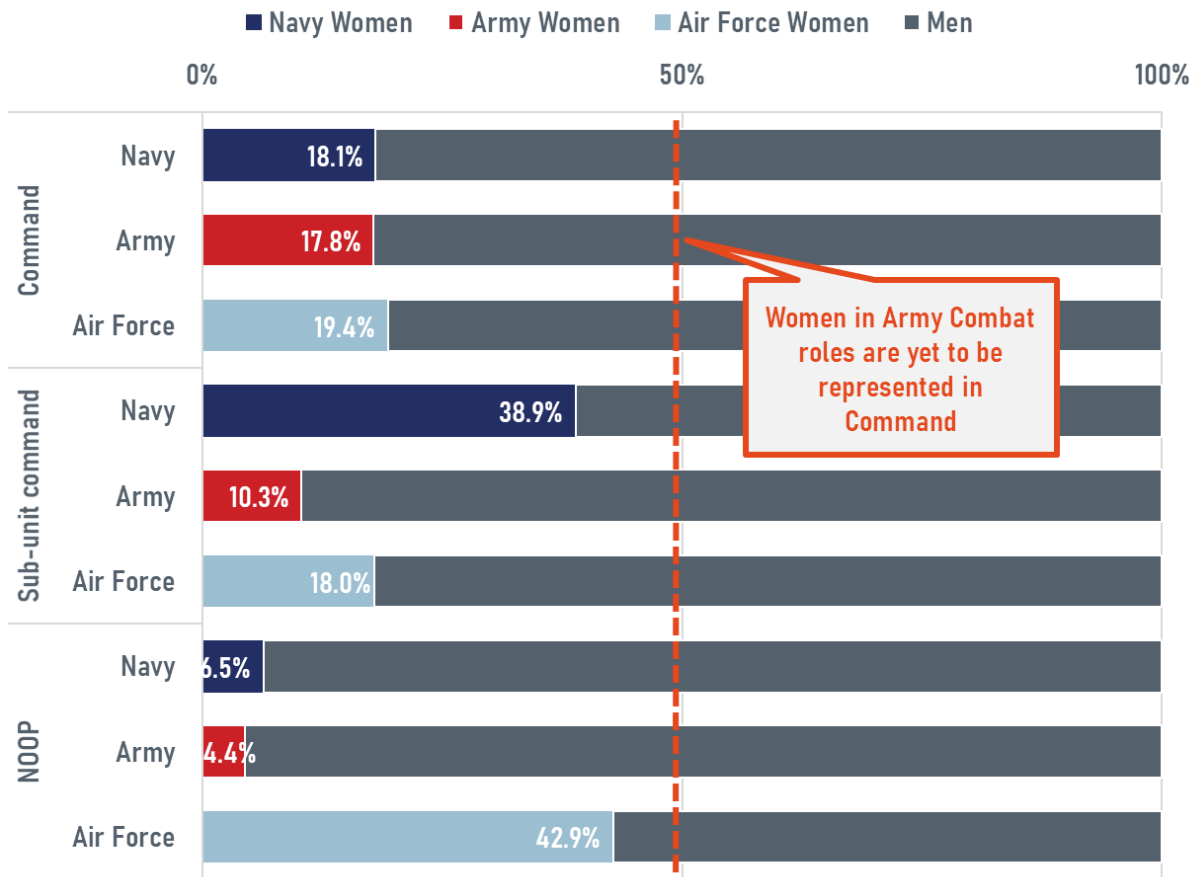


Figure 25. Proportion of women in command, sub-command and Non-Operational Overseas Postings 2021-22⁶⁸

Women and deployment

Defence recognises the importance of deploying women on operations, both from the perspective of the individual, for whom deployment is often an important career goal and from an organisational perspective.⁶⁹ ADF members’ careers are managed through a centralised model of postings and deployments that balance preparedness, force generation, development of professional proficiency and advancement potential.⁷⁰ Nearly 200 Defence Gender Advisors, women and men, can be deployed on military, humanitarian, relief and recovery operations.⁷¹ For ADF members, the need to balance family responsibilities with posting cycles and operational commitments will challenge the

⁶⁸ Source: Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse

⁶⁹ Department of Defence (2018) [Defence Implementation of Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018: Local Action, Global Impact](#). Accessed 04/10/22.

⁷⁰ [Defence Strategic Workforce Plan 2021-2040 - Part One and Introduction](#)

⁷¹ The Australian Government (2021) [Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security](#). Accessed 04/10/22

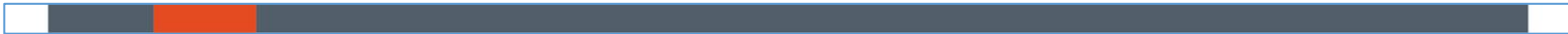


ADF career management processes and flexibility in ADF deployments. Opportunities exist to examine and adjust career management processes to allow different patterns and ways of Service.

Since the removal of restrictions and the integration of women into ADF employment categories in 2011, it was only in 2016 that first direct entry of women began training in the land combat arms. While there are more women deploying now than before, the proportion of permanent ADF women deployed across all operations in 2021-22 is lower than permanent ADF men. There are more women being deployed in some of the large scale operations where there are more ADF women and men being deployed. The proportion of women deployed in these large operations is relative to women's representation in the ADF workforce – women's participation rate in the ADF currently sits at 20.1%. In 2021-22 women represented 17.7% of total 13,956 personnel deployed across 27 operations.

Building on the mandates of UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security, the United Nations has established *Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028* that recognises the importance of women's participation in peace operations.⁷² This Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy seeks UN's member states to increase representation of women in UN peacekeeping operations. To this effect, the UN Gender Parity strategy has set the target to reach 25% by 2028.

⁷² Department of Peace Operations (2018) [Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028](#), United Nations.



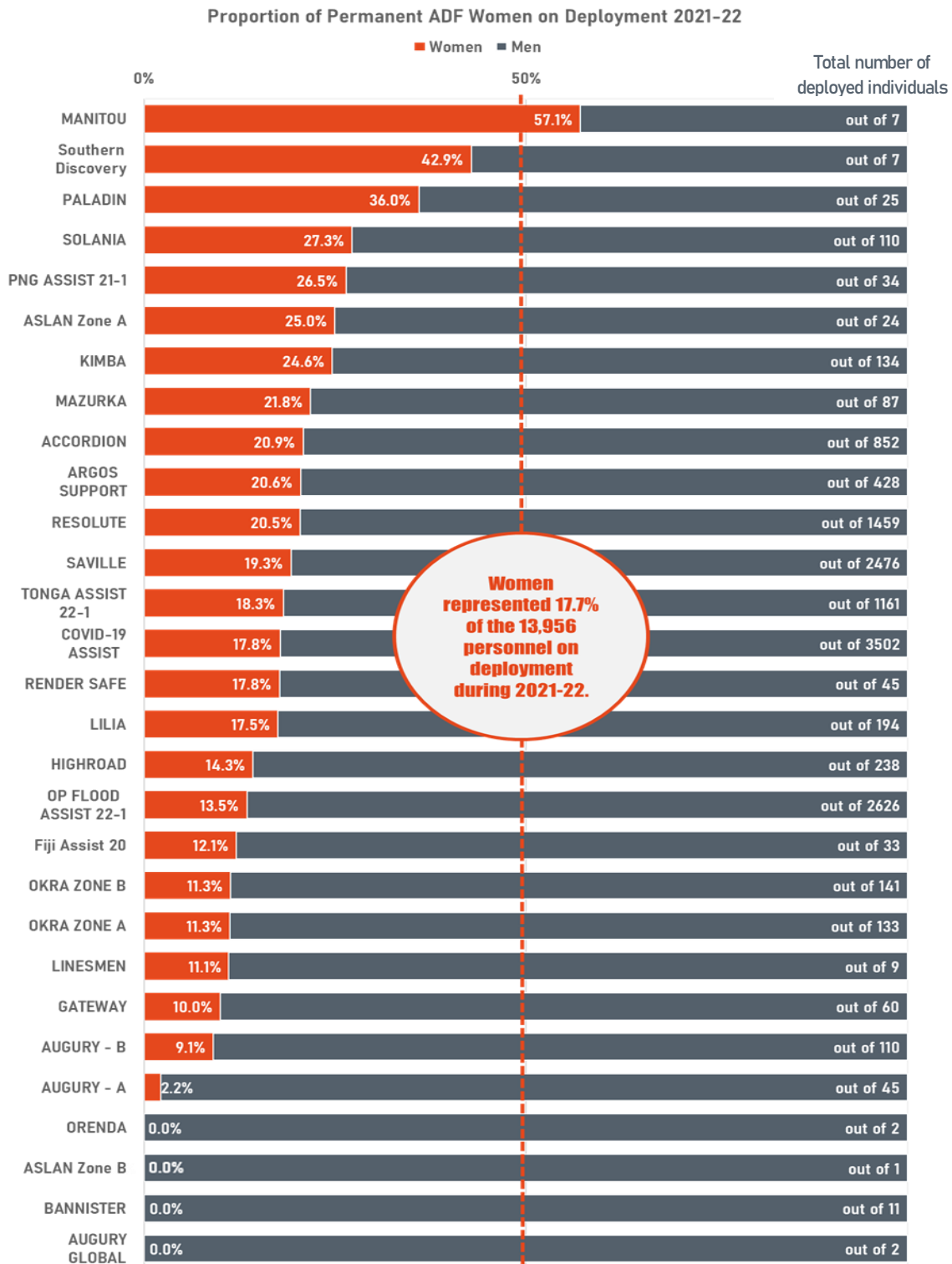


Figure 26. Proportion of ADF women on Deployment, 2021-2022⁷³

⁷³ Source: Defence Human Resource Data Warehouse

Since 2012-13, the proportion of women deployed has increased over time across all Services – an increase of 5.8 percentage points in 2021-22 (see Figure 27). Navy deployed more women in 2012-13 than did Army and Air Force. After a decade of deployments, more women from Navy than Army and Air Force continue to be deployed. The proportion of women on deployments in 2012-13 and 2021-22 reflects the participation rates of women in each of the Services over time. While the proportion of women deployed in Navy and Army shows a steady increase since 2012-13, Air Force shows a significant increase by 10 percent. The proportion of Air Force women deployed is relative to the increasing participation rate of women in Air Force over time.

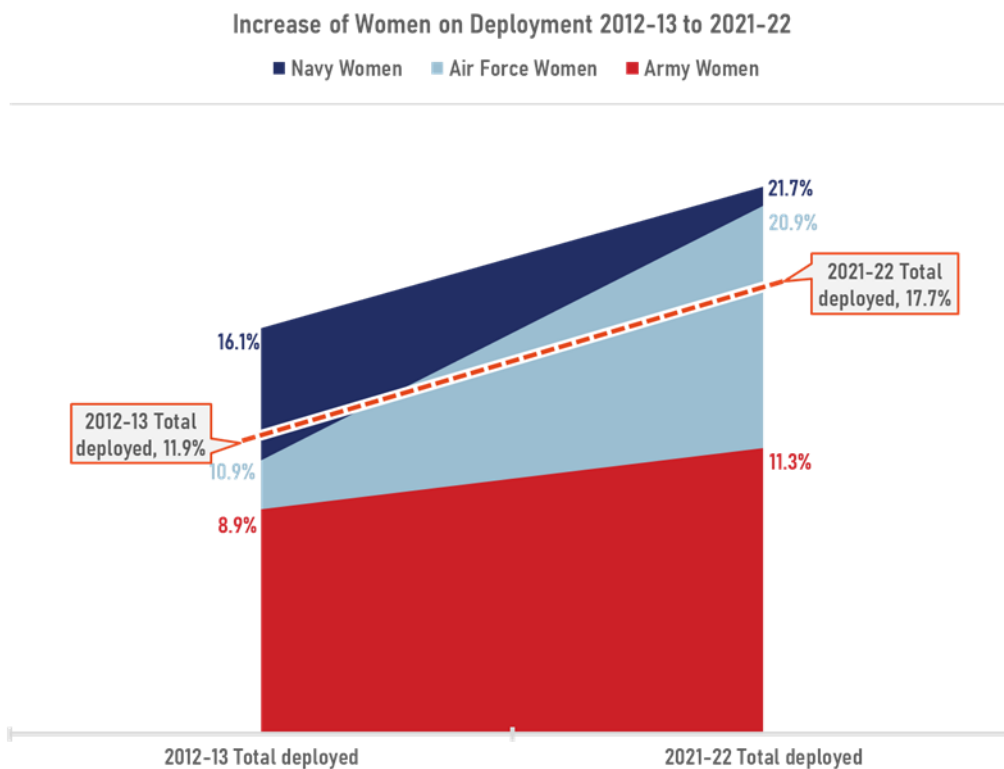


Figure 27. Proportion of women deployed across three Services in 2012-13 and 2021-22

Figure 28 below shows the proportion of women deployed by occupational group in 2021-22 for the total ADF compared with the total distribution of deployed personnel. Women are deployed at a rate almost equal to their proportionate participation in the occupational groups. This highlights that the proportion of women deployed by occupational group is consistent with occupational gender-segregation in the ADF. Only for the occupational groups Intelligence, Enterprise & Command Support and Health, the proportion of women deployed in 2021-22 is slightly higher than their proportionate participation in that occupational group. Since the removal of formal gender restrictions on ADF employment categories in 2011/12 and direct entry of women into combat roles in 2016, more women are being deployed but occupational gender-segregation persists. This confirms that removal of formal barriers on combat exclusion does not necessarily result in achieving critical mass of women across all occupational groups. Opening combat roles to women have not

made the ADF a more attractive employer and hence deployed occupational gender segregation persists.⁷⁴

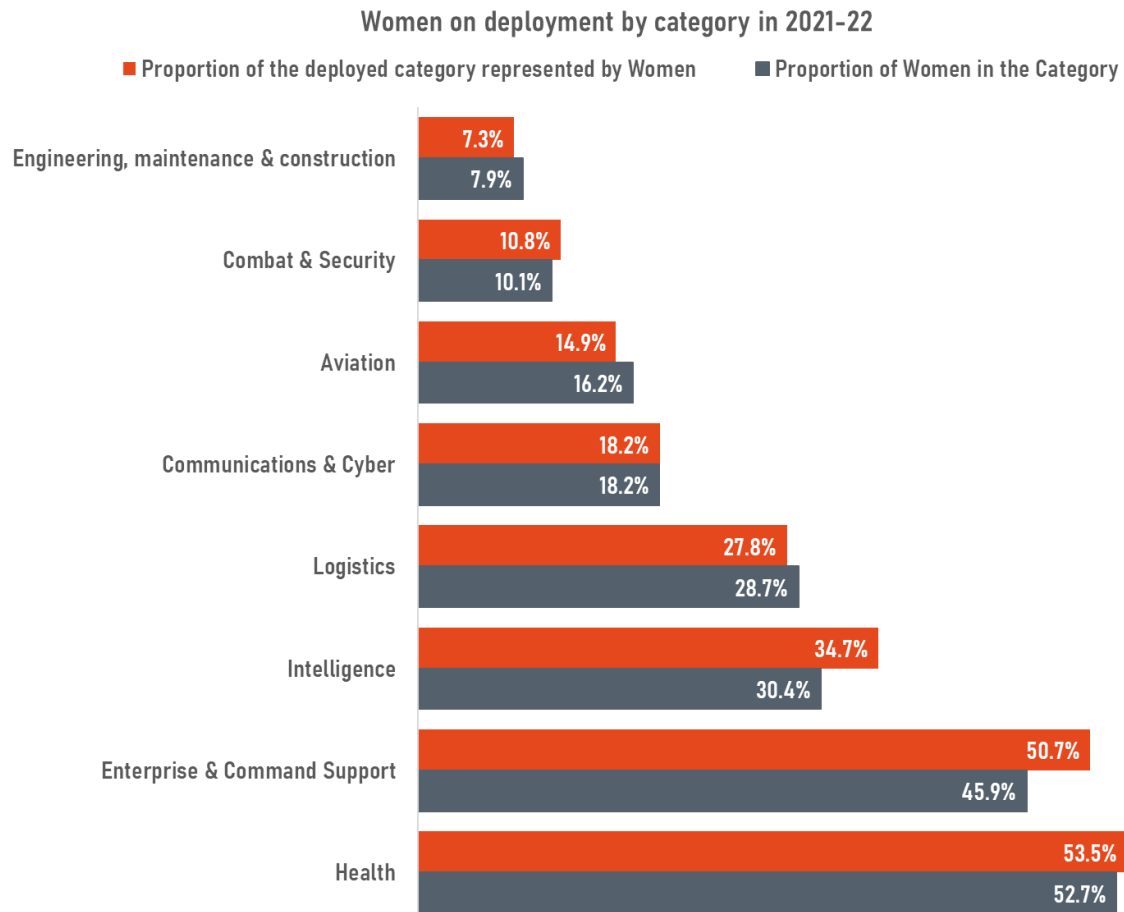


Figure 28. Proportion of women deployed by occupational groups, 2021-22

⁷⁴ Megan MacKenzie and Eda Gunaydin (2021) 'Does raising the combat exclusion lead to equality? Measuring the recruitment, retention and promotions of women in Canada and New Zealand's Defence Forces', *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*. Vol 21(2): 108-152.

KPI 11: No significant difference in cultural reporting between women and men

Progress towards understanding women’s and men’s experience in the ADF and their well-being is be measured against the following sub-indicators:

- a. Women and men feel equally supported in work and career experience.
- b. No significant difference in reported in well-being
- c. No significant difference in experiences of sexual assault.

Gendered differences on the sub-indicators may be positive or negative and are reported as such.

Key Findings for KPI 11

Over the last decade using women have reported lower levels of morale, workplace support and inclusion and satisfaction with career. These are cultural and organisational as well as individual factors. Their persistence over a decade suggests that women and their specific characteristics and needs are not recognised and valued. Some evidence suggests that men are twice as likely to have a high well-being score than women. This may indicate that there are ongoing cultural and organisational effects that need to be addressed.

There are significant differences between ADF women and men’s experiences of sexual assault. Women disproportionately experience and report sexual misconduct.

Women’s experiences in the ADF

The following six criteria use data from the YourSay Workplace Experience Survey. This survey has been conducted over the period of report (2013 to 2022) though at different frequencies and with some different items and scales. A list of comparable items and scales was developed in order to allow valid comparisons between the two points in time. A chi square analysis was conducted to allow comparison of significance of differences in item numbers and participants in the two time periods.

**Criteria 1: Women report the same level of well-being**

Well-being was not measured in 2013. In 2021-22 women and men reported similar rates of well-being. The well-being scale measured engagement and interest in daily work activities, work allowing a purposeful and meaningful life, optimism about future in the organisation and supportive and rewarding work relationships. In all Services women report similar rates of well-being as men. Although standard analysis of the YourSay data indicates no gendered differences in well-being, other analyses, which model predictors of workplace well-being, indicate that for whole of Defence men are twice as likely to have a high well-being score compared to women.⁷⁵ This finding requires further analysis.

Criteria 2: Women present the same level of morale

In 2013 women reported a significantly lower morale than men for the ADF as a whole and this difference continues to be evident in 2021-22. In 2021-22 there was a significant difference between women and men in reported levels of morale. Women were less likely to report overall high morale (-2.6%) and more likely to report low morale (+2.7%) which indicates that overall women report a lower level of morale than men.

In 2021-22 Navy reported the highest difference in morale between women and men with a 7.1 percentage point difference between women and men reporting high morale and 6 percentage point more women reporting low morale. This is similar to 2013 data where 6.8 percentage point lower women reported high levels of morale.

In 2021-22 Army women reported similar levels of morale to men, that is, similar levels of reported high and reported low morale. This is similar to 2013 results.

In 2021-22 Air Force women reported similar levels of high and low morale to men. This is significantly different to 2013 when women reported an 8.7 percentage point lower level of high morale than did men. This represents an important change in women's levels of high morale that may be a reflection of Air Force achievements in terms of representation, recognition and participation.

Criteria 3: Women report the same level of appreciation of leaders

In 2021-22 ADF women reported significantly more positive impressions of senior leaders. All Services reported similar significant gender differences, although Air Force women were the most positive overall. The 2013 data indicates similar outcomes although women's appreciation of leaders has decreased in the past ten years (reported lower levels in 2021-22 compared to 2013). Navy and Army women report a similar reduction in appreciation of leaders with Air Force women reporting an improvement since 2013.

⁷⁵ Pathway to Change: Where to now? Predictors of workplace well-being – Whole of Defence, July 2022, p.12.



Criteria 4: Perceptions of career progress are similar

In 2021-22 ADF women reported a 5.4 percentage point lower satisfaction with career progress than men. It is worth highlighting the scale items for career progress scale as these include concepts critical for career satisfaction and central to understanding gender equality:

- People are promoted on merit
- I consider the promotion process in Defence to be fair
- I consider the promotion process in Defence to be transparent
- My current duties are related to my training education
- I feel like I have no personal control over my career.

Navy and Army men and women report similar perceptions of career progress to men (though slightly lower positive agreements). Air Force women report a greater difference in perceptions of career progress to men with a 9.3 percentage point lower level of perceived satisfaction.

When comparing 2013 and 2021-22, the gap between ADF women’s and men’s perceptions of career is stable.⁷⁶ This holds true across the Services.

Criteria 5: Perceptions of team inclusivity are similar

Team inclusivity was not measured in 2013. In 2021-22 ADF women reported a statistically significantly lower perception of team inclusivity than ADF men. Team inclusivity examines aspects such as cooperation, honesty and transparency, respect, acceptance as team members, inclusion in activities, comfort identifying as a member of a diversity group and feeling like an outsider. Navy and Air Force women reported similar perception of team inclusion to men. Army women reported significantly lower levels of perceptions of team inclusivity.

Criteria 6: Perceptions of job engagement are similar

In 2021-22 ADF women reported similar perceptions of job engagement (satisfaction, personal accomplishment, important contribution, strong sense of belonging to and pride in Defence). Navy women reported significantly less positive perceptions of job engagement to men (-4.6%). Army women reported similar perceptions of job engagement as did Air Force women (+1.7%).

ADF women in 2013 and 2021-22 reported better perceptions of job engagement, although the gap has narrowed, that is, women in 2022 report a slightly lower rate of positive perception of job engagement in comparison to men (+0.7% in 2013 compared with +0.3% in 2022). Navy women’s rate of positive job satisfaction is significantly lower than men’s in 2021-22 than in 2013 (-3.1% compared with -0.4%). That is women are reporting decreasing job satisfaction in comparison to their male counterparts. Army women and men overall report similar rates of job satisfaction in the

⁷⁶ In 2013 there was a 0.1% difference between women and men’s perceptions of career compared with women reporting 7.1% less satisfaction. However, based on item and participant numbers a chi square analysis indicates no significant difference.

two time periods. Air Force women report increased job satisfaction in 2021-22 compared with 2013 (+1.5% compared with -1.4%).

In summary areas of continuing concern that require future focus are:

- Discrepancies between levels of well-being being reported by women including analysis suggesting that men are twice as likely to have a high well-being score than women.
- Lower levels of morale being reported by women.
- Lower levels of appreciation of leaders by women and examination of what might be driving this.
- Lower levels of perceptions of career progress by women including issues of merit, fairness and career agency.
- Lower perception of team inclusivity reported by women including respect, acceptance and belonging.

Sexual Offences and sexual harassment in the ADF

Defence has surveyed the workforce to gain insight into experiences of unacceptable behaviour since 1998. The current survey tool is the Workplace Behaviours Survey, first administered in 2018. Prior to this survey the Unacceptable Behaviour Research Program ran from 2012 to 2017. It was developed to measure attitudes towards, and experiences of, unacceptable behaviour in Defence. The revised survey replaced the previous definitions-based approach to measuring unacceptable behaviour with a behaviours-based approach.

One of the outcomes of the survey is evidence about people’s experiences of the actions taken by themselves and the response of supervisors and the organisation to issues and/or complaints raised. Being able to report incidents and being confident that reports will be taken seriously and action taken is central for trust to be placed in processes, actions and leaders.

Table 8. Experiences of unacceptable behaviour in the ADF by gender

	Navy		Army		Air Force	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
2013	56%	37%	52%	36%	57%	35%
2021	53%	33%	53%	29.9%	46%	26%

% of total men or women respondents (excluding training establishments)

Experiences of unacceptable behaviour have remained consistent, and consistently higher, for women than men since 2013. Over the same period men’s experiences of unacceptable behaviour

has declined. Over the last decade women have consistently experienced a less safe work environment than men. In 2021 women respondents experienced unacceptable behaviour consistently across the Services. More women in the Navy experienced sexual misconduct than those in the Army or Air Force. Similarly, across the Services fewer men than women experienced unacceptable behaviours.

Taking action in response to incidents

The 2013 Workplace Behaviours Survey did not provide a Service level breakdown of respondents who indicated they had taken some form of action. Overall, more women than men took some form of action such as seeking advice or assistance or making a complaint or report.

The Workplace Behaviours Survey administered in 2013 and 2021 did not survey respondents on their willingness to report unacceptable behaviours, but on actions taken. In the 2013 survey, data was collected on respondents' reasons for not reporting the unacceptable behaviour.

In 2021 overall, fewer men seek advice or make a complaint than women (see Figure 29). Women were much more likely to make a complaint, while men were more likely to self-manage or have their supervisors deal with the unacceptable behaviour.

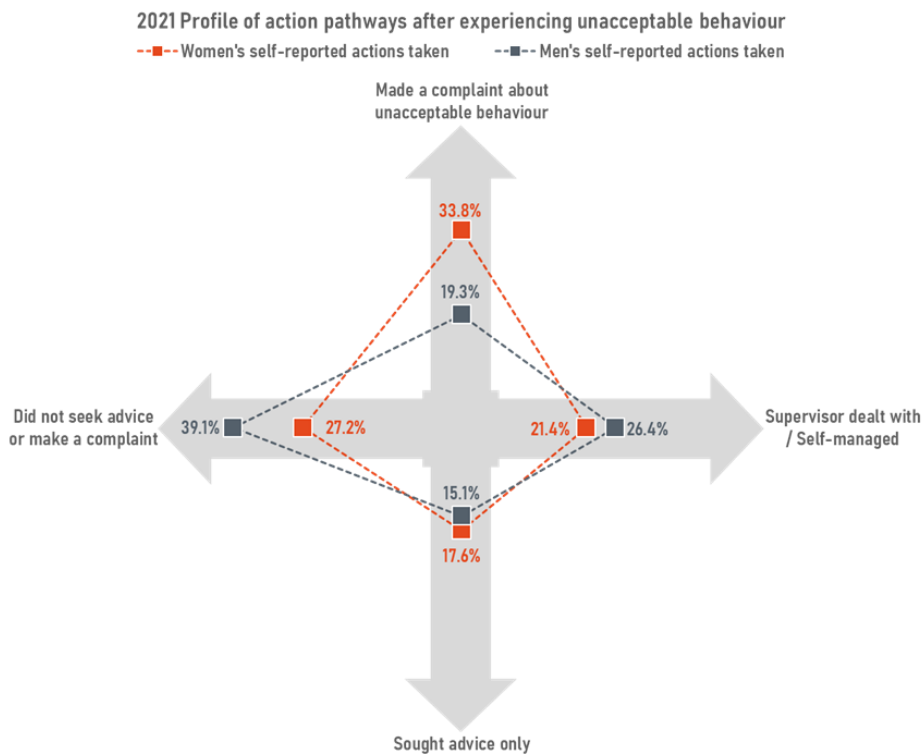


Figure 29. Proportion of ADF women’s and men’s self-reported actions taken, 2021-22

The gendered nature of unacceptable behaviour is mirrored in data from the Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office (SeMPRO). SeMPRO was established when as part of Defence’s



response to the Broderick inquiry and provides support to any current or ex-serving ADF member, APS employee, Defence contractor, ADF Cadet, Instructor or Officer of ADF Cadets, commander, manager, colleague, friend, or family member who has been impacted by sexual misconduct. It is able to offer one-on-one support or advice on how to best manage or respond to an incident. Figure 30 shows proportion of women and men ADF members supported through SeMPRO Services in the last 10 years.

The numbers of people accessing SeMPRO Services has increased from 2013/14 (93 cases) to 209 cases in 2021-22 (Figure 30). Over the past ten years women have accessed Services in the majority of cases although there has been some variation. 2016/17 saw the highest proportion of men using SeMPRO Services (36%) and 2021-22 the lowest proportion, 11%.

In line with other Defence data, it is clear that women disproportionately experience and report sexual misconduct. This aligns with national data and trends.

The rising trend from 2013 to 2022 aligns with a national trend rise. Between 2008-09 and 2020-21, the sexual assault victimisation rate for women increased from 0.5% to 0.9%.⁷⁷ The majority of sexual assault occurs for women aged 18 to 29. This has also significantly increased over the period from 2013 to 2021 (0.7% of all women aged 18-29 in 2013 to 3.3% in 2021).⁷⁸ ABS data indicates that the rate of sexual assault has risen annually from 83 victims per 100,000 people in 2011 to 121 victims per 100,000 in 2021 (accounting for population changes).⁷⁹ In the Australian population there are six times more women victim-survivors of sexual assault than male victim-survivors. Over a third (37%) of sexual assaults were recorded as family and domestic violence-related. Sexual assaults mostly occurred at residential locations (67%).⁸⁰

Knowledge of national trends and risks can inform ADF responses given that the risk factors that cluster for ADF women (age bracket, living at work, family and domestic violence).

In 2021, the Complaints and Alternative Resolutions Manual (CARM) Chapter 9 – Responding to Sexual Misconduct, was reviewed and updated. The purpose of the policy remains the same, however content on key issues has been updated, including:

- a broader focus, so that the role of the Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office (SeMPRO) is still clearly stated, as well as including additional information on ensuring the well-

⁷⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Crime Victimization, Australia 2020-21, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/crime-victimisation-australia/latest-release#sexual-assault>. Accessed 5 October 2022.

⁷⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Crime Victimization, Australia 2020-21, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/crime-victimisation-australia/latest-release#sexual-assault>. Accessed 5 October 2022.

⁷⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Sexual assaults rise for the tenth year in a row (28 July 2022), <https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/sexual-assaults-increase-tenth-year-row>. Accessed 5 October 2022.

⁸⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Sexual assaults rise for the tenth year in a row (28 July 2022), <https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/sexual-assaults-increase-tenth-year-row>. Accessed 5 October 2022.

- being of respondents;
- inclusion of other offences related to sexual misconduct, such as technology-facilitated abuse, stalking, and family and domestic violence;
- more detailed explanation of the nuanced definition of ‘consent’;
 - the laws defining 'consent' in Australia are evolving and are not the same in each state and territory, with some adoption of the term 'affirmative consent', including in the ACT, which is the legislation that applies to sexual offence proceedings under the Defence Force Discipline Act 1982 (DFDA).
- links to policy areas, such as WHS reporting requirements in Sentinel, and reference to YOUTHPOLMAN to ensure application to young people participating in Defence-run youth programs; and
- more clear and direct language reflecting enforceability of the policy under the DFDA.

SeMPRO’s victim-centric focus remains, but there is more information in the manual on managing the well-being of respondents, details of broader support and management requirements and clearer links to other Defence policy.

A detailed [interactive framework - Disclosing, Managing and Reporting Sexual Misconduct](#) has been developed. The framework outlines processes, policies and resources for assisting personnel.

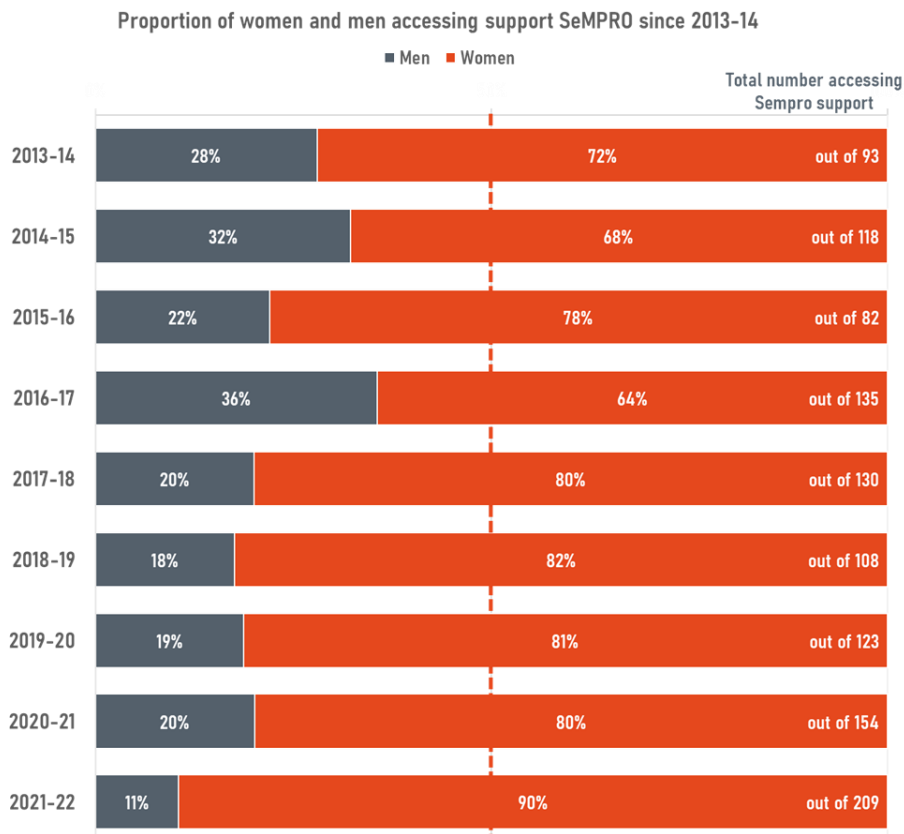


Figure 30. Proportion of ADF women and men accessing support from SeMPRO since 2013-14

KPI 12: Increase in number of women in leadership positions

Progress towards gender diversity in leadership positions within ADF will be measured by the following sub-indicators:⁸¹

- a. Women are provided with equal opportunity to develop as leaders and prepare for promotion.
- b. Women and men spend equal time in previous rank before being promoted (measured using median time in previous rank (years) before permanent ADF members are eligible for promotion).
- c. Equal proportion of women and men promoted out of those found eligible and suitable across occupational groups.⁸²
- d. Proportion of women in leadership pipeline ranks for Officers and SNCO is proportional to their participation rate.

This KPI is closely tied to KPI 5 -- learning opportunities which support access to leadership.

Key Findings for KPI 12

While the representation of women in pipeline and senior positions has improved since 2012-13, the proportion of women in the pipeline and leadership positions is still proportionately lower than men. Across all Services the percentage of women in Officer and NCO senior positions is still proportionately lower than women's participation rate in each of the Service.

Professional military and leadership development

Professional leadership development is part of talent management that manages ADF personnel to help them grow and develop their skills and capabilities, and leveraging their potential and increasing retention.⁸³ The Australian Defence College offers three professional military education courses: the Defence and Strategic Studies Course; the Australian Command and Staff College Course; and the

⁸¹ 2013 Women in ADF Report only reported on mentoring, networking and sponsorship and not on leadership positions or leadership development opportunities.

⁸² For this sub-indicator, data for each Service is presented because comparison between Services across occupational groups is not possible. Army Officers are defined by two career streams (Generalist Service officer and Specialist Service officer), not occupational groups.

⁸³ [Defence Strategic Workforce Plan 2021-2040 - Part Two](#)

Capability and Technology Management Course.⁸⁴ These courses are open by selection to officers and senior Warrant Officers who have achieved their relevant career requirements, and who have leadership potential. These courses support members' competitiveness for promotion at middle and senior levels within the career continuum (see Appendix B for Service-specific details on the promotion courses).

All women officers are represented at leadership development courses either in greater or almost equal to their Officer participation rates in the ADF (See Table 9). All women in Other Ranks across all three Services are represented at a level lower than their participation rates in Other Ranks. This suggests that rank and socio-economic class differences play roles in the levels of support provided to women. These differences in access to resources warrant further investigation.

Table 9. Number of women on professional military education and leadership development courses as a percentage of total cohort, 2021-22.

	Cohort		No. of women on course		% of women on course		Service Participation rate	
	Officer	NCO	Officer	NCO	Officer	NCO	Officer	NCO
Navy	74	1,130	18	315	24%	28%	24%	23%
	<i>Total (1,204)</i>		<i>Total (333)</i>		<i>Total (27.7%)</i>		<i>Total (23.5%)</i>	
Army	99	509	19	80	19%	16%	18%	14%
	<i>Total (608)</i>		<i>Total (99)</i>		<i>Total (16.3%)</i>		<i>Total (15%)</i>	
(Non-combat)	77	372	18	80	23%	22%	23%	20%
	<i>Total (449)</i>		<i>Total (98)</i>		<i>Total (21.8%)</i>		<i>Total (20.8%)</i>	
(Combat)	41	137	4	0	10%	0%	3%	2%
	<i>Total (178)</i>		<i>Total (4)</i>		<i>Total (2.2%)</i>		<i>Total (2.0%)</i>	
Air Force	62	10	25	2	40%	20%	25%	27%
	<i>Total (72)</i>		<i>Total (27)</i>		<i>Total (37.5%)</i>		<i>Total (26.1%)</i>	

Promotions

Career management identifies and manages the movement of personnel to roles where their skills are most suited and relevant to their employment category or occupation. Figure 31 below illustrates that equal proportions of women and men across all three Services were found to be eligible in the population.

⁸⁴ For more information on ADC and these courses is available at defence.gov.au/ADC/.

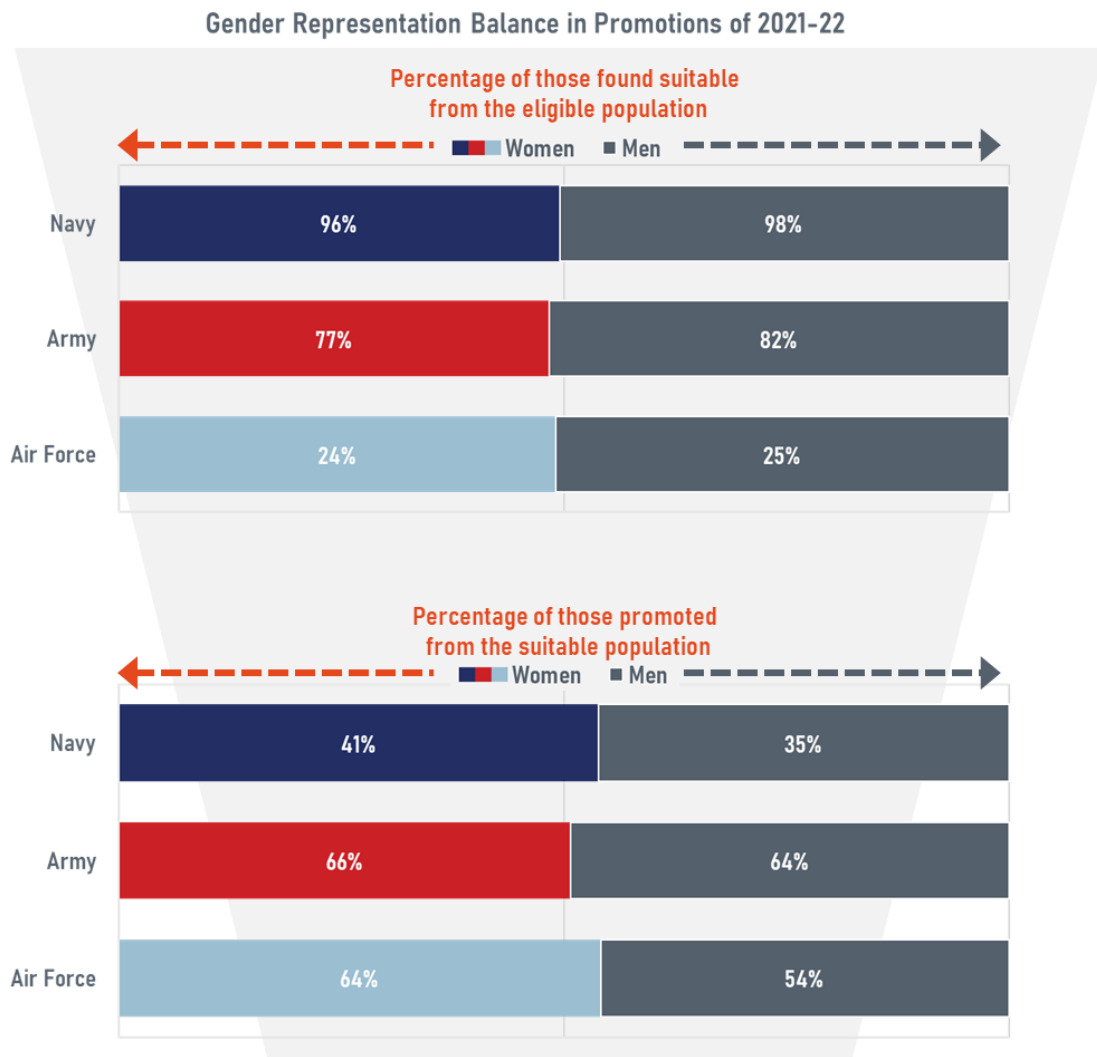


Figure 31. Proportion of women and men being promoted 2021-22

Women in senior leadership positions

Processes for ADF performance and career management are highly structured, with career progression through defined career paths to senior leadership. Each Service has its own career management system and are mostly designed around traditional career pathways to serve Force Generation objectives of each Service.⁸⁵ In the ADF, senior leaders are those at the O-6 (officers) and E-6 (Senior Non-Commission Officers (SNCO)) rank and above, and the pipeline is O-5 and E-5 rank respectively. Almost a decade since Broderick Review in 2012, more ADF women are seen in senior leadership positions.

⁸⁵ Defence Strategic Workforce Plan 2021 – Part Two.
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The proportion of women in Officer and Non-Commissioned Officer Ranks have increased since 2012-13. This includes the pipeline and women in Senior Officer and Senior Non Commissioned Officer (SNCO) positions (Figure 32). While the representation of women in Officer and SNCO pipeline and positions has improved over time, the proportion of women in the pipeline and leadership positions is still proportionately lower than men. In 2021-22, the pipeline for Senior Officers is smaller than pipeline for SNCO, but the proportion of women in Senior Officer roles is proportionately higher than women in SNCO.

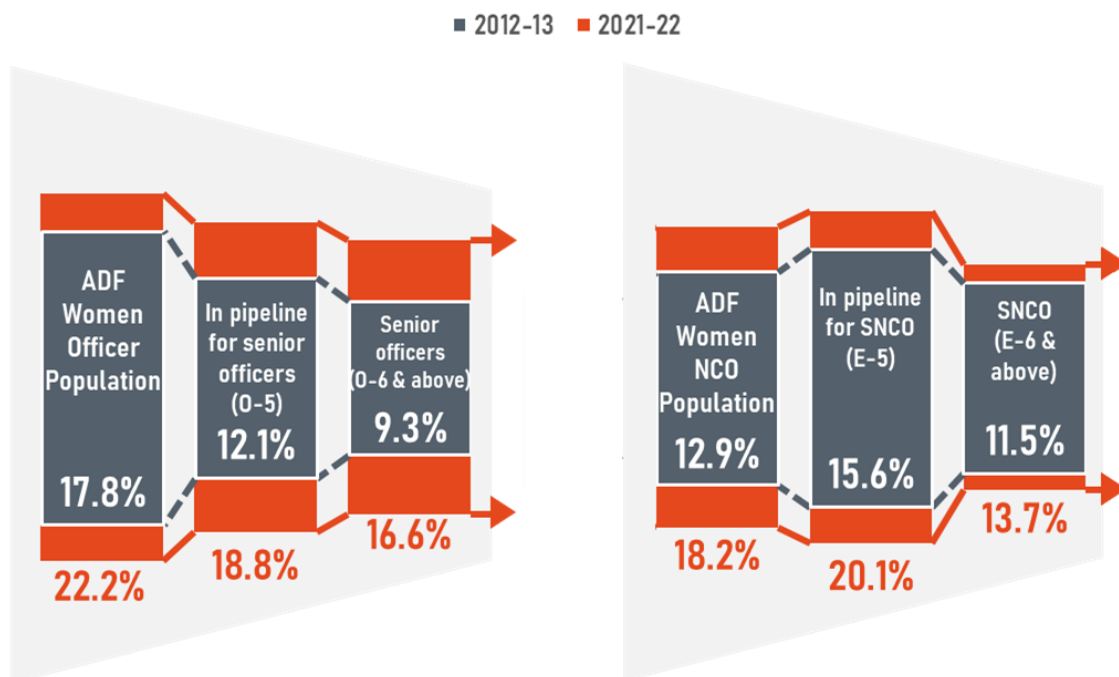


Figure 32. Proportion of ADF women in the Officer and Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) Ranks and in pathways for senior leadership in 2012-13 and 2021-22

In 2021-22, the proportion of Air Force women in Senior Officer and SNCO pipeline and positions is higher than Navy and Army. Army women in Officer and NCO senior and pipeline positions is the lowest.⁸⁶ The pipeline of women for Officer and NCO senior positions is comparable for Navy and Air Force. However, across all Services the percentage of women in Officer and NCO senior positions is still proportionately lower than women’s participation rate in each of the Services.

⁸⁶ Army advised that for Officers above the rank of O-6 there are no combat and non-combat roles because Officers lose their combat affiliation after O-6. It is difficult to discern from the data the split between combat and non-combat after promotion. Army officers and positions above the rank of O-6 have no corps affiliation. Analysis does not provide data aggregation of senior officers as well as senior SNCO into combat and non-combat roles.



Systems, policies and procedures have yet to evolve with the removal of structural and systematic biases impeding the advancement of diversity and inclusion strategic outcomes for Defence.⁸⁷ Performance and career management are key components of ADF talent management system. These systems lack robust succession planning for retaining women to support sustained periods of workforce growth in an increasingly competitive labour market.⁸⁸ Obvious barriers have been removed however results suggest that tacit/hidden/invisible or harder to address visible barriers remain. This limits women's standing or place in the ADF and continues to affect the women who are positioned to reach leadership.

⁸⁷ [Defence Strategic Workforce Plan 2021-2040 - Part One and Introduction](#)

⁸⁸ [Defence Strategic Workforce Plan 2021-2040 - Part Two](#)





Figure 33. Proportion of ADF women in the Officer and Non-Commissioned Officer Ranks, and in pathways for senior leadership in three Services, 2021-22

KPI 13: Women feel equally included in the ADF (NEW)

Progress towards women feeling equally included in the ADF will be measured by the following sub-indicators:

- a. Women and men are equally included.
- b. Women and men have equal feelings of belonging.
- c. Gendered experiences do not drive burnout.
- d. Women's health is comparable to women in the general population.

KPI 13 is a new KPI in response to COSC and the Defence People Committee agreeing in 2021 that new measures may be required in order to better understand women's experiences in the ADF. In particular, agreement was made to examine inclusion and belonging. Presently this is an omnibus KPI in development, where indicators that do not fit neatly into other indicators can sit. It is also a strongly research-based KPI where new indicators and sub-indicators can be developed, examined and their intersections with other indicators assessed – in a way, a sandbox indicator for gender research and measurement innovation.

Key Findings for KPI 13

Currently this KPI does not report data as measures and sub-indicators are in development.

Inclusion

Broader societal changes, shifts in the nature of warfare and geopolitical strategy, and recruiting challenges affect militaries globally. Women's inclusion⁸⁹ and participation sit at the nexus of these challenges. If we are to achieve gender equity in the objective force and assure that women are part of the ADF future force, we need to understand what drives these challenges. The enduring problem may not be the need to "add more women" but to understand and modify the operating architecture of the organisation and support cultural change to build women's participation and inclusion across the Service life cycle (Figure 34).

⁸⁹ Inclusion is the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised. Oxford English Dictionary, 2022. Here it is used to refer to opportunities, resources and the feeling of belonging to an organisation or group.

In this context, measures of inclusion and belonging are being developed as modules to be included in the current YourSay Workforce Experience survey. Links between inclusion, belonging, burnout and intention to leave will also be examined.

Women's Health Indicators⁹⁰

Military Service can involve a higher risk of injury generally⁹¹ and to women specifically.⁹² Higher health and safety concerns are related to: deficiencies in workplace design, physical standards for, employment practices, and access to appropriate apparel, training, support and health care, driven by not proactively accounting for biological differences between men and women⁹³. Additionally, women in the military have a different experience than men, which can influence their health status and health care needs⁹⁴.

Frameworks

Career life-cycle perspective

The career life-cycle social-ecological framework comes from the US Department of Defense's (DoD) Defense Health Board (DHB) and arose from a report on the health of active duty women. The framework starts at recruiting and ends at retirement or separation from the military.⁹⁵ The framework below outlines the major issues and challenges at each career stage that contribute to early separation from the military. The framework encourages long-term thinking about investments in women's health and suggests that initiatives, including measurement, are tailored to career stage.

⁹⁰ Developed for Defence by Professor Gita Mishra, Professor of Lifecourse Epidemiology, Director Australian Women and Girls' Health Research Centre, School of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, The University of Queensland, September 2022.

⁹¹ Oster C, Morello A, Venning A, & Lawn S (2017) 'The health and well-being needs of veterans: A rapid review', *BMC psychiatry*, 17(1):414–414pp, doi:10.1186/s12888-017-1547-0.

⁹² Kaplan RS, Chukwura CL, Gorman GH, Lee VS, Good CB, Martin KL, Ator GA, & Parkinson MD (2022) 'A Career Life-Cycle Perspective on Women's Health and Safety: Insights From the Defense Health Board Report on Military Women's Health', *Journal of occupational and environmental medicine*, 64(4):e267–e270, doi:10.1097/JOM.0000000000002504

⁹³ Kaplan et al. (2022).

⁹⁴ Bean-Mayberry, Bevanne, MD, MHS, Yano, Elizabeth M., PhD, MSPH, Washington, Donna L., MD, MPH, Goldzweig, Caroline, MD, MSPH, Batuman, Fatma, MD, Huang, Christine, MD, Miake-Lye, Isomi, BA, & Shekelle, Paul G., MD, PhD (2011) 'Systematic Review of Women Veterans' Health: Update on Successes and Gaps', *Women's health issues*, 21(4):S84–S97, doi:10.1016/j.whi.2011.04.022.

⁹⁵ Kaplan et al. (2022)

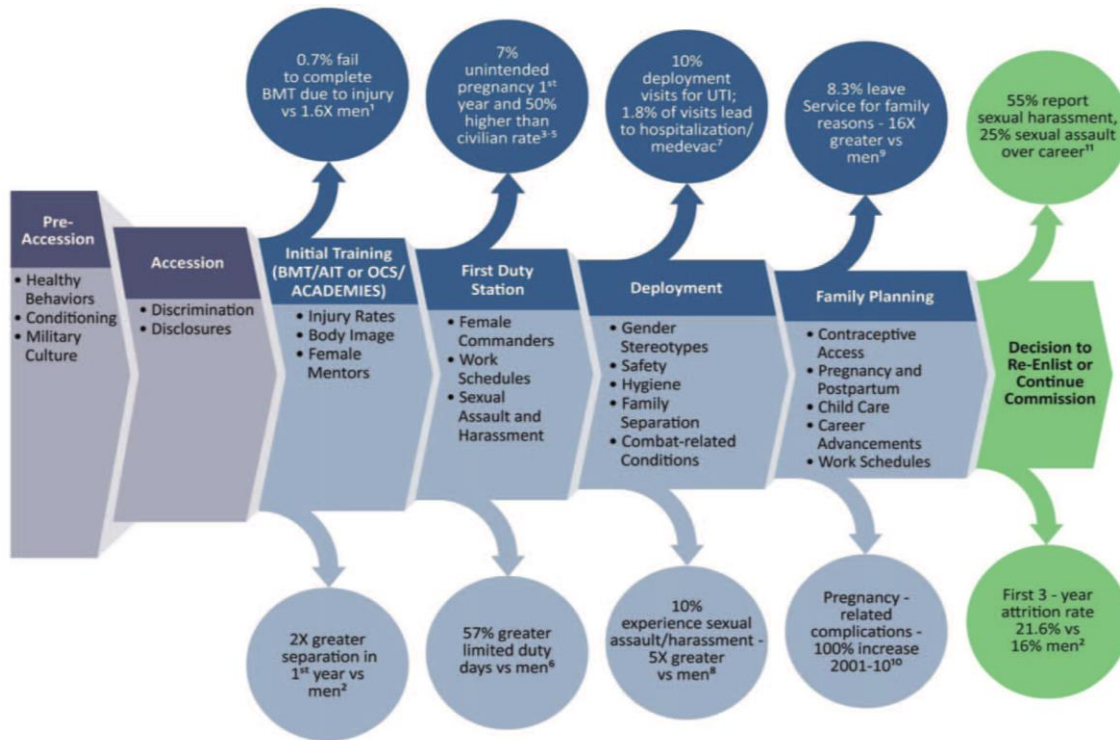


Figure 34. United States Armed Forces active duty women’s career life cycle and health attrition factors⁹⁶

Social ecological model

The social ecological framework places the individual Servicewoman at the centre of layers of influence, each of which influence the health of the individual (see table below).⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Kaplan RS, Chukwura CL, Gorman GH, Lee VS, Good CB, Martin KL, Ator GA, & Parkinson MD (2022) ‘A Career Life-Cycle Perspective on Women’s Health and Safety: Insights From the Defense Health Board Report on Military Women’s Health’, *Journal of occupational and environmental medicine*, 64(4):e267–e270, doi:10.1097/JOM.0000000000002504

⁹⁷ Trego, L. L., and C. Wilson. "A Social Ecological Model for Military Women's Health." *Womens Health Issues* 31 Suppl 1 (Aug 25 2021): S11-S21. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.whi.2020.12.006>. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/34454699>.



Elements of the Social Ecological Model (SEM) for Military Women's Health (MWH)

SEM Layer	Characteristics that Influence Health	Examples
Individual	Beliefs Behaviors Physiology	Core values Health behaviors Symptoms
Microsystem	Physical environment	Military occupational tasks Deployed setting
	Social environment	Family and friends Peers
	Work environment	Military occupational setting Unit cohesion/coworker social support
Mesosystem	Community interface	Housing, social programs, and support centers on military installations Military treatment facilities
Exosystem	Organizational qualities	Department of Defense mission and regulations Service-specific (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines) missions and regulations
Macrosystem	Cultural values	Military Health System readiness mission Military culture U.S. culture National policies

The authors argue that military women are exposed to environmental and cultural conditions unique to the military and these need to be built into any understanding of women’s health in a military context.

Any research program on women’s health within the military will need to be situated within a strong theoretical measurement framework, which may or may not include the two mentioned here as examples.

Methodological considerations

Adding indicators on women’s health to the Women in the ADF Report is contingent on data collection, and there are several considerations that would guide data collection or inclusion.

- a) Comparison between men and women.
The indicators that are currently reported compare between men and women, and also between Services. If health indicators will also be compared between men and women then it will be necessary to collect/access the same information on both sexes.
- b) Comparison to other military Services and civilian populations.

The indicators that are currently reported compare to other military Services and civilian populations. If this is important for health indicators, then it will be necessary to collect/access indicators that are currently collected for other military and civilian populations. For civilians in Australia, this could include the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women’s Health as a population level study.

- c) Existing versus new data.

The current KPIs seem to draw from data already collected by the ADF. Department of Defence and Department of Veterans Affairs have previously funded external agencies to conduct research with Serving and ex-Serving members, including the Transition and Well-being Research Programme (2015) and deployment-related research such as the Military Health Outcomes Program (MilHOP) and the Middle East Areas of Operations (MEAO) studies. This can be an advantage for health-related research as ADF members may feel more comfortable disclosing sensitive health information to independent researchers.



However, if health indicators are going to be in line with the rest of the report, it may be that data will need to be collected by the ADF and available for annual compilation and reporting. The ADF does conduct health checks and surveillance, but the details of this are not available in the public domain. It is unclear what health information is currently collected and whether it would be suitable for inclusion in the Women in the ADF Report.

Potential indicators from the ALSWH

It is possible to suggest some potential areas from the Australian Longitudinal Study on, which would enable comparison to the Australian population. Assuming that the number of indicators will need to be limited (as the focus of the report is not only on health), there are several different approaches that could be taken.

- a) Pillars of health: The report could compile data on the common pillars of good health. These include diet, sleep, exercise, and social support.
- b) Health conditions and health Service utilization: The report could compile data on common health conditions, which include: diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, low iron, arthritis, thyroid problems, asthma, bronchitis, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, genital herpes, genital warts, hepatitis B or C, skin cancer.

To assess current health status, it could include measures such as the Short-Form 36 (SF-36) or the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) or K6.

It could also compile data on health Service usage, for example, consultations with General Practitioners, specialists, dentists, hospital, counsellor, chiropractor, osteopath, massage therapist, acupuncturist, physiotherapist, dietitian, exercise physiologist.

- c) Health risks: The report could compile data on behaviours that are considered health risks. These include alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, sedentary behaviour, body mass index, and satisfaction with weight and shape.
- d) Women's health: The report could compile information on women's health issues specifically, with the understanding that this could be compared back to Australian population data but not to men within the ADF. These would include menstrual symptoms, access to contraception, infertility, reproductive conditions (e.g. endometriosis, adenomyosis, polycystic ovary syndrome, uterine fibroids), and preventive health checks (e.g. pap smears, breast examinations)

Conclusion

“Good intentions are not enough to bring about change; nor are simple tallies, training programmes or unwarranted rosy views. Change requires sustained investment, appropriate incentives and evidence-backed interventions.”

Michelle Ryan, *Nature*, 19 April 2022

Achieving gender equality targets is a challenging and complex agenda especially when overambitious targets creates a risk of under-achievement and may damage future progress.⁹⁸ Like any other organisation, addressing gender equity and inclusion within Defence is a journey because the process of achieving meaningful change that leads to gender equality outcomes in the workplace is also the end-state.⁹⁹ Defence’s journey towards gender equality started in 2012 with the Broderick Review into the Treatment of Women in the ADF. Since then, ADF has been reporting annual progress on gender equality across against 12 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Many improvements have been made in the decade since ADF’s gender equality journey began in 2012, however, occupational segregation, lack of women in senior roles and leadership positions, lack of flexibility and support for ADF families and unacceptable behaviour (specifically gendered misconduct) persist. Like many workplaces in the Australian context, gender inequality is often reinforced and perpetuated through institutional structures, social norms, processes and practices that elevate the status of men and devalue women. This report has focused on these multi-layered systems that influence how women are recognised, seen and valued as individuals, as members of the ADF and as contributors to national security.

For Defence to continue its decade of effort to establish a safe and respectful culture will require a further systemic shift to address some of the underlying factors and drivers of gender inequality. A program logic has been developed to provide a strategic framework that identifies intervention pillars as building blocks for creation of a safer and more respectful culture in Defence. At an enterprise level this program logic provides a programmatic approach to focus efforts on specific activities, strategies and initiatives across the functions of the Defence People System. Through the implementation of activities under each of the intervention pillars, Defence will ultimately improve the performance of the Women in ADF KPIs and shift to a future state where Defence attracts and retains diverse workforce capability that is reflective of the full diversity of the Australian community.

For women in the ADF much has changed and some has not changed in the last decade. Gender equality has not yet been achieved but the decade has seen both movement towards equity and

⁹⁸ Workplace Gender Equality Agency (2019) [Gender Strategy Toolkit: A Direction for achieving gender equality in your organisation](#). Accessed 13/09/22.

⁹⁹ Ibid.



commitment to achieving it. Significant improvements have been made in women's participation but women's experience of the ADF remains different to that of men.

In addition to workforce achievements, work remains to be done in women's well-being, morale, safety, career progress, recognition of Service in promotions, honours and awards and cultural change in acceptance of flexible work. Childcare and family remain heavily gendered especially for dual Service couples. The ADF is starting on the journey of considering well-being, families and health as essential contributors to women's career outcomes in the ADF.

