



Australian Government

Defence

DEFENCE WORKFORCE PLAN

INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE

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Defence acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia. Defence recognises their continuing connection to traditional lands and waters and would like to pay respect to their Elders both past and present.

Defence would also like to pay respect to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have contributed to the defence of Australia in times of peace and war.

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Ministerial Foreword

The Albanese Government has delivered the most significant reforms to defence policy, strategy, capability and planning in decades. In a challenging strategic environment where we no longer enjoy the benefit of a 10 year window of strategic warning time for conflict, we must recognise that people are Defence's most important capability. It is essential that Defence supports its workforce so its people are resourced, postured and structured to protect Australia and our national interests.

The National Defence Strategy is our blueprint to guide the significant and urgent changes required to address Australia's strategic circumstances. Its successful delivery depends on recruiting, retaining and growing the highly specialised and skilled workforce required to meet Defence's needs and achieve the objectives of *National Defence*.

The challenge is significant. The Australian Defence Force (ADF) is experiencing a crisis in recruitment and retention at a time when national unemployment is low. There is high demand across the economy for the skills required by both the ADF and industry.

The Defence Strategic Review made clear the policies, processes and approaches inherited by the Albanese Government were not fit for purpose. There was no comprehensive plan to recruit, upskill and retain people. Workforce initiatives had been announced without the funding to deliver them.

In response, the Government directed Defence to undertake a thorough analysis of its workforce requirements over the coming decade to develop a comprehensive plan of action.

The 2024 Defence Workforce Plan examines planning and development, including the growth and future needs of the integrated workforce. It addresses ADF recruitment and retention, as well as Defence's organisational culture, wellbeing and support to ADF members and their families.

The 2024 Defence Workforce Plan builds on the initial reforms the Government introduced to stabilise Defence's workforce. These reforms include the ADF Continuation Bonus pilot, enhanced access to study opportunities, expanded health benefits and additional remuneration for ADF members. It is designed to sustain the momentum created by the Government's reforms to recruitment, including widening the recruitment pool and modernising the approach to recruit personnel.

As part of the 2024 Defence Workforce Plan, the Government has committed to:

- ▶ extend the Continuation Bonus for eligible, permanent members at the end of their initial service obligation, who have served a minimum of four years
- ▶ expand the Continuation Bonus for a second cohort of eligible, permanent members around the 7-9 year of service mark, to encourage continued service and career progression to the middle ranks of the Defence Force
- ▶ increase the Operational Reserves by an additional 1,000 personnel by 2030
- ▶ improve wellbeing and mental health support, and organisational culture

Defence's ability to implement the 2024 Defence Workforce Plan is underpinned by generational investment in the ADF. The Government has committed an additional \$5.7 billion over the forward estimates and \$50.3 billion over the planning decade to 2033-34 to grow the ADF and deliver a more capable, self-reliant Defence Force. Over the coming decade, Defence will spend over \$200 billion on a highly skilled, capable workforce.

Australia asks a lot from those who join and serve in the Defence Force. Those who pursue a career in the ADF must have a positive and inclusive workplace and be supported from the time they join, through transition to civilian life, and after service. As we respond to the findings of the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, the 2024 Defence Workforce Plan will evolve to continue to promote and build a culture that supports all of Defence's people and their families.

The Government is grateful to our Defence personnel for their professionalism, selflessness and sacrifice in the service of our nation, as well as the families who support them. Our goal is to ensure Defence attracts the people it needs, and that our personnel stay with Defence and build rewarding careers, to help safeguard Australia's security and protect our national interests, now and into the future.

The Hon. Richard Marles MP
Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Defence

The Hon. Matt Keogh MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel

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Chapter 1: Strategic Context

- 1.1 The outcomes of the Defence Strategic Review required a recalibration of Australia's defence capabilities to fit our new strategic context. This recalibration is reflected in and informed the changes made to the Integrated Investment Program that was released together with the National Defence Strategy. This 2024 Defence Workforce Plan matches our physical and technological capability requirements with our most important capability: our people.
- 1.2 The central goal of the 2024 Defence Workforce Plan is to support the Australian Defence Force's (ADF) transition from a balanced force to an integrated, focused force in order to meet the demands of Australia's strategic circumstances.
- 1.3 As an integrated, focused force, Defence must leverage the skills and expertise of both its ADF and Australian Public Service (APS) personnel. Defence must develop its workforce in line with capability requirements so that its workforce is capable of pivoting to support provided to new and enhanced capabilities.
- 1.4 To this end, Defence is focused on recruiting, retaining and growing the highly specialised and skilled workforce required to meet Defence's capability needs. This is intricately tied to Defence's efforts to implement cultural change and improve the mental health and wellbeing support provided to its personnel and ADF families.
- 1.5 The highly competitive national labour market across all sectors and record low levels of unemployment will continue to put pressure on Defence's ability to attract and retain the right people. With skilled and experienced workers in high demand globally, Defence and defence industry must respond to these challenges to ensure a stable, highly skilled workforce today and into the future.

- 1.6 While work is underway to shape a positive and effective environment for Defence people, enduring institutional change requires deliberate and sustained action. Defence will implement the agreed recommendations from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.
- 1.7 Since 2022, in response to the Defence Strategic Review, Defence has been fundamentally transforming its recruitment and retention systems to increase the size of the workforce. Through investment and reforms, Defence's ADF workforce has stabilised, with improved recruitment inflow and retention. There are positive signs that in 2024-25 there will be the first year on year increase in the size of the permanent ADF since 2020-21.
- 1.8 Defence will continue to transform its recruitment and retention practices by:
- ▶ widening eligibility criteria to enable more people to join the ADF, including expanding the recruitment of eligible permanent residents living in Australia
 - ▶ expanding the recruiting system to translate this wider pool of eligible applicants into an increase in the number of ADF recruits
 - ▶ improving processes to enable faster recruiting so that skills gaps can be identified and addressed more quickly
 - ▶ encouraging current personnel, who have built the skills and expertise the ADF needs, to stay and serve longer through retention initiatives, including increased investment in skilling and modernisation of employment conditions.
- 1.9 The Government will continue to implement targeted financial and non-financial initiatives to deliver sustained growth in the size of the ADF. The Government has enhanced study and education assistance, family health benefits and leave arrangements including remote locality leave travel. Defence will continue to ensure benefits support member and family wellbeing, are fit for purpose, and meet both member and capability needs.
- 1.10 The ADF Continuation Bonus pilot has been a successful initiative, with an uptake rate of almost 80 per cent since the Government introduced the bonus in July 2023, contributing to over 3,100 junior rank ADF personnel choosing to remain in service. Consequently, the Government has extended the ADF Continuation Bonus to 2027-28. Further, commencing in 2025-26, the Government is expanding the Bonus to later career personnel to extend their service through the middle ranks. The payment will transition to \$40,000 to enable the expansion to all eligible individuals. These retention bonuses are short-term initiatives to alleviate pressure on the ADF's junior and middle ranks, and address hollowness in the force.
- 1.11 The 2024 Defence Workforce Plan will be updated biennially as part of the National Defence Strategy cycle.

Chapter 2: Delivering an Integrated, Focused Force

- 2.1 In line with the National Defence Strategy, the ADF must shift to an integrated, focused force capable of impactful projection through the full spectrum of proportionate response. The ADF force structure – comprising members of the Navy, Army and Air Force – must be integrated across the maritime, land, air, space and cyber domains.
- 2.2 The 2024 Defence Workforce Plan outlines the workforce requirements to deliver the National Defence Strategy and Integrated Investment Program. It includes eight strategic tasks that Defence will implement to meet the current and future needs of Defence's workforce.



8 Strategic Tasks

1 Optimised design of the integrated workforce	2 Enhanced ADF inflow	3 Partnership with Defence industry	4 Enhanced ADF health services and readiness
5 Development and transformation of the defence workforce	6 Management of the integrated workforce	7 Improved culture, mental health and wellbeing	8 Support to defence personnel, ADF families and transitioning members

2.3 Following a thorough analysis of its workforce, Defence aims to achieve a permanent ADF workforce of 69,000 by the early 2030s, with an overall permanent ADF and APS workforce of around 100,000 by 2040. This realistic growth is aligned to the Integrated Investment Program, is achievable and will be updated biennially as part of the National Defence Strategy cycle.

2.4 The permanent ADF and APS workforce requirements are outlined below.

Workforce Growth

	2024-25 Budgeted workforce requirement*	2025-26 Budgeted workforce requirement	2026-27 Budgeted workforce requirement	2027-28 Budgeted workforce requirement
Permanent ADF	58,850	59,373	61,049	63,272
APS	19, 236	19,862	20,260	20,273
Total – Permanent ADF + APS	78,086	79,235	81,309	83,545

* Note: This permanent ADF requirement has been updated following the release of the 2024-25 PBS.

ADF Workforce

2.5 Defence's immediate ADF workforce priorities are to address recruitment challenges and increase the retention of junior and middle rank personnel. The current permanent ADF workforce is focused on delivering the priorities outlined in the National Defence Strategy and the Integrated Investment Program. To ensure it is able to continue delivering these priorities effectively, the 2024 Defence Workforce Plan identifies three key lines of effort:

- ▶ **stabilise** the numbers of ADF members before 2026 by bringing the inflow into balance with the outflow of members leaving the permanent force
- ▶ **remediate** the necessary depth of ADF members in junior and middle ranks by 2030, especially in the employment categories identified as 'critical' and 'at risk'
- ▶ **grow** the size of the ADF's permanent force to 69,000 by the early 2030s, with the capacity, infrastructure and resources to sustain growth to deliver an integrated, focused force.

2.6 To stabilise, remediate and grow the permanent ADF workforce, the inflow must increase from approximately 5,500 per annum to 9,000 per annum over the coming decade. In parallel, the median length of permanent ADF service must increase from around 7 years to around 12 years.

- 2.7 Operational and contingency Reserve personnel will continue to play an essential role in supporting the ADF's readiness. Defence will enhance the Operational Reserve force by an additional 1,000 personnel by 2030. Defence will direct many of these additional Operational Reserves towards improving the readiness of the Navy, Air Force, and Joint Capabilities Group.

APS Workforce

- 2.8 The size of Defence's APS workforce has recently recovered following a long period of high separation rates and recruitment challenges. Defence's immediate priorities for its APS workforce involves skilling, development and professionalisation in order to deliver the priorities outlined in the National Defence Strategy and Integrated Investment Program.
- 2.9 An initial focus will be on uplifting skills in contracting, procurement and project management. Looking ahead, Defence will target recruitment and retention efforts to ensure the occupational profile of the APS is re-balanced in a deliberate way to address critical areas such as engineering, intelligence, cyber, ICT, project and program management and contract management.

Actual APS Full-Time Equivalent 2014-2024¹

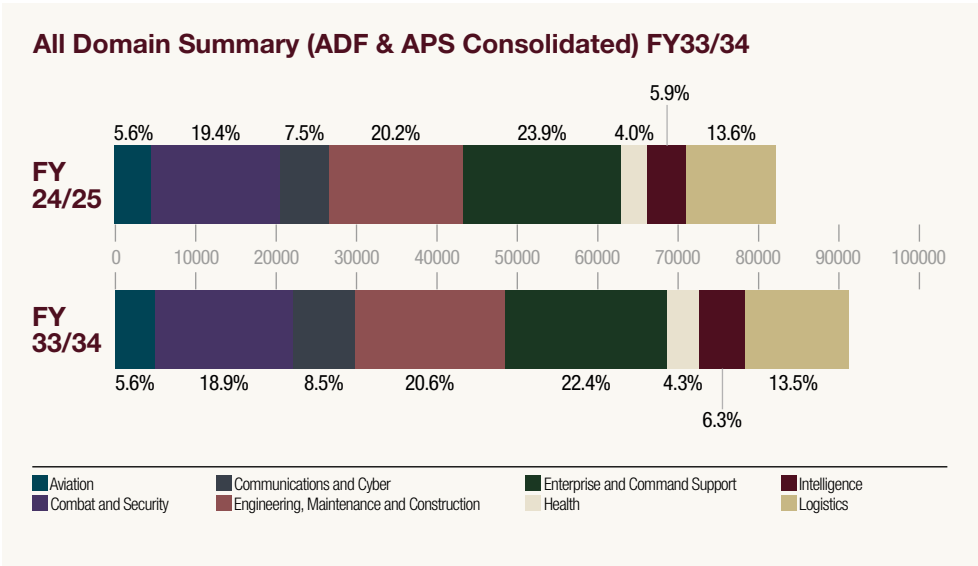


- 2.10 At the same time, Defence will reduce reliance on the contractor workforce for core APS jobs, while recognising there will continue to be a need for contracted support in specialist areas.

¹ Full-Time equivalent (FTE) is a measurement of the number of full-time and part-time APS employees

Capability Requirements

- 2.11 To align the workforce growth with the National Defence Strategy and Integrated Investment Program, Defence has assessed the distribution of required skills over the decade. Defence uses workforce segments to provide a consolidated view of these required skills. The largest workforce segments will be Combat and Security, Enterprise and Command Support, and Engineering, Maintenance and Construction, comprising 57 per cent of all roles. While not as large overall, significant planned growth in highly sought after skillsets for the Communications and Cyber, Intelligence, and Health workforce segments will be important.
- 2.12 Current shortfalls in junior and middle rank personnel have created skill gaps in all workforce segments, which will take time to remediate. The Continuation Bonus is targeted at the two cohorts with the highest separation rates – the junior and middle ranks – to begin to address these shortfalls.
- 2.13 While ADF retention trends continue to improve, remediation will require a persistent focus on enhancing the value proposition for the Defence workforce, while also improving the workplace culture and leadership at all levels.





Maritime

2.14 The National Defence Strategy and Integrated Investment Program outlined significant investments in maritime capability to improve the lethality of Navy's surface combatant fleet and introduce nuclear-powered submarines. The introduction of new general purpose frigates, Hunter Class frigates, nuclear-powered submarines, and autonomous underwater warfare systems require Navy to be postured for long-term, sustainable workforce growth out to 2040 and beyond.

Maritime Domain workforce

	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040
Surface Combatants	Light	Light	Light	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Larger	Larger	Larger	Larger	Larger	Larger	Larger	Larger	Larger
Submarines	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Moderate	Moderate	Larger	Larger	Larger	Larger	Larger	Larger	Larger	Larger	Larger
Combat Support & Amphibious	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Patrol Forces	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Naval Aviation	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Undersea Warfare	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light

KEY: Light = Workforce can meet requirements Moderate = Moderate workforce growth required Larger = Larger workforce growth required



Land

2.15 The Land domain workforce is pivoting to deliver an amphibious-capable, combined-arms land system, which will optimise Army for littoral manoeuvre. This requires several immediate changes, including reprioritising the existing water transport workforce to new vessels to be built in Australia, investment in Army soldiers and officers to complete ship handling and ocean navigation qualifications, and sustained workforce growth. Army is also being rebalanced to generate new capabilities in long-range, land-based strike and air defence.

Land Domain workforce

	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040
Land Combat Forces	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Land Combat Vehicles	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Army Watercraft	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Land Based Strike	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Protected Fires	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Land C4ISREW	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Theatre Logistics & Fuel Resilience	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

KEY: ■ Workforce can meet requirements ■ Moderate workforce growth required ■ Larger workforce growth required

Air

2.16 The Air domain workforce needs to grow sustainably to generate new and enhanced capabilities in expeditionary air combat, integrated air and missile defence, intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance, and secure airfield operations. The introduction of rapidly advancing technologies, such as the MQ-4C Triton uncrewed system and MC-55A Peregrine aircraft will be significant force multipliers for the ADF, and will drive new skillsets for the workforce.

Air Domain workforce

	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040
Air Combat																
Air Mobility																
Air and Missile Defence																
Air Mobility Aerial Refueling																
Air ISREW																
Combat Air Support Air Base Operations																
Combat Air Support People/Health																

KEY: ■ Workforce can meet requirements ■ Moderate workforce growth required ■ Larger workforce growth required





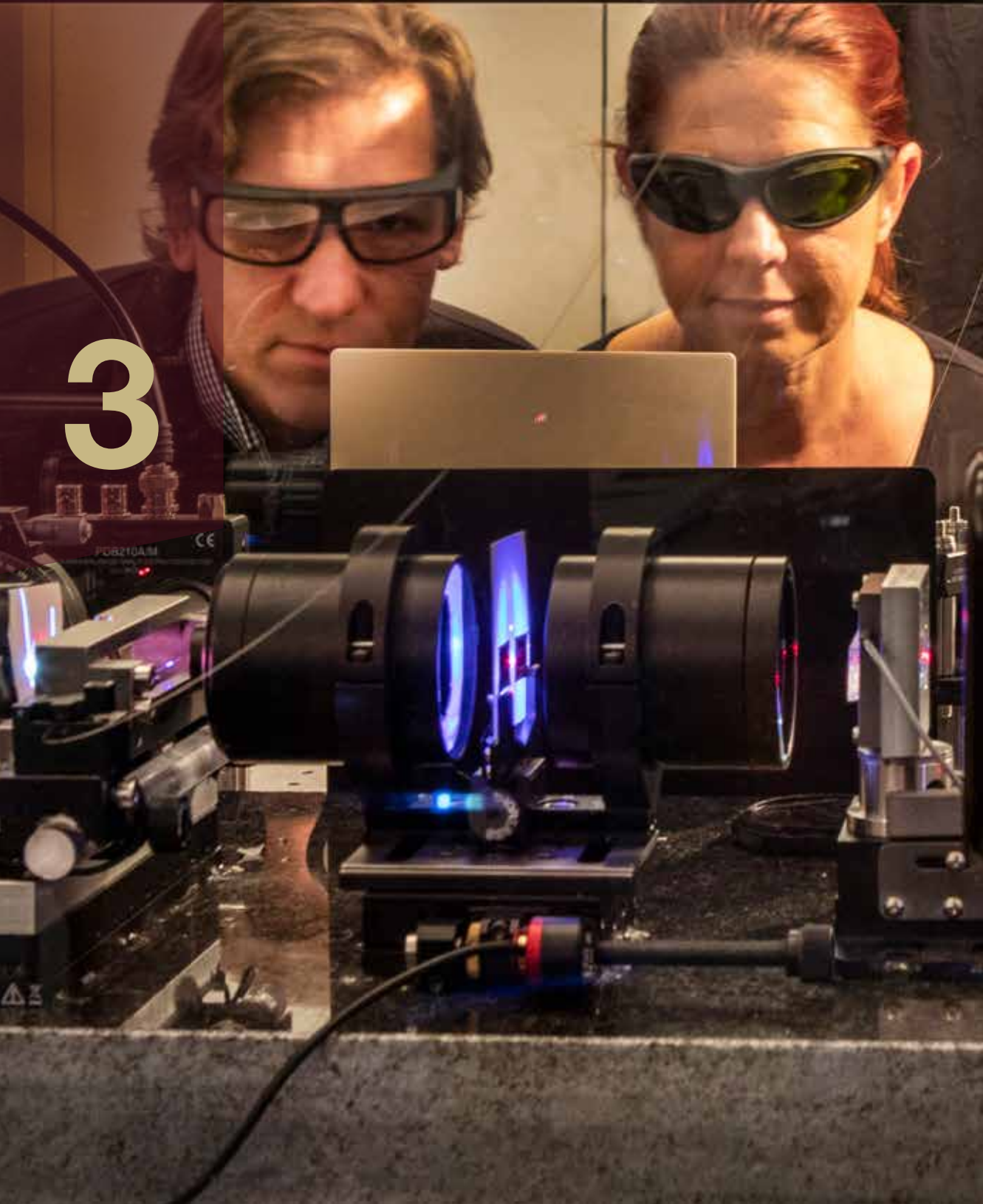
Space and Cyber

- 2.17 The 2024 Defence Workforce Plan guides the considerable acceleration and enhancement of Defence's cyber and space capabilities, which are pivotal to maintaining Australia's situational awareness and ability to protect our warfighting networks and systems. These skillsets are in high demand across the private and public sectors, requiring innovative approaches to Defence and the private sector building and sharing the Australian workforce with these skillsets.
- 2.18 The cyber workforce must be able to support the Australian Signals Directorate in developing defensive and offensive options to impose costs on malicious cyber activity and in generating cyber effects in direct support of ADF activities.

Enabling Functions

- 2.19 Enabling functions undertaken by both ADF and APS personnel, deliver a range of enterprise effects that are fundamental to the delivery of Australia's integrated, focused force.
- 2.20 Defence's enabling functions are broadly grouped into three categories: Logistics and Health; Command, Control and Coordination; and Infrastructure. Defence must meet workforce requirements for each enabling function in line with the prioritised capabilities outlined in the Integrated Investment Program:
- ▶ Logistics and Health – improving endurance and survivability in crisis
 - ▶ Command, Control and Coordination – delivering day-to-day enterprise management solutions from the tactical to the strategic level, including capability development, as well as direct support through policy-driven decision support and intelligence
 - ▶ Infrastructure – delivering capital works and facilities required to train, prepare and base the optimised integrated workforce.

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Chapter 3: Strategic Tasks

- 3.1 The ADF, APS and external components of the Defence workforce face distinct challenges. The 2024 Defence Workforce Plan addresses the requirements of the total workforce through a suite of eight strategic tasks, each with clearly defined outputs and outcomes.



Strategic Task One – Optimised Design of the Integrated Workforce

The ADF workforce is to be stabilised, remediated and postured for long-term, sustainable growth. As part of the integrated workforce, the APS workforce must continue to be reshaped into priority capability and enabling functions, with reduced reliance on the use of external contracted staff.

Action	Outcome
1.1 ADF, APS and external workforce resource allocations will be assessed annually to ensure ongoing alignment with the National Defence Strategy and Integrated Investment Program. This assessment will be informed by recruitment achievement, separation rates, and critical category/occupation analysis.	An integrated force structure and Total Workforce System optimised to make best use of the workforce.
1.2 Organisational Capability Reviews will be used to review existing functions and the design of all new functions. These reviews will inform the design of ADF, APS and external workforces and will enable Defence to align its workforce to meet strategic priorities.	Reduced duplication, coordinated prioritisation of workforce demand and rebalanced workforce composition including reduced reliance on the external workforce and a calibration of the ADF leadership structure.
1.3 ADF workforce postings will align with Defence priorities including the implementation of the National Defence Strategy, Integrated Investment Program and the agreed recommendations of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Final Report.	An integrated, focused force positioned to deliver Government priorities.
1.4 Appointment of the Deputy Secretary Defence People as the APS workforce authority to align APS workforce allocations to Government priorities, including the National Defence Strategy and Integrated Investment Program.	Composition and allocation of the APS allocated to Government priorities.
1.5 Implementation of the Defence External Workforce Reform Action Plan 2024-2026.	Defence is an informed buyer and user of external support. Defence reduces its reliance on external contractors and contractor positions are converted to APS roles, except in cases where this is not possible. Core roles are performed by ADF or APS personnel.

Strategic Task Two – Enhanced ADF Inflow

Defence needs to grow its highly skilled and specialised ADF workforce by attracting people who have, or have the capacity to acquire, key skills needed in transitioning to an integrated, focused force.

Increasing ADF inflow requires an approach that leverages all avenues of entry, together with improved use of ADF part-time arrangements and the ADF Reserves. Leveraging all avenues of entry includes, but is not limited to:

- ▶ improving the ab-initio recruitment²
- ▶ evolving and consolidating mid-level career entry, lateral recruitment and re-hiring avenues
- ▶ expanding recruitment of eligible permanent residents living in Australia, starting with eligible New Zealanders in July 2024 and expanding to permanent residents from other Five Eyes nations in January 2025, and
- ▶ ongoing investment in the ADF Gap Year and First Nation's development programs.

Action	Outcome
2.1 The eligibility pool of potential applicants will be expanded for all avenues of entry through reform to Defence policies and removing unnecessary barriers to recruitment. This expanded eligibility includes recruitment of citizens from the Five Eyes nations who are permanent residents living in Australia through a staged approach.	Increased ADF inflow through an expanded pool of eligible candidates for all avenues of entry.
2.2 Recruitment processes will be reviewed to accelerate recruitment of eligible candidates for all avenues of entry.	Increased ADF inflow through accelerated pathways to service, improved candidate experience and minimal candidate withdrawals during the recruitment process.
2.3 The ADF Careers Future Service Delivery Model will be implemented, delivering new systems of work and a new candidate management system.	Increased ADF inflow through the introduction of new capabilities that will improve volume, velocity and the candidate experience.
2.4 Work with our Pacific Family with a view to expanding the focus on non-citizen recruitment to the Pacific.	Expanded pool of eligible candidates, and develop new ways of engaging Pacific Islanders in Defence Force work.

² Ab-initio refers to the recruitment of personnel with no previous military experience into the base training ranks.

Strategic Task Three – Partnership with Defence Industry

A strong, sovereign Australian Defence industry is central to National Defence, as outlined in the National Defence Strategy and the Defence Industry Development Strategy. The highly competitive national labour market and forecast continued low levels of unemployment will continue to put pressure on Defence’s ADF and APS workforce. Addressing this challenge will require close collaboration with defence industry on workforce initiatives.

Defence must continue to partner with defence industry to create, train and retain the highly skilled and experienced workforce needed to deliver capability outcomes critical for Australia’s national security. This is alongside the implementation of the Defence Industry Development Strategy, which will be updated biennially as part of the National Defence Strategy cycle, with Defence and defence industry working cooperatively to develop the workforce. Collaboration with other Government agencies, including with state and territory governments, as well as consultation with unions, peak industry bodies must all continue to be prioritised.

Action	Outcome
3.1 Defence will work with State Governments, industry and unions through the Maritime Skills and Workforce Ministerial Council and the Tri-partite Defence Industry Council to collaborate on initiatives that will build the workforce pipeline.	More Australians with the skills needed and able to contribute to Australia’s National Defence, across both Defence and defence industry.
3.2 Defence will work cooperatively with industry to plan how members of the ADF Reserve can best contribute to National Defence.	ADF Reserves perform roles that most effectively contribute to National Defence.
3.3 Defence will continue to work with Commonwealth Government agencies including the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and the Department of Education, will expand engagement with States and Territories through implementation of the Defence Industry Development Strategy, and will continue to implement the South Australian Defence Industry Workforce Skills Report.	Greater engagement with States and Territories to enable the delivery of National Defence.

Strategic Task Four – Enhanced ADF Health Services and Readiness

It is important that Defence continues to focus on the health and wellbeing of its workforce. It is a priority to provide best practice health care to ADF personnel, including ahead of, during, and after deployments as well as at key junctures in the posting cycle.

The ADF Health workforce must be agile and able to deliver a health effect in support of ADF warfighting capabilities.

Action	Outcome
4.1 Defence will deliver health services and health protection through the implementation of cutting-edge technology, monitoring, prevention and protective capabilities.	The health and wellbeing of ADF personnel will be monitored, treated, and sustained.
4.2 Defence will deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ strategic, enterprise and theatre-level health planning; ▶ integration of health effects across Defence, whole of government; and ▶ continuous system improvements and enterprise risk through clinical governance processes. 	The Defence health system is managed, integrated and assured.
4.3 Defence will deliver a qualified health workforce, appropriately balanced across ADF, APS and external workforce, providing ADF personnel with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ ongoing health care; ▶ preventative and occupational health support; ▶ optimised health readiness; and ▶ individual wellness support through the members whole of life. 	The health and wellbeing of ADF personnel will be enabled through a qualified health workforce.

Strategic Task Five – Development and Transformation of the Defence Workforce

The introduction of new and enhanced Defence capabilities requires higher levels of education, training and experience across the ADF and APS workforce. This will be achieved through targeted initiatives that address immediate workforce needs while also building a long-term workforce pipeline.

For the ADF, Defence will improve recognition of existing skills, knowledge and experiences. This will make it easier for personnel to enter and re-enter the ADF. It will also help our ADF personnel transition to civilian life.

For the APS, immediate training requirements will focus on uplifting contracting, procurement and project management skills and embedding these skills broadly across Defence. Strengthening these skillsets will support Defence to continue to reduce its reliance on the external workforce.

Action	Outcome
5.1 Defence will align education and training with new and enhanced capability priorities and will strengthen delivery of education and training through enhanced engagement with academia and industry.	The skills of the ADF and APS workforce will be enhanced and focused on delivering Defence priorities.
5.2 Defence will implement a Defence Leadership Framework to strengthen the leadership capabilities of the ADF and APS workforce.	Defence leaders will be accountable, including for the development of their teams.
5.3 Defence will deliver a flexible ADF career pathway and skills model that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ facilitates the development of Reserve and Permanent ADF (Service Categories 3 to 7) at every stage of the career life cycle; and ▶ enables non-Defence trained personnel and previous members of the ADF to be more easily engaged mid-career. 	People will be able to more easily enter, and re-enter, the ADF.
5.4 Defence will implement an APS Professionalisation framework to support targeted upskilling and professional growth.	The skill of the APS workforce will be enhanced and focused on the delivery of Defence priorities.
5.5 An ADF and APS Job Architecture Framework will deliver business intelligence that will inform ADF and APS skilling and professionalisation requirements.	An integrated Defence People System that uses business intelligence to inform skilling requirements to ensure workforce alignment with the National Defence Strategy.
5.6 Defence will continue to implement the Strategic Commissioning Framework, including clear definitions of core APS roles.	Skills and composition of the Defence APS workforce is strengthened and APS accountability and integrity is enhanced.

Strategic Task Six – Management of the Integrated Workforce

Defence must plan and manage its ADF, APS and external workforce to deliver the integrated, focused force that Defence needs to respond to Australia's strategic circumstances.

This integrated planning and management has commenced through the implementation of the Defence People System, designed to reduce duplication, streamline processes and improve career opportunities for Defence personnel.

Through the implementation of the Strategic Review of the ADF Reserves, Defence will better manage the Reserve workforce and integrate them with permanent ADF personnel. Reservists play a critical role in delivering the National Defence Strategy and reinforcing the permanent ADF in times of need.

Improved communication of the Defence Employee Value Proposition – that is, the conditions of service and employment – will ensure Defence personnel and families are accessing the services they need and can make informed choices when opting to remain in service or transition.

Action	Outcome
6.1 Defence will improve and rationalise its people and career management policies, processes, and procedures through the implementation of the Defence People System.	An integrated Defence people, workforce and career management system.
6.2 Defence will implement the recommendations of the Strategic Review of the ADF Reserves.	A strengthened ADF Reserve capability that recognises that importance of competitive conditions of service and the need to enhance the Operational Reserves.
6.3 Defence will continue to review, update and communicate the Defence Employee Value Proposition. Communication will be enhanced through digital channels that will be available on personal, portable devices.	Defence continues to offer a competitive Employee Value Proposition to support the recruitment and retention of Defence personnel.

Strategic Task Seven – Improved Culture, Mental Health and Wellbeing

People are, and will remain, Defence’s most important capability. Improving Defence’s culture is fundamental to achieving the Defence mission and implementing the National Defence Strategy.

Defence will continue to implement initiatives to provide a positive and psychologically safe environment for its people, including through the implementation of:

- ▶ the Government agreed recommendations from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide
- ▶ the Defence and Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, including expansion of mental health and suicide prevention programs
- ▶ the Defence Culture Blueprint
- ▶ the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

To grow the workforce and achieve a generational uplift in capabilities, Defence needs to better harness the diversity of the Australian workforce. This includes more equitable representation of women, First Nations people, and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Action	Outcome
7.1 Defence will implement agreed recommendations of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.	Improve the culture, wellbeing and lived experiences of Defence personnel.
7.2 Defence will continue to implement the Defence Culture Blueprint 2023-2033 and evolve the Defence Culture Blueprint Action Plan annually, informed by an analysis of survey results, incident reports and HR data.	An inclusive and psychologically safe culture that provides Defence personnel with a positive workplace experience.
7.3 Defence will continue to implement the Respect@Work Framework, including enhancing the understanding of Respect@Work across its leadership and workforce.	Defence personnel behave in accordance with the Defence Values and are aware of their Respect@Work responsibilities.
7.4 Defence and the Department of Veterans’ Affairs will develop and implement a Defence and Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024-2029.	A positive culture where the mental health and wellbeing of Defence’s integrated work-force is supported.

Action	Outcome
7.5 Defence will continue to implement the Defence Work Health and Safety Strategy 2023-2028 and Action Plan.	Defence will have a better understanding of the unique hazards and risks confronting Defence people, and will be well placed to prevent and manage these hazards and risks.
7.6 Defence will continue to prioritise and invest further in efforts aimed at preventing sexual violence, and managing incidents to prevent further harm.	A reduction in prevalence of sexual violence and creation of a safe work environment where individuals have access to support services and feel safe to report sexual violence.
7.7 Defence will implement the APS Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Strategy.	Improved representation, including at the SES level, and support for Defence's culturally and linguistically diverse workforce.
7.8 A Defence First Nations Commitment and Plan of Action will be released in 2025.	Enhanced training and employment opportunities and improved support for First Nations personnel.
7.9 Defence will continue to deliver the annual Women in ADF Report to support gender equality, more women in leadership positions, more women on boards, and greater flexible work arrangements. Defence aims to achieve an overall increase in the participation of women, achieving 25% representation in the permanent ADF by 2030.	Increased representation of women in the ADF at all levels.

Strategic Task Eight – Support to Defence Personnel, ADF Families and Transitioning Members

Defence families play a pivotal role in the health and wellbeing of Defence’s workforce, particularly with respect to the retention and operational effectiveness of ADF members. It is vital that families are supported to manage the impact that military service has on their day-to-day lives, including the impact of member relocations, absences, injury, separations, transfers and transition.

The process of leaving the permanent ADF, commonly referred to as transition, can be a significant life changing event for many ADF members and their families. Transition is not only about meeting a series of practical needs, it is a journey that includes emotional and cultural adjustments as well as changes to familial and social relations. While there have been significant improvements in the support provided to transitioning ADF members over time, Defence recognises there is more work to do.

Action	Outcome
8.1 Defence will release and implement the Defence and Veteran Family Wellbeing Strategy 2024-29.	Defence and veteran families' wellbeing is supported.
8.2 Defence will implement the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028 through improved communication, training, support services, governance and accountability. Defence will also review and update relevant policies.	Defence personnel and their families at risk of, or affected by family and domestic violence, are supported through a range of internal and external services.
8.3 Defence will deliver the six transition priorities from the Veterans Transition Strategy 2023. 1. Veterans and their families plan and prepare early for their transition. 2. Veterans and their families are aware of and able to access support appropriate to their needs. 3. Families are engaged through transition. 4. Veterans and their families have access to employment, education and skills opportunities. 5. Financial wellbeing for veterans and their families. 6. Veterans and their families feel supported and recognised.	An enhanced transition ecosystem that best prepares and supports veterans and their families to transition and go on to live fulfilling lives.
8.4 Defence will develop and implement an assurance framework across the transition ecosystem.	A transition ecosystem that supports a positive transition experience for members and their families, and complies with relevant legislation, policy and procedures.

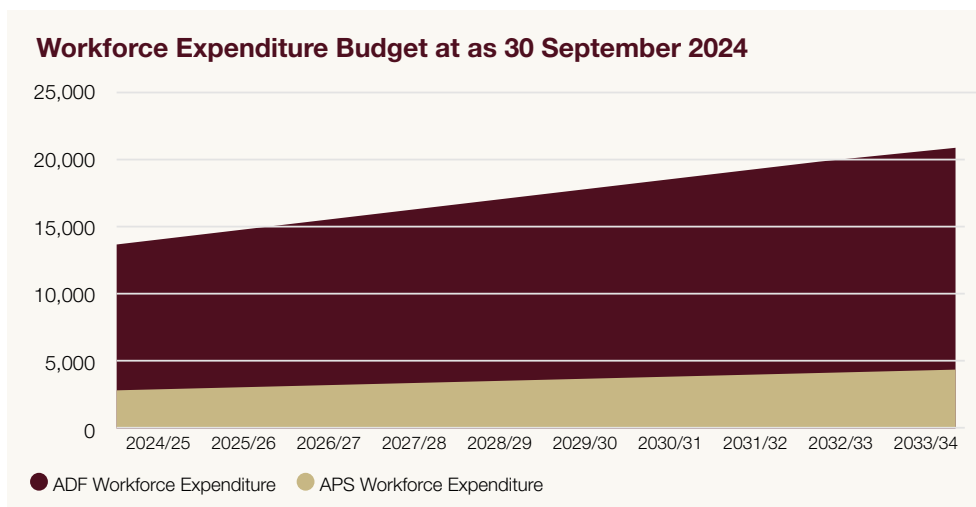


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Chapter 4: Resourcing

- 4.1 To provide funding certainty for Defence, the Government has continued the long-standing policy of providing a ten-year funding model for Defence. The Government is investing an additional \$5.7 billion over the next four years to 2027-28 and \$50.3 billion over the next decade to 2033-34.
- 4.2 The Defence workforce budget is aligned to the budgeted workforce requirement outlined in this Workforce Plan and includes per capita costs, as well as dedicated funding for workforce initiatives.
- 4.3 The cost of the Defence ADF and APS workforce is expected to increase over time as the workforce becomes increasingly specialised and technical, aligned to more complex and capable platforms and major systems. The Defence Budget provides funding for these costs while preserving the acquisition, sustainment and operation budgets.
- 4.4 The total ADF and APS Defence workforce expenditure over the next four years to 2027-28 is \$71.6 billion and \$208 billion over the next decade.



- 4.5 The Government is investing \$371.9 million from 2025-26 to 2027-28 to extend the ADF Continuation Bonus for eligible junior ranks at a rate of \$40,000 per person, and \$195.4 million over the next three years to 2027-28 to introduce a second ADF Continuation Bonus for eligible personnel at a rate of \$40,000 per person.
- 4.6 The Government is also investing \$38.3 million over the next four years to 2027-28 to increase the Operational Reserves by an additional 1,000 personnel.
- 4.7 This builds on the Government's existing investment to improve study assistance to ADF and APS personnel, increase support to families through enhanced remote locality leave travel, and expand the ADF Family Health Benefits Program.
- 4.8 The Government's financial investment in the Defence workforce complements the initiatives underway to support Defence personnel by delivering lasting institutional change. This lasting change will be delivered through the modernisation of the ADF employment offer, improved wellbeing and mental health support and initiatives to enhance the Defence culture.





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