

**SENATE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE  
REFERENCES COMMITTEE**

**INQUIRY INTO RECRUITMENT & RETENTION  
OF DEFENCE PERSONNEL**

**SUBMISSION**

**Submission No:** 76

**Submittor:** LCDR Peta Harwood RAN  
L134547

**Address:**

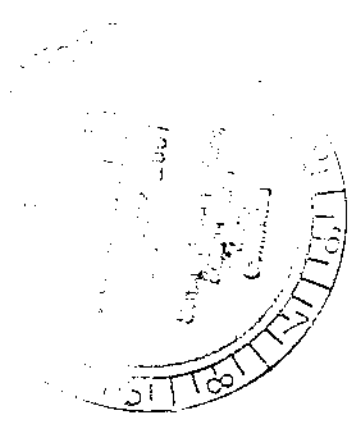
**Telephone No:**

**Fax:**

**E-Mail:**

**No. of Pages:** 4

**Attachments:** NO



18 May 2001

**Senator John Hogg**

Chairman

Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee

Inquiry into Recruitment and Retention of Australian Defence Force Personnel

Dear Senator,

I would like to begin this submission by giving you my background.

**Member's Background.**

In 1978 I joined the Australian Army Reserves originally I was a Private attached to an Ordnance Platoon (3 Ord PLT). I then transferred to 2/15 Artillery Unit as a Gunner and worked in the Q store. At this stage females were allowed to belong to reserve field force units such as Artillery, Infantry and Engineers and work with the regular force. I made the rank of Bombardier before leaving to join the Navy.

I joined the Women's Royal Australian Naval Service (WRANS) as a Midshipman on 2 September 1983. I proceeded through the Supplementary List program completing my basic training, familiarisation training (stage 2) and trade training as a Supply Officer. In 1985 I joined HMAS JERVIS BAY the Navy's then training ship as the first female Deputy Supply Officer in a permanent position on a ship. The female crew included the doctor, four WRANS and myself.

On completion of my time at sea I undertook a number of jobs that related to the Supply Officer category. In 1987 I met my husband and in 1988 we married. My husband is currently a Major in the Australian Regular Army and we have one child who was born in 1997. In December 2000 I completed a Graduate Diploma in Human Resource Management and I am currently serving at the Joint Logistics Systems Agency in Melbourne.

## Social Change

Overall social change outside of Defence during my period in the Defence Forces has been good. The law has changed to modify the public's behaviour in treating people fairly including women, homosexuals, and people from different races. The Australian Defence Force has adopted these laws as policy and although it will always be difficult to change attitudes a good attempt has been made to change behaviour. The laws however, did set the cause for the progression of women in the military back in some services such as the Army Reserve, which already had women in combat roles however; it opened the door for Navy which had women allocated to very limited positions. One could argue that the Navy would eventually come onboard to expanding the roles of women but the Army still does not have any women in combat roles in the year 2001 and still only discussion is taking place no action.

It is indicative how the very senior members of the ADF see women with only one female Star Rank Officer in the Royal Australian Air Force. I could pursue the problems relating to women in the services but the point I wish to make is that there are very few female role models in the Defence Forces. This influences the way women see the ADF, as a masculine entity where they have to continue to prove themselves. There is a very obvious glass ceiling. Who would want to join an organisation such as the Defence Force when the social ethos has changed so much these days?

## Changes within Defence (including the Defence Reform Program).

We seem to have lost all perception of change within the ADF. Two years ago I worked for a group within the Department (Support Command) that did not last two years. When we have a change of Defence Minister we seem to go around the 'mulberry bush' yet again. In 1994, I drafted a minute in response to review that was currently being undertaken the references in my minute referred to the 12 other reviews also currently being undertaken. I think that most members are change fatigued. It is also very frightening when you are serving for example on a ship (in a job you know) and come ashore to a job where the whole of the Defence Force seems to have changed. The Defence Reform program is only another review that Department of Defence personnel (military and civilian) have no idea if objectives were achieved, if savings were made and to what extent.

Other changes are just annoying in that we have been told we are not a Defence Force any more. We are to be known as the Australian Defence Organisation (ADO). APS members are important to Department of Defence but they do not serve in a forward area of operations, work on a warship or fly combat aircraft. In other words they do not form a force a large body of armed personnel; army.<sup>1</sup> APS members are not required to move their families and chattels from one area to another around the country from isolated country areas to capital cities when military members and their families are expected too. Other changes include the spreading of resources across 12 Defence groups, which increases bureaucracy within the ADO causing the problem that some officers, sailors, soldiers and airmen and are unaware of their military chain of command. The Navy divisional system works well at sea but ashore there is no divisional system and this means that many sailors' feel isolated from they're own Service. Other military members also feel disoriented from they're own service.

---

<sup>1</sup> Definition of Force: The Macquarie Dictionary, 1999, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., The Macquarie Library Pty, Ltd.

## Conditions of Services

The impact of change in this area has been particularly brutal to military personnel and specifically at the lower levels of the rank structure. The issues began when the funding for salaries and allowances for military and APS personnel were combined into the Department of Defence and also when the enterprise agreements were established for military personnel. The combination of funding for salaries and allowance meant one 'bucket' of money is available to the Defence Department for all salaries and allowances, prior to this, funding for APS personnel came from the Department of Finance. When an increase in salary or allowance is given to APS members it seems that the military members loose another allowance or don't receive an increase. Conditions of service for APS personnel working in the Department of Defence seems to have increased two-fold whereas military members seem to loose or not obtain increases (perceived or not) in conditions of services. I justify this statement by examples however; further research within your department would be beneficial.

I will start by discussing the CPA for APS members and the EPA for military members. The CPA for APS members obtained 15 outcomes. Not all these outcomes were a benefit to APS members. These benefits included:

- a one off payment of \$500 to every APS member for voting 'NO' to the initial CPA agreement, (I doubt military would receive the same benefit);
- subsidised meal rates for APS members in military messes (military messes are a unique service condition to provide R & R for members) ;
- Isolated Establishment allowance to be phased out; and
- 3 days leave for APS personnel who worked in the Sydney area during the 2000 Olympic games (military members did not receive this benefit).

The EPA for military members had three outcomes only:

- A 10.9% compound pay increase over three years;
- Isolated Establishment allowance to be phased out; and
- A review of all ADF conditions of service.

The two agreements were negotiated separately, as should be, however representation for military members at the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal is the Returned Service League (RSL), Armed Forces Federation of Australia (AFFA) and the National Consultative Group of Service Families (NCGSF). The APS have Industrial Relation lawyers representing the Unions, Professional Bodies and other interested parties. APS members are fully consulted. Military members were consulted by answering yes/no to six questions. Our senior military leaders are on a different pay scale and receive a performance bonus. They are caught between performing for government, representing military members as well as balancing the Defence budget. The 23 million-dollar increase in Defence spending was all on Capital equipment; little on support systems for the equipment and no notable expenditure for remuneration of military members in recognition of the unique employment. With this alignment of APS members to military members, military members are leaving the Defence Force to undertake the same employment in the APS or sub-contract to the Department of Defence without the overheads of being in the military.

Another condition of Service change for Navy personnel is the introduction of individual readiness. While it is expected that all members of the military should maintain a high level of fitness, age, length of service, history of service, employment categories and current positions should be taken into account when assessing a persons fitness to serve. Instead of being compensated to maintain a high level of fitness such as a bonus (money, extra leave) members are punished (non-promotion, discharge) if they don't maintain fitness levels. It is understandable that levels of fitness have to be maintained however, no civilian organisation even government organisation would require their employees to undertake an extra task without some form of compensation. Punishment and policies keep military members in line instead of encouragement and compensation.

Recently agreement took place to offer APS members' access to Defence Subsidised Housing when relocating from Canberra only on a short-term tenure (such as what Military members do regularly). Although now you don't have to be a military member to have access to Defence Housing the discriminating fact is that Defence Housing is only offered to married military members whereas Defence Housing can be offered to married or single APS members. This is not 'a fair go for everyone'.

The other issue I would particularly like to raise is the fact that salary is not commensurate to the one income military family particularly at the lower rank level. Most (nearly all junior rank officers, sailors, soldiers and airmen) are on some sort of family assistance allowance. If in a stable environment (non-military employment) families are able to obtain access to two incomes on an ongoing basis. It is usually the spouse who must give up employment when the military member is required to relocate with a posting. It is perceived the welfare gap (Centrelink payments) of junior military members has increased over the years.

### **Conclusion**

I have never written to a Senate inquiry before. I now feel that over the last eighteen years conditions of service particularly have degenerated greatly and something must be done. We need to attract good decent young people and how can we do that when there is no benefit or recognition to being a member of the Australian Defence Force. Better pay is found in the private sector and better conditions are found in the APS. I have a very strong allegiance to the Royal Australian Navy. I am proud to wear a Navy uniform and belong to such a distinguished organisation but being proud and loyal does not put bread and butter on the table.

As a mother I am concerned about the future of my son. As a Naval Officer I am concerned about the future of our junior members. They should be given every opportunity to be provided with a positive future with good prospects. All members of the Australian Defence Force are voluntary and because they want to belong to the ADF they accept decisions and policy as in the best interest for members. This is part of the esprit-de-corps that each individual service creates. It is what bonds military people and makes them perform to the best of their abilities for their country and the people they serve. We put 'Duty First' at the expense of family and well being however, it is not apparent that the Military is a 'People First' organisation.

**Peta M. Harwood**  
Lieutenant Commander, RAN