



DEFENCE
RESERVES

PRIVATE SECTOR LEAVE GUIDELINES

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE SECTOR LEAVE
GUIDELINES FOR DEFENCE RESERVISTS.



WHY HAVE THESE GUIDELINES BEEN DEVELOPED?

The guidelines are designed to enable the release of Defence Reservists from private sector employment to fulfil their training and service obligations.

These guidelines have been developed by the Defence Reserves Support Council (DRSC), which comprises representatives from peak employer groups, industry bodies and unions including the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Australian Industry Group, the Council of Small Business Organisations of Australia and the Australian Council of Trade Unions. The tertiary sector, women's and youth groups and indigenous organisations are also represented on the Council.

The guidelines provide clear direction to employers, Reservists and the Defence Force in relation to Reservists employed in the private sector. Employers are strongly encouraged to adopt the guidelines as a best-practice model for supportive workplace arrangements and practices.

A policy for the public sector has already been introduced.

WHAT SHOULD EMPLOYERS DO?

Employers are encouraged to develop policies that provide clear support for their employees to undertake Defence service.

Supportive employers are encouraged to:

- have a clear human resources (HR) policy for employee participation in the Defence Force Reserve with provision for Defence leave, acknowledging that Reserve training enhances job performance as well as contributing to national security
- ensure that every level of management in the organisation is aware of the supportive policy
- recognise employees' Defence service accomplishments in the organisation's newsletters and other publications
- grant, as a minimum, two weeks (10 working days or 14 calendar days) Defence leave each year, in addition to the employee's annual leave, either as paid or unpaid leave or on top-up pay
- in line with current legislation provide access to additional Defence leave if required by the Australian Defence Force
- support Reservists during their first year of Defence service to enable the member to complete recruit or initial-employment training, whether by continuous attendance or by attendance at modules, in order to allow Reservists to achieve the necessary competency skills and qualifications
- ensure that any absence on Defence service does not break an employee's continuity of service for the purposes of seniority and employment
- preserve access to other entitlements during absences on Defence service, including counting periods of leave without pay as service for accrual of annual leave and long service leave entitlements except where such periods are rendered as Continuous Full Time Defence Service (CFTS)

“Because we pride ourselves on being an Australian company, we feel that supporting the Defence Reserves is very much a part of Australian organisations working together.”

Lyn Everett, Founder and Executive Director, Language Links, Perth WA

- commit, wherever possible, to the provision of job opportunities and benefits for Reservist employees, consistent with those for other employees
- review the Reservist's salary or conditions along with other employees if a periodic review is undertaken while the Reservist is absent on Defence service. If a new workforce agreement is signed during the Reservist's absence, then the Reservist should be considered as an employee for the purposes of that agreement
- actively address the Reservist's re-integration into the workforce, without detriment, after compulsory deployment or absence on military duties including training.

Where employers currently provide levels of support exceeding these guidelines, they are strongly encouraged to maintain their present levels of support into the future.

DEFENCE RESERVE SERVICE (PROTECTION) ACT 2001

The Act makes it mandatory for employees to be released for Defence service and for the training necessary to prepare for that service. It also makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against, disadvantage or dismiss an employee for undertaking Defence service. For further information contact the Office of Reserve Service Protection on 1800 803 485.

WHAT SHOULD DEFENCE DO?

The guidelines also contain recommended actions for the Defence Force and Reservists to ensure the needs of employers are met.

These actions include:

- providing sufficient notice of a Reservist's requirement for Defence service
- seeking to identify alternative dates for the Defence service if it causes significant operational difficulties for the employer
- whenever possible to not withdraw from or cancel a course or other period of Defence service at short notice if Defence leave has been arranged with the employer
- to advise the employer of qualifications or skills a Reservist has gained as a result of Defence service
- to inform the employer about the Employer Support Payment Scheme and opportunities to visit or observe Defence activities.

For further information visit www.defence.gov.au/reserves or call 1800 803 485.

NEED MORE INFORMATION? WE ARE HERE TO HELP

For further information contact your local Defence Reserves office:

1800 803 485

www.defence.gov.au/reserves



DEFENCE RESERVES SUPPORT COUNCIL

SUPPORTING AUSTRALIA'S DEFENCE RESERVISTS AND THEIR EMPLOYERS

The Defence Reserves Support Council provides a link between the Australian Defence Force (ADF), employers and the community from which Reservists are drawn.