

**AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE COLLEGE**  
**AUSTRALIAN COMMAND & STAFF COLLEGE**



**RAN STAFF ACQUAINT COURSE**

**EXERCISE REPORTER**



**AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE COLLEGE**  
Australian Command and Staff College  
**MINUTE**



**EXERCISE REPORTER**

1. The attached exercise, having been approved, is promulgated for action by CM and staff.
2. The exercise has been produced for private study by RANSAC CM. It is to be used for no other purpose and is not to be reproduced.

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25 Jul 09

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**Distribution:**

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RANSAC CM – Course 28/09

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## TIMETABLE

1. The timetable for this exercise is promulgated in the RANSAC Phase Two *Study Guide*.

## INTRODUCTION

2. Exercise REPORTER is the first of three major exercises undertaken by CM during Phase Two of the RAN Staff Acquaint Course. It provides an opportunity for CM to address an aspect of their service employment or experience that they believe warrants critical examination.

## AIM

3. The aim of Exercise REPORTER is for CM to write a Defence paper that critically examines an aspect of their service employment.

## OBJECTIVES

4. Exercise REPORTER is designed to give CM the opportunity to:
  - a. consolidate their Defence writing skills; and
  - b. analyse a complex issue, and make practical suggestions to improve the situation.
5. On completion of Phase One, CM will have three weeks in which to decide upon their topic and a further 13 weeks to write the paper. The paper is to be 2000 words long.
6. The paper's topic is to be approved by the Guidance Officer (GO) iaw with the Phase Two Study Guide. At this time, the CM is strongly encouraged to outline the scope of the topic to their GO. Once the topic is approved, and the scope agreed, the CM may commence work on their paper. Before progressing too far the paper's introduction and aim are to be approved by the GO iaw the Phase Two Study Guide.
7. Regular consultation with the GO to ensure the paper's structure and headings are correct prior to fully writing the body of the paper is encouraged.
8. When the paper is submitted, it should be written as though it is being submitted to the GO who is role playing your immediate supervisor.
9. Selected papers may be forwarded subsequently to the relevant responsible authorities.

## ASSESSMENT

10. Exercise REPORTER will be assessed against the written exercise criteria as follows:
  - a. **Knowledge.** (30%) Knowledge refers to the writer's grasp of the subject matter. Have all the relevant factors been considered?
  - b. **Critical Evaluation.** (25%) Critical Evaluation describes the extent that the writer has judged information used for relevance and validity and has related it to the topic.

- c. **Structure and Logic of Argument.** (30%) How has the argument been formulated? Has the issue been defined? Is the argument valid? Is there a good balance between descriptive information and persuasive use of that material to generate reasoned conclusions and recommendations?
- d. **Format and Expression.** (15%) Is the sentence construction simple and direct or convoluted? Does the submission conform to the format requirements of Defence writing? Is the level of prose appropriate to the material and the intended audience? Are the grammar and spelling correct?

### CHOOSING THE RIGHT TOPIC

11. CM may choose, for their topic, any aspect of management in the ADF or Department of Defence. Papers **must not** contain any material above **RESTRICTED** level. Any paper containing restricted material must have appropriate security markings.

12. You should choose your topic with some care. Put a good deal of thought into this decision because, as REPORTER involves much work, you will want to have something worthwhile at the end of it.

13. Phase Two GO will approve the topic of each Defence paper to ensure that it is appropriate and practicable, and that the proposed paper will satisfy the aim of the exercise. In choosing a topic CM are to select an area in which they can make truly practical suggestions to improve an element of Defence management. Vague policy reviews that have no direct relevance or implications for present practice will not be accepted. Once your Phase Two GO has agreed to your choice you will be expected to persevere with it, even if you find unexpected difficulties along the way.

14. It is critical that the topic selected can be addressed objectively. CMs are strongly counselled against choosing a topic which is too close to their emotions and which they will not be able to view at arm's length in an objective and logical way. **Emotive and subjective content invariably result in poor REPORTER submissions.**

15. Topics will be unsuitable for your REPORTER if they are:

- a. too vague and general,
- b. trivial,
- c. too complex to be covered adequately in the allowed word limit,
- d. dependent on research which is too time consuming,
- e. too highly classified,
- f. too ambitious, or
- g. otherwise unlikely to lead to a worthwhile Defence paper.

## WRITING THE PAPER

### Selection of the Aim

16. CM are formally to clear their written Introduction and Aim with their GO before proceeding further with the paper. This approval is essential because selection of a suitable aim is crucial to the success of the paper. Once approved the written Introduction and Aim may only be changed with GO approval.

17. As their research progresses, CM who wish to do so, may discuss their intended framework with their Phase Two GO. Guidance Officers will **not**, however, read draft papers before they are handed in for assessment.

18. In selecting your aim and preparing to write the paper you should be guided by the references. Considerable emphasis was placed on the importance of a methodical approach during Exercises TASK GROUP VISIT and QUILL. Such an approach is essential for the successful completion of your REPORTER.

### Framework

19. Pay particular attention to the structure of your paper. Try drawing up a 'flow chart' to see if the logic of your argument flows well. If the chart shows sidelines with 'dead-ends', you have not thought the paper through well enough. Discuss the outline with your Phase Two GO.

### Writing

20. When you have written a section try reading it aloud. If it sounds pompous or overblown, that is the way it will seem to the reader. Take care to:

- a. keep sentence constructions simple,
- b. prefer concrete examples to abstract concepts,
- c. avoid long words where short ones have the same meaning, and
- d. use your dictionary and thesaurus.

### Proofreading

21. Resist the temptation to hand in your exercise as soon as you have printed it. Put it aside for a period (the longer the better) and then take the time to go through it line-by-line checking for errors. They may be hard to find, but there will be some. Have someone else give you an honest opinion of the paper.

22. When you are doing your final proof read prior to submission go right through the document one last time. Make sure all the page breaks are electrically input and any supplementary documents available. Check paragraph and page numbering. Minor details like these are often missed and detract from the professional appearance of a paper.

## **SUBMITTING THE PAPER**

23. Your REPORTER must be submitted electronically by the date shown in the Phase Two Study Guide. Any submission received after this date will be considered to be late.

24. When submitting your paper it is to be emailed to [RANSAC.ASSESSMENT@defence.gov.au](mailto:RANSAC.ASSESSMENT@defence.gov.au) and named as follows:

SURNAME\_INIT\_EX REPORTER.doc

Eg: OREB\_T\_EX REPORTER.doc

## **EXERCISE ADMINISTRATION**

25. Any administrative tasks requiring action by either the Director RANSAC or RANSAC Planning Officer should be emailed to [ACSC.RANSAC@defence.gov.au](mailto:ACSC.RANSAC@defence.gov.au) to ensure timely and correctly directed response.

## **CONCLUSION**

26. The final hint is also the most important: START EARLY. You will have many demands on your time that force REPORTER to the back of your mind, but you must make the effort to keep at it.

**The sooner you start, the better.**