

New Starters Program FAQs

What is the New Starters Program?

The New Starters Program is a corporate induction program applicable to all new APS Defence employees. The New Starters Program is intended to provide a common knowledge base and understanding about why the Australian Defence Organisation (ADO) exists; its current mission and strategic priorities; how the Department functions; including its structure and culture and the accountability obligations; and the conditions of employment for APS employees.

Do I have to undertake the New Starters Program?

The New Starters Program is mandatory for all new Defence APS employees engaged on an ongoing basis. This includes those employees who have been permanently engaged, transferred or promoted from another government agency, and those who have worked for Defence in another capacity, such as ADF members or contractors. The probation report will ask supervisors to indicate if the New Starters Program has been completed by the probationer.

What will I have to do?

The New Starters Program is made up of three complementary stages. Each stage is designed to cover important knowledge and workplace behaviours required of new starters in Defence.

Stage one commences with an Information Package sent to new employees as an electronic link with the Notice of Engagement letter from Recruitment. New employees should read the Information Package prior to their commencement. At the same time a Supervisor Toolkit is sent as an electronic link to the new employee's supervisor. Supervisors will be expected to utilise the Supervisor Toolkit to induct their new starter into their work area.

Stage two is 'Understanding the Defence Work Environment' which consists of a workplace induction undertaken by the new starter's supervisor as well as a Group induction or orientation if one is in place. Participants will also self nominate via campus on the 'Understanding Defence' face-to-face course.

Stage three is 'Understanding Defence Employment Conditions and Responsibilities' This consists of a range of mandatory courses which are usually undertaken as on line training and includes the PFADS Awareness course and all DECA mandated awareness programs.

How long will the New Starters Program take me to complete?

The New Starters Program will be delivered through a blended learning mode including face-to-face delivery and online learning. Given this mixed method training style, participants should expect to dedicate approximately 3 days over their first 6 months to complete the full program.

How will the New Starters Program assist me in my role?

The New Starters Program has been developed to accelerate your integration into the department and to assist you to become more productive in the shortest possible time. The program provides new starters with relevant information, resources and training that will help you to:

- Orient and understand the Department
- Make sense of the first day and weeks so you can become functional as soon as possible
- Understand the purpose of your mandatory training
- Understand and contribute to the Department's Mission, Goals and Values; and
- Develop a sense of belonging and long term commitment to the Department.

Can I complete my mandatory training before attending the 'Understanding Defence' course?

Yes. It does not matter in which order you complete the components of the New Starters Program. However you should note that completion of the 'Understanding Defence Environment' stage will provide some context for the DECA Awareness programs. The intent of the DECA Awareness programs is to ensure you understand the Defence employment conditions and your responsibilities.

I've worked in Defence before; do I have to attend the 'Understanding Defence' course?

As a component of the New Starters Program, this course is mandatory for all new Defence APS employees engaged on an ongoing basis. This includes those who have worked for Defence in another capacity, such as ADF members or contractors. Ideally; participants should attend this course within 1 - 3 months of starting work in the department.

How can I enrol in the 'Understanding Defence' course?

New employees will be required to self nominate for the 'Understanding Defence' course through Campus.

The 'Understanding Defence' course is full, how can I complete the program by the end of my probation period?

Ideally the 'Understanding Defence' course should be completed within 1-3 months of commencing in the department. In most cases, this is well within the probation period which is normally a minimum of 6 months. Where new starters have nominated to attend the course but have not completed the program by the end of their probation this should be indicated on the final probation report.

My Group already has an induction course – do I have to complete the New Starters Program?

The focus of most Group induction or orientation programs is on Group specific or locational information. These programs are designed to introduce the new starter to the Group.

The New Starters Program is a corporate induction program aimed at providing new employees with a comprehensive orientation to the whole of the department. The intent is to provide a whole of Defence perspective, including enabling the new starter to establish an understanding of where their Groups fits in to the wider Department.

The New Starters Program has been developed with the input of all Groups to ensure it meets the needs of all. The New Starters Program is mandatory for all new Defence Employees engaged on an ongoing basis.

I've completed the New Starters Program before do I have to complete it again?

The New Starters Program is mandatory for all new APS Defence employees engaged on an ongoing basis. The New Starters Program has been assigned a PMKeyS proficiency code which will be awarded upon completion of the Understanding Defence course and all mandatory training.

Where an employee has the PMKeyS proficiency code specific to the program recorded on their PMKeyS training record they will not need to undertake the Program again if they are engaged on an ongoing basis in the future.