

How does Diversity affect Operational Capability?

By creating a workplace in which every person is valued, we can expect a more cohesive workforce with higher morale. This results in retention of the best people for the job, increased effectiveness of teams and a more focussed and productive workforce.

A workforce that is more flexible, has greater problem solving capability, is innovative and focussed on the primary goal is more productive and wastes less resources. These resources can then be redirected to operational capability.

In addition, being more informed about our environment and utilising the skill sets assists in the strategic planning process. An ADF that has an understanding of the depth and complexity of cultural and societal aspects, is an ADF that is more able to successfully engage in peace keeping and operational deployments.

The Principles of Equity and Diversity in Defence

The principles underpinning equity and diversity in Defence are:

- > treating each other with respect and dignity;
- > recognising that all people are different and valuing these differences;

- > using the different contributions that people can make to the team;
- > making judgements genuinely based on fairness and merit;
- > eliminating artificial, unfair and inappropriate barriers to workplace participation;
- > providing suitable means to monitor and address discrimination and harassment
- > providing opportunities for flexibility when meeting organisational requirements and
- > consulting people on policies and decisions that affect them.

The Defence Equity Organisation

The Defence Equity Organisation has been tasked with setting directions, communicating and promoting the principles of equity. Staff in the Defence Equity Organisation are available to assist commanders and managers in all aspects of equity and diversity policy and its implementation in Defence.



Sponsored by:

- >> The Defence Equity Organisation
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EQUITY & DIVERSITY IN DEFENCE

>> a fair go for everyone

Defence Equity Advice Lines

*FREECALL™ within Australia:

>> 1800 644 247

>> 1800 803 831

>> 1800 626 254

>> (International Access Code) 800 DEFENCE 1

(800 3336231)

7 days a week from 0830 to 2100 EST

This service is unavailable on 25 December

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What is Equity?

The basic idea behind equity is a fair go for everyone at work. That is, everyone should have equal access to training and development opportunities, to fair working conditions and equitable chances for promotion.

Equity does not assume that everyone has the same abilities, qualifications and experience, or that everyone will reach the same level. It means that everyone should be given an equal chance to make the most of their talents and use their abilities.

In short, equity doesn't mean 'sameness': It means fairness.

Practicing equity often requires flexibility and lateral thinking. Commanders and managers may be required to seek innovative solutions to 'tired' management practices if they are to properly capitalise on the talents and skills of all members. For example, more flexible working hours may enable greater participation by some staff.

Applying the principles of equity can significantly improve morale and can act as an incentive to the retention of quality personnel.

Why is Equity in Defence Important?

It is important because it:

- > breaks down prejudices and stereotypes;
- > improves organisational performance and productivity;
- > improves morale;
- > fosters good working relationships amongst people;
- > capitalises on available talent;
- > reduces workplace stress; and
- > makes Defence a better place to work.

Who is responsible for Equity in Defence?

Equity is first and foremost a leadership and management issue. That is because leaders and managers make decisions and set policies that directly influence the employment of their people. Equity in the workplace is the concern of all commanders, managers, supervisors and indeed all staff (ie everyone).

>> **Diversity
enhances
Capability** >>

What is Diversity?

Diversity relates to the variety of differences in people. These differences can include:

- > life experience
- > work experience
- > values
- > personality profile
- > work practice
- > age
- > ethnicity
- > cultural background
- > family responsibility
- > religious belief
- > education level
- > socio-economic background

In fact, the definition of diversity includes all the human characteristics that make us unique as individuals. It includes everyone and excludes no one.

Recognition of these differences and valuing the different contributions people can make to their team and the whole organisation are the basis for the concept of diversity.