



# DEFENCE INSTRUCTIONS (GENERAL)

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Department of Defence  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

31 January 1994

Amendments to Defence Instruction (General) PERS 32-1 are issued pursuant to section 9A of the *Defence Act 1903*.

A.J. AYERS  
Secretary

A.L. BEAUMONT  
Admiral  
Chief of the Defence Force

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## LIST B—ISSUE NO PERS B/4/94

### REVISED INSTRUCTION

PERS 32-1                    *Employment of Women in the Australian Defence Force (ADF)*  
AMDT NO 2  
**Complete Revision**

### SINGLE SERVICE FILING INSTRUCTIONS

This Instruction should be filed as:

1. NAVY PERS 44-2
2. ARMY PERS 217-1
3. AIR FORCE PERS 23-2

### CANCELLATION

DI(G) PERS 32-1 ISSUE NO PERS B/9/86 dated 3 NOV 86 and ISSUE NO PERS B/10/84 dated 26 NOV are cancelled.



## EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE (ADF)

### INTRODUCTION

1. Since the proclamation of the *Sex Discrimination Act (SDA) 1984*, the ADF has made significant advances in the employment of women in terms of increased numbers and in the substantial widening of employment opportunities. Similarly, since 1990, the ADF has not relied on the exemptions embodied in the SDA when employing women in **combat related** positions and from 1992 a considerable number of **combat** positions have also become open to women.

### AIM

2. The aim of this Instruction is to state the policy concerning the employment of women in the ADF.

### ADF POLICY

3. The ADF policy on the employment of Service members is to provide equality of opportunity consistent with operational effectiveness. Men and women can compete equally for all employment except those involving 'Direct Combat Duties'.

4. Direct Combat Duties are defined as:

'Duties:

requiring a person to commit, or participate directly in the commission of an act or violence against and armed adversary; and

exposing a person to a high probability of direct physical contact with an armed adversary'.

5. The Direct Combat exclusion precludes the employment of women from the following types of units/positions, and

- a. **Navy.** Clearance diving teams (OBERON Class submarines are currently excluded because of accommodation limitations);
- b. **Army.** Armour, artillery, combat engineers and infantry; and
- c. **Air Force.** Airfield Defence Guards and Ground Defence Officers.

6. When initiating posting action cognizance must also be taken of employment categories that may have the potential for exposure to embryo toxic substances.

### ADMINISTRATION

7. Within the ADF, the Assistant Chief of the Defence Force (Personnel) has responsibility for the coordination of policy on the employment of women in the ADF, and the Services have responsibility for its implementation and administration.

8. The number of positions in the ADF which are closed to women will vary depending on the strategic circumstances and changes in equipment and organisation. Targets or quotas on the number or percentage of women to be employed in the ADF overall or in particular units or employment categories are, to be avoided wherever possible as this is contrary to the notion of open competition. Periodic Recruiting Directives may, however, indicate the numbers within categories open to both sexes in competition.

9. This Instruction will be repromulgated to reflect changes in legislation following formal amendments to the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*.

**Sponsor:** DGSPP