

How does the Network operate?

The Regional Network meets twice a year to raise and discuss workplace issues and to evaluate emerging corporate issues in terms of their impact on staff with disabilities. To assist the Network address particular issues at the local level, the Network invites appropriate staff with responsibility for corporate policies to attend its meetings.

What is in the Network for me?

The Defence Disability Staff Network reinforces staff-with-disabilities' rights to:

- > access support that was previously not available to them in the Department;
- > fair treatment in any aspect of their employment with the Department;
- > have control over the decisions that affect them in the workplace;
- > have input into the design, development, implementation, evaluation and review of Defence policies that affect them; and
- > information about their rights and access to formal complaints systems.

Where do I get more information?

Contact details are available from the Defence Equity Organisation.

- > **internet site:**
www.defence.gov.au/equity
- > **intranet site:**
<http://defweb2.cbr.defence.gov.au/dpeequity>



Australian Government
Department of Defence

Sponsored by:

- > **The Defence Equity Organisation**
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Australian Government
Department of Defence

DEFENCE
DISABILITY
Staff Network

For Staff with a Disability

A message from the Secretary

One of Defence's great strengths is that our people come from a variety of different backgrounds and circumstances and bring a wide range of skills and talents. Defence is committed to fostering this strength through the development of a working environment that allows people to contribute fully to Defence.

I strongly believe that Defence must be a fair and inclusive place to work, and that all staff should have an opportunity to work in an environment free from barriers that might limit them reaching their full potential.

To help Defence achieve these objectives, specific measures have been put in place to cater for Defence staff with disabilities. The Defence Disability Staff Network is designed to provide a forum for raising, debating and resolving issues affecting staff with disabilities. The Network also provides a communication link between staff with disabilities and senior managers, and acts as an advisory body to Defence on the best ways to meet the needs of staff with disabilities.

I hope that staff with disabilities find the Network a useful resource, and commend it to all staff and managers who have responsibility for staff management.

R.C. Smith

What is the Network?

The Network is established to cater for the interests of staff with disabilities in the Department of Defence. It acts as a reference group on issues affecting staff with a long-term injury, chronic illness or disability.

Who sponsors this Network?

The Sponsor of the Defence Disability Staff Network is the Secretary of the Department of Defence.

What is the charter of the Network?

The Network is to provide information to the Defence Organisation, through the Defence Equity Organisation, for action on current issues and concerns, as well as the successes and frustration of staff with disabilities.

What are the objectives?

The network, among other things, is to:

- > **act as an Advisory Body for Defence on the best ways to deal with the needs of staff with disabilities;**
- > **serve as a communication link between staff with disabilities and senior managers of the Defence Organisation;**

- > **provide a forum for raising, discussing and resolving issues, including removing barriers to enhance the participation of staff with disabilities in the workplace; and**
- > **create a better understanding in Defence of the diverse needs of staff with disabilities.**

Who can be a member of the Network?

Membership of the Network is open to any Australian Defence Force or Australian Public Service (APS) staff member, with or without a disability, who is genuinely interested in the welfare of staff with disabilities.

What is the structure of the Network?

A Regional Network is in each State and major Defence site. The Regional Network is made up of all interested staff members. The Defence Equity Coordinator (DEC) in each State is the ongoing Point of Contact. The Regional Networks feed into a National Forum, which advises the Secretary and the Head, Defence Personnel Executive. The National Disability Forum is composed of co-chairs from each State, including the DEC in each state.