ADF technical personnel will soon be receiving recognition from Engineers Australia meaning their skills will be recognised internationally.

SENIOR AEROSPACE TECHNICIANS AND ENGINEERS IN THE DEFENCE FORCE ARE ABOUT TO RECEIVE A GAME CHANGING LEVEL OF VALIDATION OF THEIR CONSIDERABLE SKILL AND KNOWLEDGE.

As part of their ongoing employment in Defence, senior aviation technical personnel will be recognised by Australia’s peak engineering body – Engineers Australia – as meeting and in some cases exceeding the international benchmarks of competency in the Washington, Paris and Sydney accords. This includes around 40% of Air Force personnel. This not only validates their skills in the wider Australian civilian aviation community, but also provides the necessary competency assessment for key aviation appointments in Defence, and provides the international recognition that is needed to support modern aircraft under global support arrangements.

“This IS A GAME CHANGER!”
- AIRCDRE JAMES HOOD

AIRCdre James Hood, Director General of the Defence Aviation Safety Authority (DG DASA) says the changes represent a quantum leap in how aviation technical personnel are employed in Defence. “This is a game changer! The previous agreements with Engineers Australia only focussed on the professional development of some select engineers. The agreements were fragmented and intended only as a retention strategy to entice experienced engineers to remain in Defence”, he said. “The new Defence Engineer and Senior Technician Agreement (DESTRA) is completely different. Under the DESTRA agreement ALL technical Flight Sergeants and Warrant Officers, and ALL engineers above Squadron Leader rank, will have their leadership, management and technical skills accredited against a global benchmark. I am excited that our Defence Force engineers and senior technicians are going to be recognised as being amongst the best in the world”.

The move towards internationally recognised qualifications for aviation technical personnel is one of the many benefits of the new Defence Aviation Safety Regulation (DASR) which aligns Australia with a global convention in military airworthiness. Glen Crawley from Engineers Australia paid tribute to the high standard of Defence technical staff. “The Engineers Australia Registrar of Professional Standards has assessed the qualifications, training system and experiential requirements for promotion of Defence engineers and technicians”, he said. “Defence meets – and in some cases exceeds – the level required for certification and registration. The independent and competitive selection process provides the necessary assurance that Defence engineers and technicians have appropriate leadership and management competencies – in addition to their respective levels of technical practice.”

Defence aviation technical personnel have consistently demonstrated the highest standards, and can now look forward to this being recognised internationally.

EA LEVELS OF MEMBERSHIP FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER, TECHNOLOGIST AND ASSOCIATE

Depending on educational qualifications, EA will assign members into one of three categories; Professional Engineer, Engineering Technologist and Engineering Associate.

- Professional Engineer – Holders of an accredited or recognised four-year professional engineering degree.
- Engineering Technologist - Holders of an accredited or recognised three-year engineering technology degree.
- Engineering Associate – For ADF Senior Technicians, a minimum of three year’s work experience in an engineering related role.
WHY THE ADF IS DOING THIS AND WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

There are a number of reasons why Defence is moving towards an internationally recognised structure for its technical personnel. Global credibility and defensibility of technical decision making is vital in an age of joint operations and global support arrangements. It also links to the Defence Aviation Safety Regulation (DASR) which aligns Australia with a global convention on military airworthiness used by around 30 other nations. Another advantage is the ability to allow blended workforces on both civil and Defence aircraft within the one commercial entity – supporting the emergence of a single aviation sector in Australia.

“THE ABILITY TO ALLOW BLENDED WORKFORCES ON BOTH CIVIL AND DEFENCE AIRCRAFT WITHIN THE ONE COMMERCIAL ENTITY.”

Engineers Australia is the leading professional body representing all professional engineering disciplines in Australia and has been since its establishment in 1919 as the Institution of Engineers, Australia. The organisation is dedicated to supporting and developing the engineering profession and to encouraging engineers to strive for excellence. Engineers Australia is a member-based organisation that provides specific services exclusively for members. These are provided so that engineers can develop and consolidate their skills, attitudes and knowledge leading to a national and international recognition of their capacity to take responsibility for their engineering work.

WHO BENEFITS AND WHAT LEVEL OF RECOGNITION DO THEY RECEIVE?

Chartered Membership
ADF Senior Engineers and Senior Technicians on successful promotion to Squadron Leader (O4) or Flight Sergeant (E8) will become Members of Engineers Australia, and depending on their qualifications and experience, they will be concurrently chartered in the Leadership and Management College of Engineers Australia as a Chartered Professional Engineer (CPEng), Chartered Engineering Technologist (CEngT) or Chartered Engineering Associate (CEngA). They will also be offered an additional technical Area of Practice depending their employment history, qualifications and training. Technical Areas of Practice include specialist fields like aerospace; civil; and information, telecommunications and electronic engineering.

Fellow
Wing Commanders (O5) and Warrant Officers (E9) will be invited to apply as Fellows of Engineers Australia, recognising these very senior engineers and technicians as being amongst the true leaders of the Defence aviation industry and profession. They will be easily recognised with the post nominals of Fellow (FIEAust), Technologist Fellow (TFIEAust) or Associate Fellow (AFIEAust). Engineers Australia’s Royal Charter requires nomination to be considered by Engineers Australia’s membership committee.

Engineering Executive
Group Captains and above (O6 +) will be invited to apply as a potential Engineering Executives. The individual application process is simple; submission of Engineers Australia’s applicant checklist, an updated CV, and a one-on-one interview with an Engineers Australia’s assessor. This status is an addition to being Chartered and also additional to any recognition as a Fellow of Engineers Australia.

WHAT DOES BEING “CHARTERED” MEAN?

Based on international standards, receiving Chartered status through Engineers Australia means having attained the qualifications and experience to be considered professional, that is, able to carry out tasks in a specialisation, exceeding expectations and behaving with professionalism and respect.

Areas of Practice (AoP) are subgroups of the engineering profession that practitioners align their skills and work activities with. This can be influenced by formal, informal education and work experience. Members can seek to be Chartered in one or more areas of practice. Defence personnel who have

YOU DON’T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING!

Recognising that Defence engineers and senior technicians are very busy people, and often moved or deployed at short notice, Defence has picked up the administrative burden to process the applications. After all, if Defence requires engineers and senior technicians to hold accreditation for their ongoing engagement in Defence, then it is only correct that Defence does the heavy lifting. Engineers Australia will be provided with a list of eligible applicants and an excerpt from PMKeyS records to prove a member’s qualifications and experience. Members should ensure PMKeyS data is accurate and correctly reflects their education (including University/Institution name).

Upon successful processing, Engineers Australia will provide a Membership Number, relevant Certificates and access to the on-line portal used to record membership data and Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
OBLIGATIONS OF BEING CHARTERED.

Once recognised as a Chartered professional, you have an obligation to expand your knowledge and maintain your skills. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is considered anything that helps expand knowledge, maintain up-to-date technical skills and progress an engineering career. Leadership and Management CPD are readily obtained concurrently with a wide variety of engineering, logistics, training, and staff postings to Maintenance Organisations, Continuing Airworthiness, Project Offices and System Program Offices.

Engineers Australia has created an online destination for Continuing Professional Development called “myCPD”. This site is a tool for career progression, providing information on a multitude of courses that award CPD hours while increasing skills and knowledge.

CPD records must document a minimum of 150 hours of structured CPD over a three-year period, which includes 50 hours per AoP. You are able to record your CPD activities on eCPD via myPortal.


The National Engineering Register (NER) is a directory of Australian engineers who have met the high standards of professionalism expected within the industry. Through Defence’s agreement with Engineers Australia, all engineers that are provided with Chartered status will also be placed on the NER for the duration of their time with Defence. Each member will have ability to access and update their personal information in myPortal.

https://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/portal/ner/search

HOW THIS AGREEMENT IS DIFFERENT FROM THE OLD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS?

The program and alignment with Engineers Australia has many benefits including a consistent and simplified approach to the accreditation of engineers and technicians. It is inclusive of para-professionals and the ADF agreement is more streamlined than any of the civilian pathways. The administrative process is also markedly reduced and leverages from the military leadership education continuum and the individual’s efforts to attain rank, providing a more natural fit for ADF members.