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**DIRECTIVE 07/2025
BY THE CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCE**

**MANAGEMENT OF RESERVE SERVICE DAYS: ALLOCATIONS AND
USAGE**

REFERENCES

- A. *Strategic Review of the Australian Defence Force Reserves*
- B. *CDF Command Authorisations Instrument – Personnel Related Decision Making Functions*
- C. *AF004 - Force Element Variation - Position*
- D. *AE959 – Reserve Service Day Allocation Form*
- E. *MILPERSMAN Part 7 Chapter 3 Voluntary Unpaid Service*

INTRODUCTION

1. Reference A provides a mechanism to shift the Australian Defence Force (ADF) Reserve to be an integral part of addressing the strategic challenges outlined in the 2024 National Defence Strategy. This will involve adapting the structure, shape and role of the Reserve to ensure the Reserve workforce contributes to the total Defence workforce and provides a critical expansion capability when needed. In parallel, it is necessary to manage the peacetime expectations of the contribution of the ADF Reserve commensurate with Reserve service.

2. By rendering service using Reserve Service Days (RSD), the ADF Reserve makes significant contributions across a spectrum of operational, individual and contingency activities. The engagement of ADF Reserves using RSD is not intended to provide a replacement workforce for permanent positions. Routinely permitting Reserve service beyond 150 RSD per financial year (FY) could undermine the integrity of the Total Workforce System, and limit the capacity and capability of the ADF to expand rapidly if needed.

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PURPOSE

3. The purpose of this directive is to ensure the ADF Reserve retains its part-time role, and Reservists do not render more than 150 RSD total per FY without authority from an authorised appointee listed in reference B.

DIRECTION

4. A Reservist may render RSD through different patterns of work in one or multiple Reserve positions or roles. Alternatively, a Reservist may serve on continuous full-time service for a defined period through a SERVOP C arrangement against a vacant permanent (full-time) position.

5. **RSD limits.** A position is not to attract an allocation of more than 150 RSD per FY. Additionally, a Reservist is not to render more than 150 RSD total per FY in one or across multiple positions or roles without prior authority from an authorised appointee. These limits ensure the part-time nature of Reserve service (other than through continuous full-time service) is protected and associated conditions reflect the nature of service, including but not limited to tax free salary. Neither Defence nor an individual Reservist should routinely expect a Reserve position or a Reservist working in one or multiple positions or roles to attract approval for more than 150 RSD per FY. Voluntary unpaid service is not to be used as an alternative means to extend a Reservist's service in a FY or (in accordance with reference E) if a Defence member is required for duty. The interim approval pathway for exemptions to the 150 RSD per FY limit for 2025-26 is detailed at annex A.

6. **Alternative to Reserve service.** Reservists can play a key role in mitigating experience gaps or shortfalls in the full-time workforce. However, they are not a replacement workforce when a full-time position is not available or affordable. Military Workforce Design Division (MWDD) retains responsibility on behalf of the Joint Force Authority to prioritise the Government agreed Portfolio Budget Statements workforce budgets for permanent and Reserve positions to deliver agreed capability to best effect. If any Reserve position routinely requires more than 150 RSD per FY, this may indicate the position is more accurately identified as permanent and should fall within the affordable limit on permanent positions linked to workforce budget (Average Funded Strength (AFS)).

RESPONSIBILITIES

7. **Groups and Services.** ADF Reserve workforce supervisors within Groups and Services are to:

- a. Monitor RSD usage by individual Reservists to ensure no Reservist exceeds the 150 RSD per FY limit for work within their respective Group or Service. If a Reservist is employed across multiple Groups or Services, the combined RSD usage must not exceed 150 RSD total per FY.
- b. Ensure each Reservist does not undertake any Reserve service before approval for each period of service (either through completion of reference D or upload of RSD by MWDD staff).

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8. **Supervisors.** Supervisors are to establish a Reserve attendance plan and review achievement against this plan periodically throughout the FY to ensure RSD are used to achieve efficient outcomes.
9. **Reservists.** Reservists are to ensure they do not exceed 150 RSD total per FY, unless otherwise authorised. The 150 RSD limit includes work across all positions. All Reservists who have already received a 2025-26 allocation that exceeds 150 RSD must renegotiate their planned attendance with their supervisor and reduce their RSD allocation to 150 RSD by 30 October 2025. In all instances of proposed service, Reservists and supervisors have a joint responsibility for ensuring Reserve service is not started before approval for each period of service through either completion of reference D or upload of RSD by MWDD staff.
10. **MWDD.** MWDD is to ensure Reserve positions are established through use of reference C and include an assessment of RSD required to meet the capability output, with all positions limited to no more than 150 RSD per FY. The workforce capability demand is to be indicated by the number of RSD in the position title as the means to enable a potential move to a Resource to Structure model for Reserve engagement. Head Military Workforce Design is the authority for approving Reserve positions for One Star and below; and CDF approves Two and Three Star positions via the Star Planning Meeting.
11. **Military Personnel Organisation (MPO).** MPO, through Military Personnel Division, is to develop the necessary enduring governance mechanisms, including controls and regular reporting to the Defence People Committee, for postings, management of RSD against prioritised roles and alignment with CDF Staffing Priorities. The Chief of Personnel (CPERS) is the authority for posting of Reserve Two and Three Star officers, HMP is the authority for personnel below 1* rank. This governance system is to replace the transition conditions at annex A and ensure a reformed governance approach is implemented before 2026-27.

IMPLEMENTATION

12. This directive supersedes and replaces any prior RSD management policies regarding RSD allocation limits and approval authorities for exceptional circumstances.
13. CPERS is to incorporate the content of this directive into policy by no later than 30 April 2026.
14. This directive is effective immediately and will expire on 01 May 2026.
15. This directive is sponsored by the Chief of Personnel.

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David Johnston AC
Admiral RAN
Chief of the Defence Force

03 October 2025

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Annex:

- A. Interim approval pathway for Reservists to render service for more than 150 RSD for 2025-26

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ANNEX A TO
CDF DIRECTIVE 07/2025
OCT 25

**INTERIM APPROVAL PATHWAY FOR RESERVISTS TO RENDER SERVICE
FOR MORE THAN 150 RSD FOR 2025-26**

1. This annex provides the interim approval pathway in the exceptional, capability-driven circumstances a Reservist is required to exceed 150 RSD. This annex is to be considered with the requirements of reference B.
2. **Approvals.**¹ For 2025-26, Service Chiefs and three-star Group Chiefs are authorised to grant exemptions for Reservists to render 151 to 180 RSD for 2025-26. Exemptions are to be capability based – not for continuation of routine work. Both the Reservist and applicable authorised appointee are also to ensure total RSD do not exceed 180 RSD in 2025-26. The authorised appointee in each Group and Service for approving exemptions up to and including 180 RSD are as set out in reference B.
3. In accordance with reference B, CPERS is authorised to approve requests for any rank to render more than 180 RSD. This is only to occur when the Reservist's three-star Group Head or Service Chief supports the application and provides details of the exceptional, capability-based justification to CPERS for consideration in the approval process (i.e. warranting additional RSD beyond the previous approval from the authorised appointee for up to 180 RSD).
4. **Funding.** All requests for a Reservist to render service for more than 150 RSD require completion of reference D with exemption approved by an authorised officer detailed at paragraph 2. Approval of reference D does not trigger additional RSD funding for a Group or Service.

¹ These authorities replace any listed in other Defence or single Service policy and those listed in reference A.

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