

# **NATIONAL RESERVE FORCES STATUS**

## **COUNTRY: AUSTRALIA**

Although not a member of NATO, Australia has permanent observer status on the National Reserve Forces Committee.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Australia is an Island Nation located in the south pacific between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Colonised by the British in 1788, Australia has a population of approximately 20 million people drawn from a wide cross-section of cultures and societies. Australia has a surface area of approximately 7.68 million square kilometres, much of which is sparsely habited.

Australia trades with most countries around the world and has close ties with the USA, Japan, ASEAN countries, South Korea, China, New Zealand and the EU.

## **DEFENCE FORCE**

**Origin** – The Australian Defence Force comprises the Royal Australian Navy, the Australian Army and the Royal Australian Air Force.

**Reserves** – The Australian Defence Force is a volunteer Defence Force with a strength of almost 90,000 men and women. Of this, the Reserves number approximately 40% with more than 31,000 men and 6,000 women. The permanent force consists of more than 50,000 personnel consisting of almost 45,000 men and 6,500 women.

## **BASIC ORGANISATION PRINCIPLES**

The Australian Defence Force Reserves are embedded within the Navy, Army and Air Force. The Naval and Air Force Reserves are highly integrated within their respective Services. Reservists are used primarily to augment permanent force units and ships, being allocated to vacancies alongside their permanent force counterparts. The Army Reserve is primarily structured along similar lines to the Regular Army, with most active Reservists serving in Reserve brigades and units.

## **MAIN LEGISLATION**

The main legislation relating to the Defence Force is the *Defence Act 1903* and its supporting regulations. This federal legislation details the make-up of the Defence Force, the requirements and regulations for service within its ranks, the call-out procedures for Reservists and the utilisation of the force in domestic and international operations.

Other important legislation concerning the Reserves is the *Naval Defence Act 1910*, the *Air Force Act 1923* and the *Defence Reserve Service (Protection) Act 2001*.

## **FUNCTION OF THE RESERVE**

The strategic role for the Reserves changed in 2000 from expansion and mobilisation to that of supporting and sustaining the types of contemporary military operations in which the Australian Defence Force may be increasingly engaged. There is no delineation between the operations in which the permanent force members and Reserve members may be involved.

## **CATEGORISATION/READINESS**

All units, ships and personnel are maintained at given readiness notices for deployment. These vary depending on the role of the unit and the skills of the individual. All Defence Force personnel are required to maintain their specified readiness.

## **FUNDING**

Funding of the Reserves is included within the total defence budget, currently approximately 16 billion Australian Dollars per year. As Reserves are integrated with Permanent Force capabilities, Reserve funding is not separated from other funds.

## TRAINING

Reserve training is incorporated into the overall training schedule for the Defence Force. Training is divided into individual and collective training, with most individual training contributing to individual readiness requirements. All training within the Australian Defence Force, whether for permanent force members or Reserve members, is conducted to the same standards.

## INTERNET

- **Department of Defence** ([www.defence.gov.au](http://www.defence.gov.au)). This website provides information on Defence news and activities, including deployment, humanitarian aid, careers, support, publications and contacts.
- **Royal Australian Navy** ([www.defence.gov.au/navy](http://www.defence.gov.au/navy)). The Royal Australian Navy site provides the information on the RAN organisation, locations, history and people.
- **Australian Army** ([www.defence.gov.au/army](http://www.defence.gov.au/army)). The Australian Army site provides the information on the Army organisation, unit locations, history and people.
- **Royal Australian Air Force** ([www.defence.gov.au/raaf](http://www.defence.gov.au/raaf)). The Royal Australian Air Force site provides the information on the RAAF organisation, unit locations, history and people.
- **Australian Defence Force Cadets** ([www.cadetnet.gov.au](http://www.cadetnet.gov.au)). The Australian Defence Force Cadets site provides information to all people interested in finding out more about the ADFC and the exciting opportunities available for our young people.
- **Royal Australian Naval Reserve** ([www.navy.gov.au/reserves](http://www.navy.gov.au/reserves)). The official website of the Royal Australian Naval Reserve provides information for employers and Reservists, with details on career options, the history and culture of the Reserves and links to support services.
- **Australian Army Reserves**. At present there is no Australian Army Reserves web site, all information pertaining to the Army is maintained on the Australian Army website.
- **Royal Australian Air Force Reserve** (<http://www.defence.gov.au/raaf/reserves>). The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Reserve website, still under construction, will provide information on recruitment, history of the RAAF, its people and contacts.
- **Defence Annual Reports** ([www.defence.gov.au/annualreports](http://www.defence.gov.au/annualreports)). This site provides the link to the Defence Annual Reports and portfolio budget and additional estimate statements, which are the principal formal accountability mechanisms between government, departments and the Parliament. Defence Annual Reports also contain the staffing figures (including Reserve strength figures) for the Defence Organisation, as well as recruitment and separation totals.