



Australian
Human Rights
Commission

Elizabeth Broderick

Sex Discrimination Commissioner

22 October 2013

The role of women in the Armed Forces: current status, challenges & prospects

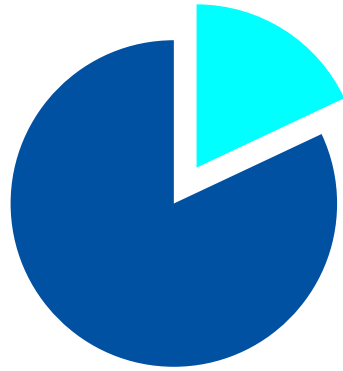
**International Conference of Ombuds Institutions
for the Armed Forces, Oslo**

The Review Process

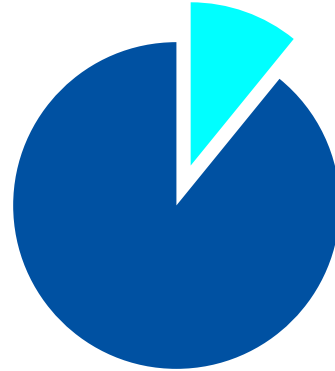
- Visited around **60** Military establishments – in Australia and deployed environments
- Spoke to over **3000** ADF members
- Surveyed over **6000** ADF members
- Analysed **1000s** of defence documents
- Conducted an in depth comparative analysis with overseas militaries



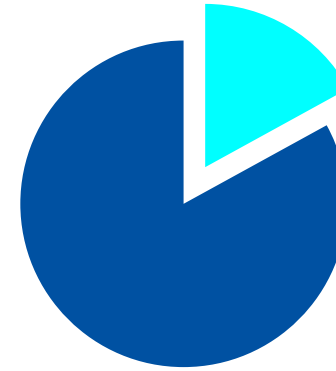
Women in the ADF



Navy
18%



Army
10%



Air Force
17%

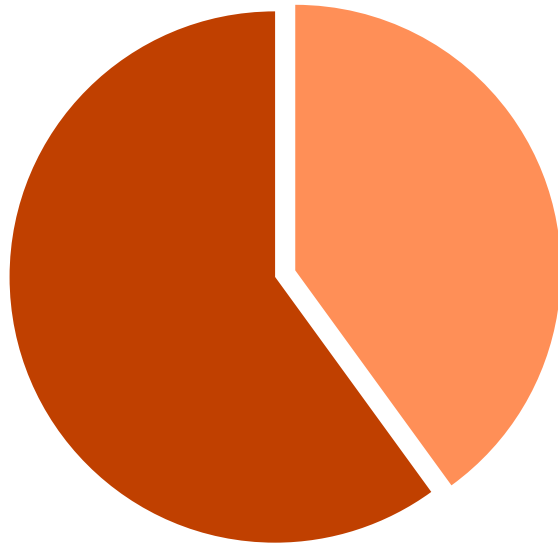
 Women

 Men



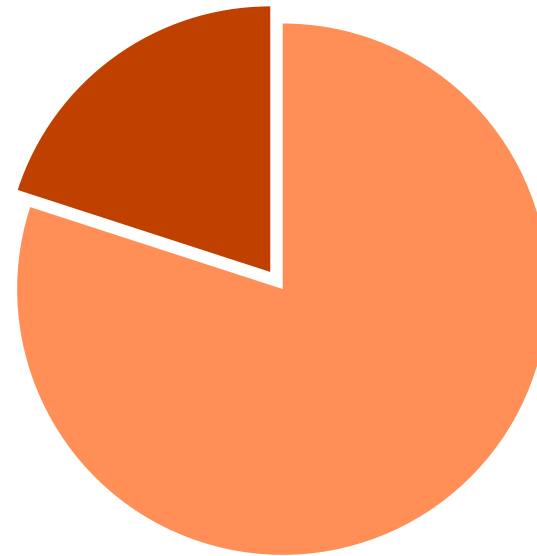
Cultural & Linguistic Diversity

Australian Population



■ Home language
other than English

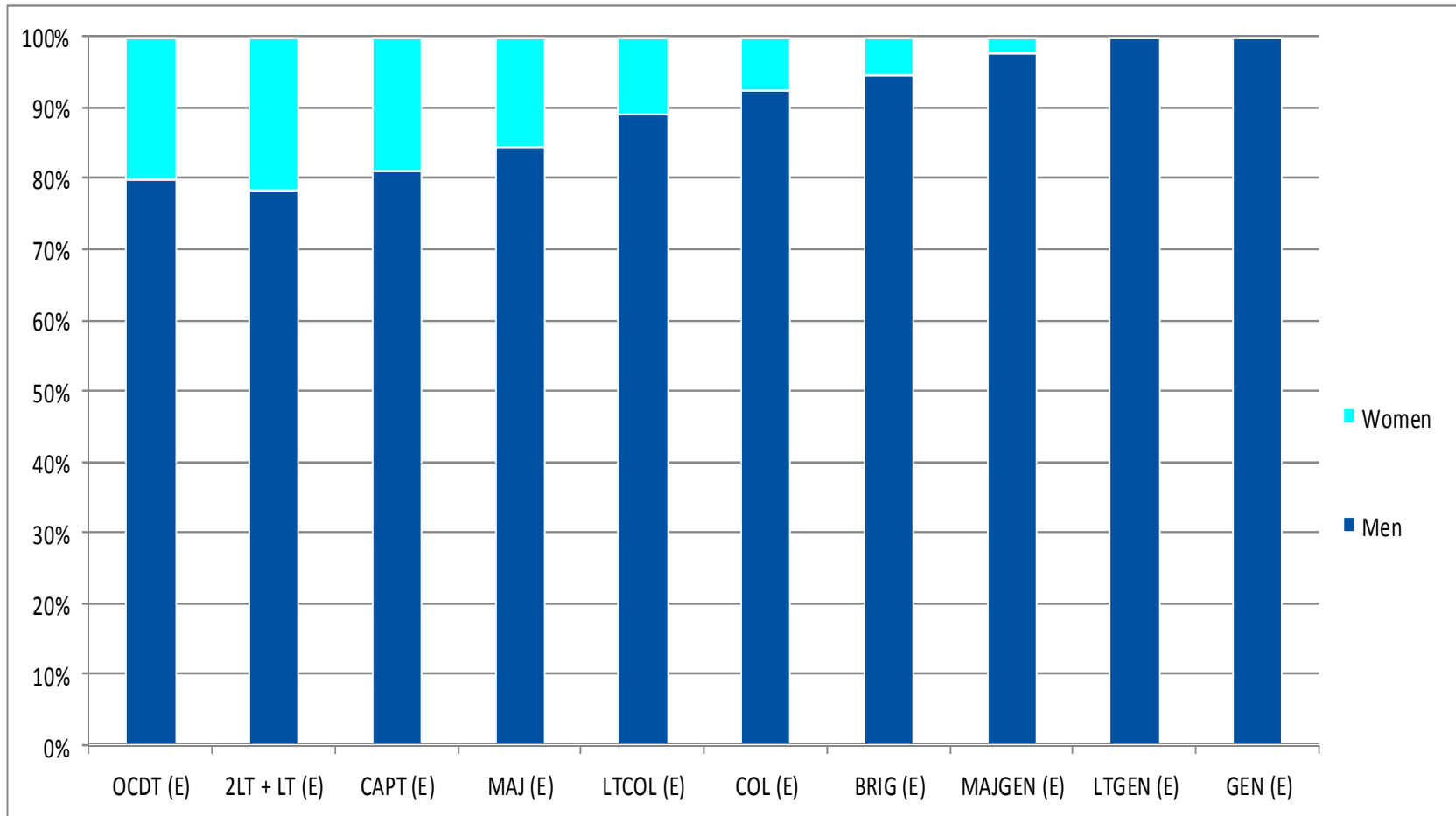
Defence Force



■ Home language
English



Women as a proportion of each ADF officer rank



Women leaving the Australian Defence Force

- Women exit the ADF at greater rates than men through the recruitment pipeline
- Strong link between paid and unpaid maternity and parental leave & separation (within 12 months)
- Rigid rank and career structure = “terminal rank ceiling”
- Sexual harassment, bullying, sexual abuse and unsatisfactory response



Principles for Success

1. Strong leadership drives reform
2. Diversity of leadership increases capability
3. Increasing numbers requires increasing opportunities
4. Greater flexibility will strengthen the ADF
5. Gender-based harassment and violence ruins lives, divides teams and damages operational effectiveness.

Principles for Success



“Women are essential to the sustainability and operational effectiveness of the ADF because they contribute to a diverse workforce which strengthens the ADF’s ability to be an effective, modern, relevant and high performing organisation”
Senior Defence Leaders

1. Strong leadership drives reform

- Practical and genuine commitment to reform by all leaders
- Transparency in reporting against key indicators
- Strong, unambiguous statements by leadership
- Modelling by leadership
- Accountability by leaders for the culture in their environments.

Principles for Success

- 2. Diversity of leadership increases capability**
- 3. Increasing numbers requires increasing opportunities**
- 4. Greater flexibility will strengthen the ADF**
 - Review and redesign the way the military develops and appoints its senior leadership
 - Create pathways through non-war fighting categories to increase diversity in leadership
 - Build flexibility into career models
 - Targeted interventions and temporary special measures

Principles for Success

5. Gender-based harassment and violence ruins lives, divides teams and damages operational effectiveness.



- Some ADF workplaces are highly sexualised environments
- Some women who had been sexually assaulted, or subject to harassment, did not report their experiences because they feared negative consequences or did not trust the system.



“Any nexus between an Army such as the one I aspire to lead and sexual assault is absolutely unacceptable. I will take all necessary steps to stamp out any hint of it among my soldiers. .. We do need to bond our soldiers to one another and instil toughness and resilience into them. But when this goal is invoked to degrade and demonize women and minorities it is undermining rather than enhancing capability. We need to define the true meaning of teamwork to embrace a band of brothers and sisters...”

Lieutenant General David Morrison, Chief of Army