

# HOW TO BECOME AN AIRMAN OR AIRWOMAN IN FOUR EASY STEPS.



**AIR FORCE** ACCOMPLISHED

**STEP ONE.**  
**DECIDE WHAT JOB YOU  
WOULD LIKE TO DO.**





There are around 30 different general and qualified entry jobs in the Air Force. Once you have decided which ones interest you, spend the rest of your time browsing through this guide to see if life in the Air Force suits you.

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## THE AIR FORCE TRAINS MORE THAN JUST PILOTS.

Despite what you may think, the Air Force isn't just about aircraft. It requires a huge number of skilled personnel such as Clerks, Dental Assistants, Security Police, Aircraft Technicians, Suppliers, Plumbers and Mechanics to keep it on the move. That's where you come in.

If you're already trade qualified or have completed Year 10, then the Air Force opens up an enormous number of career options for you, many of which you probably never knew existed.

So read through our descriptions of the jobs available, and see if life as an airman or airwoman in the Air Force interests you. You'll find that each job has abbreviations following its description, relating to the particular method of entry. They are General Entry (GE), General Entry Trade (GE Trade) and Qualified Entry (QE). Obviously the choice of entry is dependent upon a number of factors such as your education, qualifications and other Air Force requirements. There also exists the opportunity to work part-time as an Air Force reservist. Not only will you enjoy the benefits enjoyed by those serving full-time, but you'll further your chosen career while enjoying a tax-free salary. So take some time to study the various entry options to see which is appropriate to you.

### GENERAL ENTRY (GE) (GE Trade)

If you have successfully completed Year 10 and meet other Air Force requirements, you are eligible to become a General Entry airman or airwoman. However, as certain jobs require particular education and medical standards, it is essential you talk to a Careers Counsellor first. You may choose to begin an Air Force trade traineeship. They provide the best trade qualifications possible and they are highly recognised and valued in civilian industries. After all, where else could you be working on a multi-million dollar aircraft from the moment you complete your training? You'll undertake a short period of recruit training and initial employment training and will then be ready to begin work in your chosen field.

### QUALIFIED ENTRY (QE)

Qualified Entry requires you to have specific trade qualifications. You'll need to provide proof of your trade qualification and meet our eligibility requirements. Again, we'll get you to undertake a short period of recruit training prior to the commencement of your Air Force job.



**“YOU CAN BE DOING ANYTHING FROM PROCUREMENTS,  
TO STOCK CONTROL, AIR MOVEMENTS OR IN A SQUADRON  
GETTING SPARES FOR AIRCRAFT.”**

## **AIR FORCE RESERVE (AR)**

Air Force Reservists are the part-time component of the Air Force. The Air Force Reserve allows you to get involved in a strong team atmosphere; train on high-tech equipment; build upon your existing personal and professional skills, as well as have fun and improve your fitness while you do it. The Air Force Reserve trains and works right alongside the permanent Air Force and in most cases, your job will mirror that of the permanent Air Force. The only real difference is that Air Force Reserve Squadron members are required to attend for a minimum of 32 days per annum. There is normally a work arrangement to fit in with the rest of your life and because it's locally based, you can experience Air Force life without working far from home. Entry into the Air Force Reserve is dependent upon vacancies at the time, but includes jobs such as administration, logistics and some technical based jobs. Selection standards are the same as those joining the permanent Air Force.

A specialist group within the Air Force Reserve is the Ground Defence Reserve Group (GRDefRG). This group contains Reserve Ground Defence Officer's and Airfield Defence Guards who form a highly skilled, close-knit team capable of defending the Air Force's bases, aircraft, installations and personnel. Primarily the personnel in this group specialise in ground defence and the instruction of ground defence related skills. Due to the requirement for GRDefRG members to be able to deploy at a short notice, you'll undergo 11 months of full-time training and then be required to undertake a minimum of 32 days a year of part-time service with tax-free pay. To be part of the GRDefRG, you'll need to live within a three hour drive of an Air Force Base that has a Reserve ADG Rifle Flight. At present there are no Reserve Rifle Flights in the Northern Territory. Due to the combat nature of this job, the GRDefRG is only open to males.



## BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION

### CLERK

Not every job in the Air Force revolves around fast jets. As a Clerk in the Air Force you'll be in charge of providing administrative support to other personnel, general administration involving correspondence, education (including looking after technical publications), and tending to the administrative side of the financial and medical needs of Air Force personnel. (GE), (AR).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo a Basic Clerk Course where you'll learn about personnel service entitlements, orders, publications, correspondence and files, the forms of service correspondence writing, and general service matters in addition to receiving an introduction to computer database management.

## LOGISTICS AND SUPPORT

### SUPPLY

As a Supplier in the Air Force you have the opportunity to work in a variety of jobs that will rotate as your career progresses. You could be in charge of processing base demands for general stores and all types of aircraft spares. Whereas in a purchasing role you are involved in electronic purchasing, raising purchase orders, processing claims or maintaining funds control ledgers, supply databases and accounts. (GE), (AR).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo a Supply Initial Employment Training Course to teach you maintenance of inventory records; identification and cataloguing of equipment; storage, receipt, despatch and packaging of goods; computerised stock control; procurement competencies; and the role of supply within the Air Force.

### COOK

The Air Force is a great place to learn your trade as a Cook. You'll be involved in all aspects of food production including preparation, cookery, presentation, and serving of the finished product. What's more, you'll also get to apply your skills to in-flight kitchens, field cookery and instructional posts. (GE/QE), (AR).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo an ADF Initial Cooks Course where you'll be given both practical and theoretical training in all aspects of cookery and kitchen activities. The Chisholm Institute of TAFE in partnership with ADF School of Catering provides your training. Upon completion of your course, you are awarded civilian accreditation; a Certificate II in Hospitality (Kitchen Operations).

### MOVEMENTS

A Movements career will see you responsible for providing airfield services to support Air Force activities, operations and exercises. You'll be involved with a wide range of duties that includes both air movements and road movements. Air movements involves the loading, unloading and refuelling of aircraft; air terminal operations which involves the movement of passengers and cargo on Air Force or visiting aircraft; and the operation of a wide range of vehicles to support these activities. Road movements involve activities such as vehicle despatch, vehicle fleet management and vehicle accident management. (GE), (AR).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo a Movements Initial Employment Training Course which is conducted in two phases. Phase one requires you to gain various vehicle driving licences including four-wheel drive, truck, bus and forklift training. Phase two trains you in the basic air movements functionality including dangerous goods and explosive ordnance handling.

**“THE FACILITIES ARE GREAT,  
VERY MODERN, THERE’S  
NOTHING WE GO WITHOUT.”**



## AIRCREW

### AIRBORNE ELECTRONICS ANALYST

As an Airborne Electronics Analyst (AEA), you'll keep Australian waters safe by detecting and analysing contacts both above and below the water as you skim across the ocean in a P-3 Orion Maritime Patrol Aircraft. On board, you'll be working with some of the most sophisticated electronics surveillance equipment in the world to ensure the success of your mission and the safety of the crew. (GE).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo a Combat Survival Course. You will also complete the Aviation Medicine Initial Course to learn about human physiology in the aviation environment. Following that, you'll do your AEA Specialist Course before joining an operational squadron. Your first rank for this job after training is Sergeant.

### CREW ATTENDANT

As a Crew Attendant you'll be responsible for the loading and unloading of passengers, crew and cargo on Air Force VIP jets. Apart from providing in-flight food and beverages, you'll also be trained in fire fighting, combat survival and safety procedures. You could even find yourself looking after Australian and foreign heads of state, royalty and guests of the Australian government, and troops on deployment. (GE).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo a Combat Survival Course. You will also complete the Aviation Medicine Initial Course to learn about human physiology in the aviation environment. You'll then take part in an Airman Aircrew Initial Course to be taught a variety of aviation principles such as air traffic control, meteorology and first aid. The Crew Attendant Basic Course teaches students wine education, grooming and deportment, crew attendant duties, meal service and basic food handling. The Advanced Course teaches aircraft safety equipment, emergency procedures, pre-, in- and post-flight checks and procedures, and aircraft documentation.

## HEALTH AND SCIENCE

### DENTAL ASSISTANT

A Dental Assistant in the Air Force is very similar to one outside of the Defence Force. You'll be responsible for chair-side assistance to the Dental Officer in addition to patient management. You'll assist in the treatment of patients, sterilising instruments, preparation of dental materials, and the processing and mounting of dental radiographs. Administrative tasks include scheduling appointments, maintaining clinical dental records and procuring and accounting for dental equipment and stores. (GE).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo a Dental Assistant Course to teach you about biological sciences, operation procedures, laboratory procedures, occupational health, and dental administration. You then complete a dental log book to attain civil registration.

### LABORATORY TECHNICIAN

As a Laboratory Technician your role is to test human biological material to aid medical practitioners in the diagnosis, monitoring and prevention of disease. Your typical responsibilities may include analysing pathology specimens, advising health professionals on analysis results, collection and cross-matching of blood for transfusion purposes, conducting routine haematology investigations, and performing microbiological analysis of biological and environmental samples. (QE).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo a minimum of 12 months on-the-job training to consolidate your individual Laboratory Technician skills at an Air Force pathology laboratory. Your first rank for this qualification after training is Sergeant.



“THERE’S A HUGE VARIETY OF DIFFERENT JOBS YOU CAN BE INVOLVED IN.”

## TRADES AND TRAINEESHIPS

### MEDICAL ASSISTANT

If you have an interest in a medical career, a job as a Medical Assistant might just be what you’re looking for. You’ll be employed in Air Force hospitals and Unit Health facilities to assist with nursing care to members of the Australian Defence Force. You may also find yourself assisting in aeromedical evacuations and working as part of operational deployments overseas. (GE/QE).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you’ll undergo a Basic Medical Assistant Course to teach you basic nursing skills, first aid, anatomy and physiology, and how to work under the supervision of ADF Nursing Officers. Following the successful completion of the course, you’ll complete an Air Force Medical Assistant Ambulance Course to give you ambulance and airfield familiarisation training.

### AIRCRAFT LIFE SUPPORT FITTER

The safety and survival of aircrew colleagues is of paramount importance to an Aircraft Life Support Fitter. You’ll be responsible for providing serviceable aircraft, aircrew safety and survival equipment to meet operational requirements. This could be anything from helmets and oxygen masks to parachutes and life rafts, as well as survival kits, the testing of emergency locator beacons, and the updating and maintenance of technical records. (GE Trade).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you’ll undergo a Fitter Course – Aircraft Life Support to teach you all of the basic skills required to install and remove Aircraft Life Support equipment used by aircrew or fitted to aircraft, information relating to occupational health and safety issues, and technical administration procedures relevant to your duties.

### AIRCRAFT SPRAY PAINTER

If spray painting cars is what you enjoy most, what about trying your hand at spray painting a jet fighter? As an Aircraft Spray Painter, you’ll be responsible for the application of protective paint coatings to Air Force aircraft. Duties will involve painting the metallic and composite surfaces of aircraft, corrosion control, preparation and use of aircraft support equipment as well as identifying and ordering aircraft paint equipment and materials, and amending and maintaining technical publications. (QE).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you’ll be posted to an Air Force Base or Defence establishment for on-the-job training before you qualify as an Aircraft Spray Painter.

### AIRCRAFT STRUCTURAL FITTER

How would you like a career stripping down fighter jets? As an Aircraft Structural Fitter, that’s just what you’ll be doing – duties include inspection, maintenance, servicing, repair and fault diagnosis, manufacture, assembly, removal and installation of aircraft structures and associated equipment. (GE Trade).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you’ll undergo a Structural Fitter Course designed to make you proficient in the engineering skills required for all levels of aircraft structural maintenance and repair. The course covers development and manufacture of general sheet metal work items; the development, manufacture and repair of aircraft structural items; and plumbing and ducting.



## AIRCRAFT ARMAMENT TECHNICIAN

Aircraft Armament Technicians play a critical role in Australia's defence. You'll be responsible for installing and maintaining aircraft components associated with sophisticated weaponry including gun systems, bombs and a range of missiles on a wide variety of Air Force aircraft. It's an exciting career that will see you performing your role both out on the flightline and in the workshop. (GE Trade).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo a Technician Course for Aircraft Armament Technicians. The course provides instruction in generic trade hand skills, component removal and installation and detailed systems theory of operation and diagnostics. Training is also provided in aircraft handling and servicing tasks.

## AVIONICS TECHNICIAN

As an Avionics Technician you'll be looking after a wide range of systems on board fighter, strike, maritime, and transport aircraft. You'll be involved in the inspection, maintenance and servicing of electronic components and systems and, where necessary, the soldering of miniature electronic components. You'll also be responsible for oxygen and weapons systems and associated explosive ordnance. (GE Trade).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo an Avionic Technician Course to give you the initial generic trade training for Avionics Technicians who are employed at the Fitter (Grade 1) skill level upon graduation. The course trains you in generic trade hand skills, avionics systems component removal and installation, and detailed avionics systems theory. Training is also provided in aircraft handling and servicing tasks.

## CARPENTER

Carpenters provide the Air Force with the construction capability required to enable the Air Force to remain operational. You'll design, construct, maintain and repair buildings and temporary structures. Construction tasks may include site planning, excavations, timber constructions, steel constructions, concreting, interior lining, glazing, and assisting allied trades. (QE), (AR).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, a wide variety of general service and employment specific training may be undertaken. You may then be trained in general construction and supervisory courses.

## COMMUNICATION ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN

As a Communication Electronic Technician, you'll be maintaining some of the most sophisticated ground-based telecommunications and electronic systems in the country. These systems include a vast array of radar, radio, satellite, Local and Wide Area IT Networks, cabling and transmission lines, and computer systems to ensure the Air Force has an accurate view of the airspace around it. (GE).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo a Fitter Course which covers practical training on high reliability soldering, component removal and installation, trade safety, and technical administration. On completion of this training, you'll graduate as an Aircraftsman Communication Electronic Fitter Grade 1. You'll then be posted to an air base to undergo on-the-job training.



**“IF YOU WANT THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADVANCE WITHIN YOUR CAREER, IT’S THERE FOR THE TAKING.”**



### **ELECTRICIAN**

As an Electrician, you'll be part of the Airfield Engineering Organisation. You will install, maintain and repair power and lighting systems and other electrical plant and equipment in industrial and domestic installations, including runway lighting on Air Force bases or Defence establishments. You could also manage large electrical systems in the field, where generators need to be installed and managed along with deployable airfield and runway lighting. (QE), (AR).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you may take part in a wide variety of training designed to improve your competencies and skills, such as training in high voltage power generation and switching equipment, operation of medium voltage generators, and maintenance and repair of airfield lighting.

### **GROUND MECHANICAL ENGINEERING FITTER**

You are primarily responsible for the maintenance, repair, modification, and refurbishment of aircraft arrestor systems, ground support equipment, and small arms weapons. A Fitter by trade, you'll be manufacturing and modifying tools, jigs, dies, and much more. You may also find yourself testing and servicing various workshop machines and tools. (QE).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll go on to complete your induction training. During this time you'll undergo a practical trade competency test to determine your skill level and additional trade training requirements. On completion of the Induction Course and additional trade training as required, you'll be classified as a Ground Mechanical Engineering Fitter Grade 1.

### **GROUND SUPPORT EQUIPMENT FITTER**

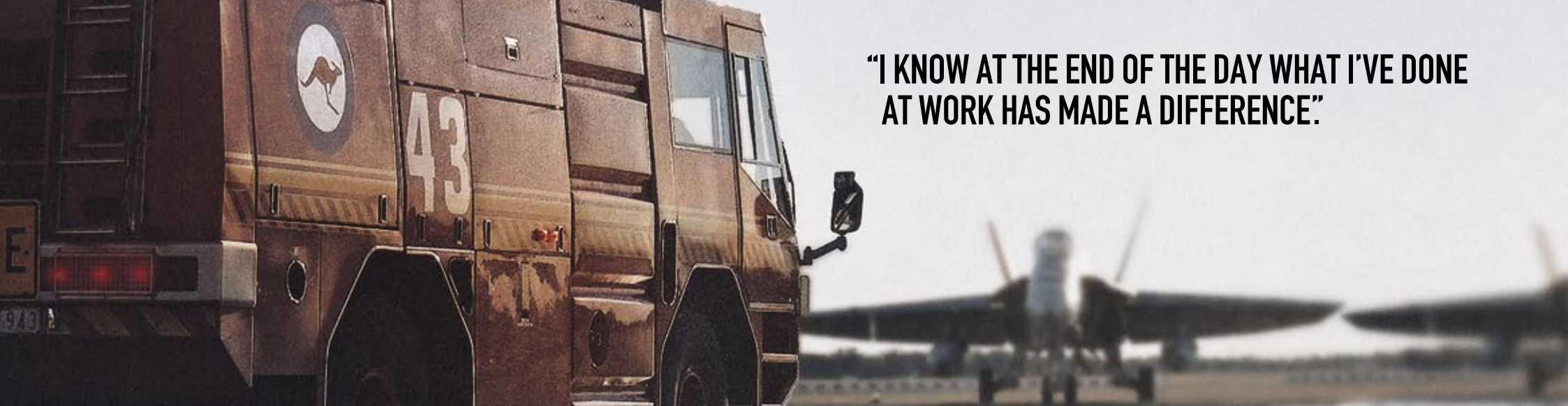
Like getting your hands dirty under the bonnet of a car? As a Ground Support Equipment Fitter, which is the Air Force's name for a mechanic, you'll be applying your skills on everything from cars, trucks, forklifts and airport specialist vehicles through to ground radar mechanical installations, refrigeration and air-conditioning systems, and aircraft arrestor systems. (GE Trade/QE).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo a self-paced Heavy Vehicle Maintenance Course. If you're already qualified, you may apply for recognition of prior learning to fast track through the course. The course introduces heavy vehicle maintenance to enable you to do routine servicing at all maintenance levels as well as fault-diagnosis. On completion of your training, you'll graduate as a Ground Support Equipment Fitter Grade 1.

### **PLUMBER**

As an Air Force Plumber, you'll be installing, maintaining and repairing installed water reticulation and treatment systems, sanitary, drainage, sewerage, gas systems and undertaking other general plumbing tasks. In deployed and exercise conditions, you'll be responsible for the provision of temporary water reticulation, and sewage and gas in a variety of locations in Australia and overseas. You will also work closely with trades such as carpenters and electricians on both civil and general construction projects. (QE), (AR).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, a wide variety of general service and employment specific training may be undertaken. You may then be trained in general construction and supervisory courses.



**“I KNOW AT THE END OF THE DAY WHAT I’VE DONE AT WORK HAS MADE A DIFFERENCE”**

## COMMUNICATIONS AND IT

### COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS CONTROLLER

As a Communications and Information Systems Controller (CISCON), you’ll be responsible for the management of information systems and operation of communication systems that support the entire Defence Force. The computer systems include Local Area Networks, Wide Area Networks, Web publishing, and database management. The communications systems include both secure and non-secure voice, data, video and message services across all media. (GE).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you’ll undergo the Defence CIS Operator Course where you’ll be taught communications and information systems, general security procedures, PC operations and maintenance, strategic communications, radio telephony, and network operating system basics.

## COMBAT AND SECURITY

### AIRFIELD DEFENCE GUARD

As an Airfield Defence Guard, you form the basis of the Air Force’s ground combat force, protecting base assets, infrastructure and personnel against attack from enemy forces. You’ll also get involved in instructional duties such as weapons handling, battle tactics, field operations, combat survival, and land search and rescue. Entry is available to males only due to the combat related nature of these jobs. (GE), (AR).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you’ll undergo the Basic Airfield Defence Guard Course to be trained in small arms; high explosive weapons and explosive stores; radio communications; field engineering; battle-craft and tactics; map reading and navigation; first aid and casualty handling; and nuclear, biological and chemical defence.

### AIR SURVEILLANCE OPERATOR

As an Air Surveillance Operator you’ll establish and maintain an up-to-date and complete picture of air and surface activities within Australia’s airspace using a network of radars whilst working closely with Air Force Air Combat Officers. (GE).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you’ll undergo an Air Surveillance Operators Course. You’ll be taught basic radio and radar theory, the Australian Defence Force Aerospace Battle Management System structure, meteorology, communications, electronic warfare, the processing of air movements information and an introduction to computers.

### FIRE FIGHTER

As an Air Force Fire Fighter, you’ll be employed in the usual duties normally associated with fire fighting, plus those involved with specialist airfield fire and rescue services and the training of base personnel in fire fighting procedures. Additional tasks include hazardous materials response, motor vehicle accident response, bushfire work, search and rescue, and other natural disaster response work should the need arise. (GE), (AR).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you’ll undergo training in first aid, fire vehicle operation, the use of breathing apparatus, rescue from heights, casualty handling, and portable rescue equipment operation. In addition, you’ll also be taught the use of portable fire extinguishers and rescue equipment, the operation of fixed fire detection/suppression system controls, and the servicing of fire fighting and rescue equipment.



## SECURITY POLICE

As a member of the Air Force's Security Police, you'll find yourself detecting and investigating various offences, apprehending and prosecuting offenders and applying protective security measures. You may also get involved with security breaches, responding to security alarms and carrying out patrols. Alternatively, you could train to team up with a Military Working Dog to provide security patrols and law enforcement. (GE), (AR).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo an Air Force Security Police Basic Training Course where you'll be taught Air Force Security Police administration, legal and security procedures, initial action at crime scenes, emergency response procedures, operational safety skills and self-defence. On successful completion of this course, further specialist training will be undertaken depending on which Security Police stream you have chosen.

## GEOSPATIAL IMAGERY INTELLIGENCE ANALYST

How about a job where you'll be working with some of the most sophisticated computer equipment in the country? Geospatial Imagery Intelligence Analysts are employed to support the Air Force aerial reconnaissance strike capability and produce intelligence products from imagery and geospatial information in support of ADF operations. You'll be providing the very latest intelligence information that will assist in the planning of Air Force missions. (GE).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo a Defence Imagery Analyst Course where you'll receive training in theoretical, analytical and practical skills that will enable you to perform a variety of tasks within the Defence intelligence community.

## SIGNALS OPERATOR

Like to do something vital to Australia's security? As an Air Force Signals Operator (SIGSOP) you'll be operating cutting edge receiving and analysis equipment to provide vital intelligence and communications security requirements for military commanders and other Defence and national authorities. (GE).

**TRAINING:** Signals Operators can specialise as Linguist Signals Operators or Technical Signals Operators. After recruit training you'll undergo, as part of the Linguist stream, a SIGSOPs course to learn about security procedures, basic language training, radio communications, radio theory and specialist intercept equipment procedures. As part of the technical stream, you'll undergo courses to learn about the fundamentals and analysis of electronic and technical signals intelligence.

## SPECIALIST MUSICIAN

Like the gig of a lifetime? One where you actually get paid every day of your career? As an Air Force Musician, you're employed to perform in the Air Force Band providing music for events such as ceremonial occasions, parades and guards of honour. You'll also get to perform throughout Australia and overseas to audiences ranging from school children to foreign dignitaries. (QE).

**TRAINING:** The Air Force does not provide any formal employment training for Musicians. However you will need to complete your recruit training and be proficient in music to certain AMEB or AMusA standards.



## PHOTOGRAPHER

So you think you're pretty good with a camera? Why not put your talent to work as an Air Force Photographer? You'll use some of the latest equipment and be involved in the capture and processing of visual information for distribution throughout the Defence Force, commercial organisations, and the media. (GE), (AR).

**TRAINING:** After recruit training, you'll undergo a Basic Photo Course to teach you ground photography which includes technical and industrial photography, portraiture, public affairs, accident photography, electronic image manipulation, computer software training, document copying, audio/visual production and optics.



A young man with short dark hair, wearing a dark blue polo shirt and a silver watch, is focused on working on the engine of a military vehicle. The hood of the vehicle is open, revealing various mechanical components. He is leaning over the engine, with his right hand resting on a part of the machinery. The background shows a large, well-lit hangar or maintenance bay with other military vehicles parked in the distance. The lighting is bright, suggesting an indoor or well-lit outdoor environment.

**STEP TWO.**  
**SEE IF LIFE IN THE  
AIR FORCE IS FOR YOU.**



Now that you know more about the range of interesting careers available and the various avenues of entry, the next few sections will give you some idea as to what to expect from life in the Air Force.

For even more detailed information visit [www.defencejobs.gov.au/airforce](http://www.defencejobs.gov.au/airforce)

## THE ROLE OF THE AIR FORCE

The role of the Air Force is to provide defence of Australia's people, security and interests. This is achieved through the delivery of effective, precision air and space power. The Air Force is an internationally respected organisation that not only looks after the security of Australia but, in times of need, performs a vital role with humanitarian work both here and overseas, such as Sydney to Hobart rescues, flood relief in the Northern Territory, and the on-going commitment in East Timor. More recently, the aeromedical evacuations from Bali, support throughout Operation Sumatra Assist and the conflict in the Gulf, are just a few of the more high-profile duties performed by the Air Force.

## TRAINING

### RECRUIT TRAINING

Once you've joined the Air Force, you'll undergo your initial military training at Number 1 Recruit Training Unit (1RTU) at RAAF Base Wagga, New South Wales. 1RTU prepares you both physically and mentally for service in the Air Force. Your recruit training lasts just over ten weeks and will teach you basic military skills and knowledge, as well as instil in you a sense of pride in being in the Air Force.

### WHAT IF I DON'T LIKE IT?

It is unlikely that you will be released by the Air Force in advance of completing your initial minimum period of service unless you apply to leave within an initial amnesty period (within first 90 days of enlistment). If you seek release after the initial amnesty period and there are significant compelling reasons why you should be released early, you may be released subject to meeting a financial condition that recompenses the Commonwealth for the cost of training you.

### SPECIALIST TRAINING

Once you've completed your recruit training, you'll undertake specialist training in your chosen field. On completion of specialist training, you'll be posted to a RAAF base or Defence establishment. To give you some idea as to what this will entail, please refer to the 'Training' section of the job descriptions in Step One of this brochure.

### TRAINING ACCREDITATION

All Air Force trade traineeships come with nationally accredited TAFE equivalent qualifications. They also guarantee you a job on completion of your specialist training.

### ON-GOING TRAINING

The Air Force wants to bring out the very best in you. So throughout your career you'll be given lots of opportunities to undertake further training in your chosen field, or maybe even train in another field that will help you if you wish to leave the Air Force. The Air Force wants to ensure you're getting the most out of your career.



**“I’VE SEEN PLACES I WOULD NEVER HAVE SEEN IF I DIDN’T JOIN THE AIR FORCE.”**

## LIFE ON BASE

### IT’S NOT ALL MARCHING AND WORK

Once you’ve completed your recruit training, you’ll probably be posted to a RAAF base or Defence establishment for your specialist training or to start your job. But don’t think that life on base means being stuck in some sort of classroom all day. You’ll find the bases are places of constant excitement and change with a huge range of social and sporting facilities to help you relax and enjoy your life out of working hours. The next few pages will give you a feel for what life’s like on base.

### AIRMEN’S CLUB

You could call the Airmen’s Club the social heart of life on-base – the place that hosts everything from pool competitions to live bands, raffles and everyday get-togethers with your mates. If you decide to live on base, it’s probably where you’ll spend a lot of your social life eating, drinking and just generally hanging out.

### SPORTING LIFE

Whatever your sport or pastime, you’re sure to find plenty of people with similar interests on-base. You’ll find most bases have fully-equipped gyms, swimming pools and tennis, squash and basketball courts. Sports approved by the Air Force include:

Alpine Snow Sports	Running & Athletics
Aussie Rules	Sailing
Basketball	Scuba Diving
Cricket	Soccer
Cycling	Softball
Gliding	Squash
Golf	Tenpin Bowling
Hockey	Touch Football
Lawn Bowls	Triathlon
Netball	Volleyball
Nordic Skiing & Biathlon	Water Skiing
Rugby League	Water Polo
Rugby Union	

### FOOD

Despite what you might think, Air Force food is very good. You’ll find the kitchen open three times a day, seven days a week, and if you need a snack in between meals, you can always drop into the base shop and pick up anything from a chocolate bar or a packet of chips to fruit juices, health bars and salads. And if you have any special dietary needs, they can be catered for as well.



## **FRIENDS**

Given that so much of Air Force life is based upon working closely in a team, from the moment you join the Air Force you'll find you'll be making a lot of new friends. That will become even more apparent when you're posted to a base where you'll probably socialise with your work friends just like you would with any job. However, given that your working hours are similar to those anywhere else, you can still catch up with your friends outside the Air Force as well.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Just like any normal job, the Air Force has certain disciplinary standards that need to be maintained, especially where people's lives are on the line. So while you'll need to be able to give and take orders throughout your career in the Air Force, you'll find discipline is based on reason and co-operation between everyone, to ensure every individual is treated with respect.

## BENEFITS

### ACCOMMODATION

There are basically two types of accommodation in the Air Force: on-base and off-base. On-base, you'll find comfortable living quarters that are subsidised by the Air Force. In most cases you also have the choice to live off-base. You can either buy your own home or live in subsidised accommodation (subject to marital status and availability). If you're single, you may also be eligible to receive rental assistance from the Air Force.

### PAY

Your salary is made up of your basic salary plus a Service Allowance and a Uniform Maintenance Allowance. It's paid directly into your bank, credit union or building society account, and tax and superannuation are automatically deducted. How much you are paid obviously depends upon your rank, length of service and your chosen career. However, you will find your pay is very competitive when compared to salaries paid in similar fields outside the Air Force. Our Careers Counsellors will be able to provide you with all salary details.

### SUPERANNUATION

Just like a civilian employer, the Air Force has its own compulsory superannuation scheme. This covers you for your super, as well as invalidity and death benefits. It is similar to a regular super scheme, and you can elect to contribute between 5% and 10% of your pay towards it.

### HEALTHCARE

The Air Force looks after your medical and dental needs, providing doctors, dentists and specialist care should you need it.

### LEAVE

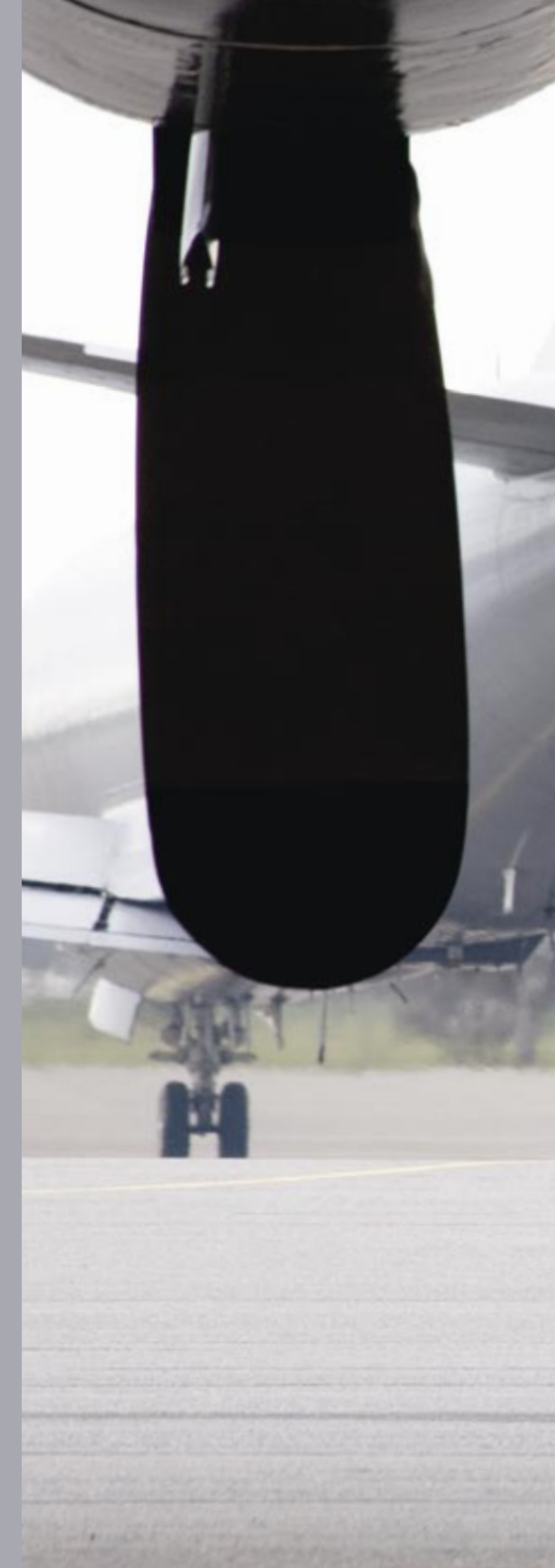
You'll be given 20 days of annual leave for every year of completed service. However, the Air Force recognises that from time to time you may need to take leave for other reasons. This may include remote locality leave, maternity leave, compassionate leave, parental leave, carers leave, long service leave and examination leave. You'll also find that, in most cases, weekends and public holidays are your own, unless of course you're rostered on duty. And as an added bonus, if you're single, the Air Force can also pay for your trip home once a year, no matter where you're stationed in Australia.

### UNIFORMS

Upon joining the Air Force, you will initially be issued with a free set of uniforms. Following this, you will receive an annual allowance to ensure your uniform is kept in top shape.

### LOW INTEREST LOANS

Following a minimum of four years continuous full-time service, or eight years effective Reserve service, you may qualify for a subsidised home loan as part of the Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS). The scheme provides you with assistance to purchase your own home, at competitive market rates. What's more, the longer you serve in the Air Force, the greater the subsidy on the home loan. In addition to the subsidised DHOAS, you may be entitled to a one-off taxable payment, under the Home Purchase Assistance Scheme (HPAS). Further information regarding pay and benefits can be found at [www.defencejobs.gov.au](http://www.defencejobs.gov.au)



**"I WAS LOOKING FOR  
SOMETHING OUT OF THE  
ORDINARY AND FOUND  
IT IN THE AIR FORCE."**





**“THE AIR FORCE PROVIDES EVERYTHING I WANT LIKE SECURITY,  
FRIENDSHIP AND DIVERSITY. IT JUST MAKES IT A REALLY GOOD JOB.”**

## SHANNON GILHAM — COMMUNICATION ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN

### **Tell us some good things about working in the Air Force?**

There's great people. The equipment is right up to date. And there's a sense of pride because of the uniform and because you're working for the Australian people.

### **What is a Communication Electronic Technician?**

Communication Electronic Technicians provide support for the aircrews and the ground crews. We're a ground based support group. I work with radios and communications equipment, radars, computers and networks.

### **What do you do in the way of electronics?**

If any of the equipment fails, any part of the equipment at all, we fix it. We repair computers, radar, radios, operator display units... everything.

### **Do you have to be pretty bright to do what you do?**

It's a fairly intense course that you have to do to become a Communication Electronic Technician. I spent about 13 months in training and there was a course nearly every week. But I think if anyone puts their mind to it they could probably become a Communication Electronic Technician.

### **What are the advantages of doing your job in the Air Force compared to a civilian environment?**

With the Air Force you get to go out on deployments, which wouldn't happen in the civilian world, and you get to work on the entire system. In the civilian world they tend to work on one piece of equipment rather than the entire system. We work on everything from the Operator Display Units to the radar – one end of the spectrum to the other. And we get a Certificate III in Electrical Engineering that's directly accredited outside in the civilian world.

### **What's the best thing about your job in the Air Force?**

Diversity. You get to work on a lot of systems. You go on operations. You get to see different parts of Australia for a couple of weeks at a time. You've got job security, whereas in the civilian world it's very unstable. You get a good wage, it's comparable to the outside world, and there's a lot of good friendships as well.

### **Is being in the Air Force just a job, or is it a way of life?**

It is a way of life, but it's not your entire life. You've got your friends and family, and you can go and visit them pretty much whenever you want. And if you live off base, well, you're around them all the time.

### **Where do you see your future heading and will you stay with the Air Force?**

I'm currently in training, so I'll be in for another four years. But I'll probably stay with the Air Force for quite a number of years after that because of the security and because it's an interesting job. My mates are great here and the Air Force provides everything I want. It makes it a really, a really good job.

### **Would you recommend your job to anyone wanting to join the Air Force?**

I'd recommend it to anyone into electronics and computers. It's challenging, but it's rewarding, because you know you're a part of a wider system supporting the Australian Defence Force. I'd also recommend it to anybody interested in the field of electronics and communications because it can lead to other things. You can progress through the Air Force and it's all relevant in the civilian world as well.



## HARDWARE

### F/A-18 HORNET

Role	Multi-role fighter
Engines	Two low bypass F404-GE-400 turbofans—each 7,258kg thrust
Airframe	Length: 17.1m Height: 4.7m
Wingspan	12.4m
Weight	10,660kg basic, 20,412kg maximum
Speed	Mach 1.8 (2,200km/h)
Range	Combat radius 740km
Ceiling	Above 45,000 feet
Weapons	AIM-120 AMRAAM active radar guided missiles, AIM-9 Sidewinder infra-red missiles, Harpoon anti-ship missiles, conventional and laser-guided bombs, nose-mounted cannon
Avionics	Hughes APG73 multi-mode radar GPS, inertial navigation system, mission computers, head-up cockpit display
Crew	Pilot

### C-17A

Role	Heavy multi-role transport and strategic airlift
Engines	Four Pratt and Whitney PW2040 turbofans (40,440 lbs thrust each)
Airframe	Length: 53m Height: 16.79m
Wingspan	51.7m
Weight	72,500kg payload
Speed	800km/h cruise
Range	4,500km
Ceiling	45,000 feet
Crew	Two pilots, Loadmaster
Accommodation	Depending on configuration: 102 troops; 90 stretcher patients; tanks, helicopters, infantry vehicles

### HAWK 127

Role	Lead-in fighter trainer
Engine	Single Rolls-Royce Turbomeca Adour Mk 871
Airframe	Length: 11.95m Height: 4.08m
Wingspan	9.39m
Weight	5443kg
Speed	1000km/h
Range	2400km
Ceiling	50,000 feet
Crew	Pilot (Instructor) and student

### PC9/A

Role	Primary trainer/forward air control and aerobatics
Engine	Pratt and Whitney PT6A-62 turboprop – 950 shaft horsepower
Airframe	Length: 10.18m Height: 3.28m
Wingspan	10.24m
Weight	2,250kg basic, 2,710kg maximum
Range	(with two underwing tanks) 1,850km, combat radius 650km
Ceiling	25,000 feet
Weapons	Two underwing smoke grenade launchers
Crew	Pilot, Observer/Instructor



### AP-3C ORION

Role	Maritime patrol/anti-submarine warfare/strike
Engines	Four Allison T56A-14—each 4,600 shaft horsepower
Airframe	Length: 35.6m Height: 10.44m
Wingspan	30.8m
Weight	61,200kg maximum
Speed	750km/h maximum, 650km/h cruise, 370km/h loiter
Range	Mission radius 3,720km
Ceiling	30,000 feet
Endurance	15hrs
Weapons	Mk 46 torpedoes, AGM84 Harpoon anti-ship missiles
Crew	Two Pilots, two Flight Engineers, three Air Combat Officers and six Airborne Electronic Analysts

### B737-8BBJ

Role	Special purpose passenger and VIP transport
Engines	Two CFM International CFM56-7 turbofans, each rated at 118.4kN (27,300lbs)
Airframe	Length: 33.6m Height: 12.5m (top of tail)
Wingspan	35.8 m (including winglets)
Weight	77,565kg (max takeoff), 60,780kg (max landing)
Payload	Standard seating for 36 passengers, or 30 VIP configuration
Speed	740km/h normal operations
Range	5,560km (Canberra direct to Honolulu, Hong Kong or Tokyo)
Ceiling	41,000 feet
Crew	Two Pilots and four Crew Attendants

### C-130J HERCULES

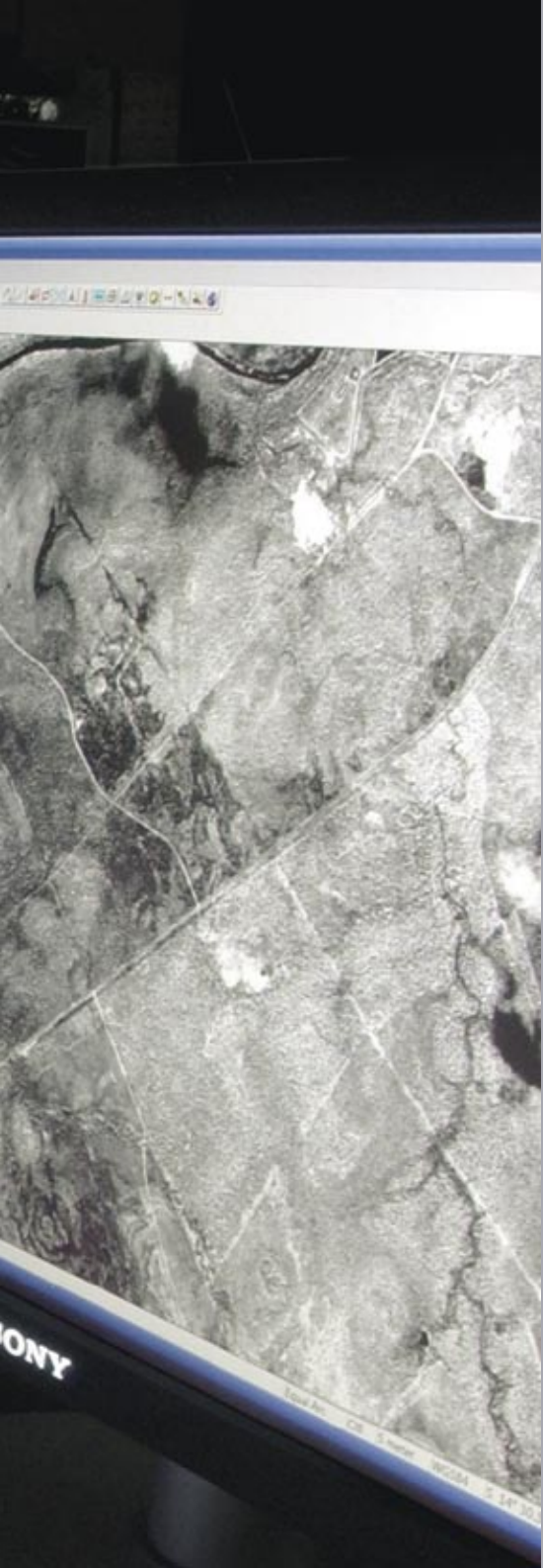
Role	Medium tactical and multi-role transport
Engines	Four Allison AE2100DE turboprops—each 4,590 shaft horsepower driving 6 blade variable pitch propellers
Airframe	Length: 34.37m Height: 10.1m
Wingspan	40.4m
Weight	79,380kg maximum
Payload	19,500kg
Speed	625km/h normal operations
Range	5,100km with 18,155kg payload
Ceiling	35,000 feet
Crew	Two Pilots, Loadmaster

### DHC-4 CARIBOU

Role	Light tactical transport
Engines	Two Pratt and Whitney radials—each 2,000 horsepower
Airframe	Length: 22.5m Height: 9.6m
Wingspan	29m
Weight	15,400kg
Payload	3,100kg
Speed	280km/h normal operations
Range	2,000km
Ceiling	13,000 feet (with passengers)
Crew	Two Pilots, Flight Engineer



# STEP THREE. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU APPLY?



There are five basic steps in applying to join the Air Force. These are: Enquiry, YOU Session, Interviews, Physical Fitness Assessment and finally, Enlistment.

## 1. ENQUIRY

By calling **13 19 01** you will be connected to someone at the Defence Force Recruiting Call Centre who can help you with any information you may require. You can then either complete an application over the phone or complete an online application at [www.defencejobs.gov.au](http://www.defencejobs.gov.au).

## 2. YOU SESSION

The second stage of the joining process is Your Opportunities Unlimited Session, or YOU Session. This day begins with a testing session to determine what particular job roles and avenues of entry you are best suited for. You will be provided with information on the range of jobs that are available to you, and discuss career opportunities with a Careers Counsellor.

## 3. INTERVIEWS

After the YOU Session, you will be booked to an Assessment Day based on the availability of positions for your preferred job. During the Assessment Day you will undergo a psychological interview, a medical assessment and a Defence Interview. Any additional testing requirements relevant to your particular career will also be conducted on this day. The purpose of this stage is to ensure that you have the knowledge required and are fully prepared for your career within the Australian Defence Force.

Airborne Electronics Analyst, Crew Attendant and Security Police will also require you to sit before a selection board. Your Careers Counsellor will be able to provide you with further details.

## 4. PHYSICAL FITNESS ASSESSMENT

After you have passed the Assessment Day process you will be required to pass a physical fitness assessment and obtain a police clearance. Information on these requirements will be provided during the testing and assessment process and you will have every opportunity to ask questions.

## 5. ENLISTMENT

Having made it through the selection process, you'll either be sent a letter of offer to join the Air Force, or advised that your application was unsuccessful. If you have been unsuccessful, our Careers Counsellor can speak to you about other Australian Defence Force career options. Congratulations, you're now just a step away from realising your career as an airman or airwoman in the Air Force. But before you can commit, there are a few things you should know.



**STEP FOUR.**  
**WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?**



## **NATIONALITY**

To be eligible for any full-time or part-time Air Force job, you must be an Australian Citizen or hold Permanent Residency Status with the intention of gaining Australian citizenship once you are eligible.

## **AGE**

The minimum age to join the Air Force is 17 on the day of enlistment. However, additional age requirements may apply to certain jobs. Check with a Careers Counsellor before making an application.

## **IDENTITY**

As proof of your identity, date and place of birth, you will be required to provide copies of your original full birth and marriage certificates.

## **MARITAL STATUS**

When you join the Air Force, you can be single, married or living in a de facto relationship. Married benefits are also extended to those in military-recognised de facto relationships.

## **EDUCATION**

The Air Force offers a wide variety of general entry jobs, some of which require passes in specific subjects or courses. But in the majority of cases, the minimum educational standard is a completion of Year 10 with passes in English and Maths.

## **LENGTH OF SERVICE**

As an airman or airwoman, you will initially sign up for either four or six years of service depending on your chosen job. If you choose to leave the Air Force after this period, you automatically become a member of the Air Force Standby Reserve for a minimum period of five years.

## **GOT ANY QUESTIONS?**

By this stage, you will probably have a few questions you'd like answered regarding a career in the Air Force. The best place to start is a Defence Force Recruiting Centre. You can find out the location of your nearest Defence Force Recruiting Centre by calling **13 19 01** or visiting **[www.defencejobs.gov.au](http://www.defencejobs.gov.au)**

**THE LAST STEP**  
**CALL 13 19 01**  
[www.defencejobs.gov.au](http://www.defencejobs.gov.au)