WHAT IT TAKES TO BE AN AIR FORCE OFFICER IN 5 EASY STEPS.
STEP ONE.

DECIDE WHAT JOB
YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO.
THERE ARE A RANGE OF DIFFERENT OFFICER JOBS TO CHOOSE FROM 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.

STEP ONE. DECIDE WHAT JOB YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO.
STEP TWO. CHOOSE YOUR METHOD OF ENTRY. 
STEP THREE. SEE IF LIFE IN THE AIR FORCE IS FOR YOU.
STEP FOUR. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU APPLY?
STEP FIVE. WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?
If you want a career that is challenging and rewarding and encourages you to lead and motivate a team, a career as an Air Force officer may just be what you’ve been looking for. The Air Force is an incredibly diverse organisation that requires a huge number of skilled officers such as engineers, logisticians, doctors, lawyers and aircrew. That’s where you come in. You’ll learn effective communication and leadership skills and develop the ability to guide those under your command. There are a number of different methods of entry when applying to become an Air Force officer.

**DIRECT ENTRY OFFICER**
A range of Air Force officer employment specialisations are available to people with or without a degree qualification. As such, you will enter the Air Force as a Direct Entry Officer (DEO).

**GRADUATE OFFICER**
If you are a degree-qualified professional looking for a career offering satisfaction, excitement and challenges, the Air Force has a role for you. As a Graduate Officer with the Air Force you will get the opportunity to further expand your management, leadership and professional skills and utilise them in ways you never imagined.

**ADFA**
You may wish to study for a degree at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) in Canberra, a campus of the University of NSW.

**AIR FORCE SPONSORED UNDERGRADUATE SCHEME**
If you are currently studying a degree at a civilian university the Air Force may be able to sponsor your studies which includes you being paid to study and all your fees being paid.

**RESERVES AND SPECIALIST RESERVES**
If a full-time Air Force career doesn’t suit your lifestyle, you might like to consider a part-time job in the Air Force Active Reserve or for selected professional services, an on-call basis in the Specialist Reserve. Specialist Reservists are professionals that are not otherwise retained permanently in the Air Force. Reserve squadrons are located all over Australia, so there’s sure to be one located near you.

Further details on the methods of entry open to you appear in Step Two of this brochure.
ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

Leading and motivating a team is just one aspect of a career as an Air Force Administration Officer. You’ll be exposed to a wide range of duties whilst leading a team of professionals in the day-to-day running of the Air Force, whether in Australia or on overseas deployments. Your job may include human resource management and planning, administration, strategic personnel management, recruitment, training, financial and information systems management.

TRAINING: Following initial officer training, you’ll commence full-time employment. After a period of time on the job, you’ll do the Administration Officer Initial Course.

METHODS OF ENTRY: Australian Defence Force Academy, Direct Entry, Undergraduate Sponsorship and Air Force Reserve.

AERONAUTICAL ENGINEER OFFICER

Like a job where you’ll be at the cutting edge of aeronautics? As an Air Force Aeronautical Engineer, your job will be to ensure the Air Force has airworthy aircraft and ground support equipment is maintained to a high standard. It’s a particularly challenging job given the constant technological changes in modern aviation.

TRAINING: After initial officer training, you’ll attend the Engineer Officer Initial Course covering technical administration, management procedures and practices. Specialist category courses are normally completed within the first twelve months of your career.

METHODS OF ENTRY: Australian Defence Force Academy, Graduate and Undergraduate Sponsorship.

AIR COMBAT OFFICER

As an Air Combat Officer you will be a master of air combat missions and advanced electronic systems. You will make real time command and control decisions crucial to the overall success of the mission at hand. The Air Combat Officer role will see you as a crew member of either the F/A-18 Super Hornet, AP-3C Orion or Airborne Early Warning and Control aircraft, involved with multi-mission Unmanned Aerial Systems or in the Air Battle Management ground environment.

TRAINING: After initial officer training, you’ll attend an Air Combat Officer (ACO) course at RAAF Base East Sale. Following your ACO course, graduates are streamed into one of the following roles: Air Battle Management, Maritime Patrol and Response, Air Combat or Combat Air Lift. Each stream undertakes specific training to their stream at RAAF Base Williamtown for Air Battle Management and RAAF Base East Sale for Maritime Patrol and Response and Air Combat Tactical Response.

METHODS OF ENTRY: Australian Defence Force Academy and Direct Entry.

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER

If you’d like to be responsible for some of the most sophisticated aircraft in the sky, a career as an Air Traffic Controller might be just what you’re looking for. Not only will you be responsible for the safe and expedient movement of Air Force, and at times civilian, aircraft in and around bases, you could also be controlling Air Force aircraft whilst on deployment in Australia or overseas.

TRAINING: After initial officer training, you’ll attend the Air Traffic Control Course where you’ll learn about surface movement control, tower control, approach coordination, approach control and area control. You’ll then undergo on-the-job training to build upon your skills.

METHODS OF ENTRY: Australian Defence Force Academy and Direct Entry.
DENTAL OFFICER

As a Dentist in the Air Force, you’ll be exposed to a wide range of working environments. You’ll be working in surgeries equipped to extremely high standards, to ensure the oral health of service personnel both on-base and whilst on deployment within Australia and, at times, overseas.

TRAINING:
After initial officer training, you’ll attend a Dental Officer Initial Course conducted by the Health Services Training Flight. This course includes training in administration and clinical policy relating to Dental Services in the Australian Defence Force.

METHODS OF ENTRY:
Graduate, Undergraduate Sponsorship, Reserve and Specialist Reserve.

AIRFIELD ENGINEER OFFICER

As an Airfield Engineer Officer you will find yourself involved in the management, delivery, assessment, maintenance, repair, regeneration and operation of the Air Force infrastructure. This includes working with a wide and varied workforce from a range of trades.

TRAINING:
After initial officer training, you’ll attend the Royal Australian Engineers Regimental Officer Basic Course at Moorebank, NSW.

METHODS OF ENTRY:
Australian Defence Force Academy, Graduate, Undergraduate Sponsorship and Reserve.

ARMAMENT ENGINEER OFFICER

If you’re looking for a unique direction for your engineering career, you might like to consider armament engineering. Quite unlike anything in the civilian world, you’ll find yourself responsible for weapons, weapons systems and associated test equipment on a range of Air Force aircraft from fighters to strike bombers, as well as bomb disposal.

TRAINING:
After initial officer training, you’ll attend the Engineer Officer Basic Course which covers technical administration, management procedures and practices. The Engineer Officer Armament Specialist Course follows and is normally completed within the first twelve months of your career with the Air Force.

METHODS OF ENTRY:
Australian Defence Force Academy, Graduate and Undergraduate Sponsorship.

CHAPLAIN

As an Air Force Chaplain you’ll provide spiritual guidance to all members of the Air Force regardless of faith or denomination. Chaplains also provide counselling services and are actively involved with the individual development of Air Force personnel.

TRAINING:
After initial officer training, you’ll be posted to an Air Force base or Defence establishment to commence full-time employment.

METHOD OF ENTRY:
Graduate and Reserve.

DENTAL OFFICER

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TRAINING:
After initial officer training, you’ll attend a Dental Officer Initial Course conducted by the Health Services Training Flight. This course includes training in administration and clinical policy relating to Dental Services in the Australian Defence Force.

METHODS OF ENTRY:
Graduate, Undergraduate Sponsorship, Reserve and Specialist Reserve.
**DURING MY MILITARY CAREER I’VE BECOME A QUALIFIED USAF FLIGHT SURGEON AND ALMOST COMPLETED A DIPLOMA OF AVIATION MEDICINE.**

**MEDICAL OFFICER:**

**EDUCATION OFFICER**

As an Education Officer in the Air Force, your primary role is to analyse, design, develop and manage the conduct and evaluation of training. As such, you may be required to consult and coordinate training with military/civilian training staff, outside contractors and students. In addition, you could also be identifying training needs and conducting analysis; designing training courses; facilitating development and conduct of training; and providing advice on appropriate training technology, including e-learning and/or other computer-based training methods.

**TRAINING:** After initial officer training, you’ll be posted to an Air Force base and complete the Education Officer Initial Course.

**METHODS OF ENTRY:** Graduate and Reserve.

**ELECTRONICS ENGINEER OFFICER**

As an Electronics Engineer, you may find yourself responsible for airborne power generation and distribution, electronic/electrical control systems and instrument and navigation systems. You’ll also be trained in communications, radar and sonar equipment on a range of aircraft.

**TRAINING:** After initial officer training, you’ll attend the Engineer Officer Basic Course which covers technical administration, management procedures and practices. Specialist category courses follow and are normally completed within the first twelve months of your career with the Air Force.

**METHODS OF ENTRY:** Australian Defence Force Academy, Graduate and Undergraduate Sponsorship.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER**

As an Environmental Health Officer, you could be responsible for planning, coordinating and implementing strategies that minimise and control the adverse health impact of the environment and workplace on personnel. You will also be responsible for managing the impact of military operations and activities on the environment. Applicants will need to be full members of the Australian Institute of Environmental Health.

**TRAINING:** After initial officer training, you’ll be posted to an Air Force base where you will complete a number of specialist training courses such as; Laser Safety, Nuclear, Biological Chemical Defence Training and Operational Field Hygiene, while completing your Environmental Health phase 2 workbook.

**METHODS OF ENTRY:** Undergraduate Sponsorship, Graduate, Reserve and Specialist Reserve.

**GROUND DEFENCE OFFICER**

As an Air Force Ground Defence Officer, you and your team are responsible for defending airfields and aircraft from attack. You’ll also be involved in ground defence policy and weapons training and coordination. As this is a combat-related role, only males can be accepted as Ground Defence Officers.

**TRAINING:** After initial officer training at RAAF Base East Sale in Victoria, you’ll attend the Royal Military College (RMC) Duntroon, Regimental Officer Basic Course, and Ground Defence Basic Operations Course. Upon successful completion of these courses, you’ll be put in charge of a Rifle Flight in an Airfield Defence Squadron. At this point, you will specialise in either ground defence; training base personnel; specialist training officer; an instructor with combat survival training; the RAAF Security and Fire School or the Officers’ Training School.

**METHOD OF ENTRY:** Direct Entry.
INTELLIGENCE OFFICER
As an Air Force Intelligence Officer, you will be responsible for preparing and presenting intelligence briefs as well as analysing and preparing assessments on air-related activities. This may involve interpreting intelligence data and analysing electronic weapons systems information. You may carry out your role on an Air Force base or Defence establishment, or whilst on deployment during specific missions or exercises.

TRAINING: After initial officer training, you’ll undergo initial defence intelligence training before completing the Air Intelligence Officer Basic Course.

METHODS OF ENTRY: Australian Defence Force Academy, Direct Entry and Graduate.

LEGAL OFFICER
As a Legal Officer, you’ll be involved with a wide variety of legal matters ranging from operations law to military, disciplinary, civil and administrative law. You may also be involved in civil law issues including common law claims, equal opportunity and anti-discrimination matters, copyright and government contracts.

TRAINING: After initial officer training, you’ll begin your legal training specialising in one of three core fields of law—military justice, administrative or operations law. This will lead to a Graduate Diploma (Grad Dip) and then a Masters degree in Military Law (LLM). Your Grad Dip (or equivalent) is a requirement for advancement to the next level, and similarly your LLM is also required to advance to the following level.

METHODS OF ENTRY: Graduate, Undergraduate Sponsorship, Reserve and Specialist Reserve.

LOGISTICS OFFICER
As a Logistics Officer, you’re responsible for the acquisition, control and support of modern and valuable equipment. You will also be responsible for the management and welfare of military and civilian staff. You’ll receive specialist training to provide you with the skills necessary for procurement, integrated logistics support, project management, as well as personnel and equipment movements.

TRAINING: After initial officer training, you’ll attend the Logistics Officer Initial Course. You will receive training in the handling of fuels, oils, dangerous goods and explosives; the movement of people and cargo by air; catering; and integrated logistics support.

METHODS OF ENTRY: Australian Defence Force Academy, Direct Entry, Undergraduate Sponsorship and Reserve.

MEDICAL OFFICER
As an Air Force Medical Officer, your primary job will be to look after the health and fitness of military personnel. You’ll also be involved in general practice care and occupational and preventative medicine, including physical fitness at a wide variety of locations around Australia and on deployments overseas.

TRAINING: After initial officer training, you’ll attend Medical Officer Specialisation Training followed by Flying Familiarisation. You may have the opportunity to attend a number of short service and civilian courses—in Australia and overseas. These courses cover areas such as operational health support; aeromedical evacuation; medical aspects of nuclear, biological and chemical warfare; aerospace medicine; sports medicine; and public health.

METHODS OF ENTRY: Graduate, Undergraduate Sponsorship, Reserve and Specialist Reserve.
PHARMACEUTICAL OFFICER

Pharmacists perform a vital role in the Air Force. Unlike their civilian counterparts, Air Force Pharmacists get the opportunity to work as a ‘career pharmacist’ without the stresses of operating a small business. You will find yourself dispensing medication, providing information on drugs and ordering, storing and supplying pharmaceuticals.

TRAINING: After initial officer training, you’ll attend a Logistics Officer Initial Course and later undertake the Operational Health Support Course.

METHODS OF ENTRY: Graduate, Undergraduate Sponsorship and Reserve.

NURSING OFFICER

Despite what you might think, not all nursing is the same. In the Air Force, your job will involve regular nursing duties and outpatient care, however you may also find yourself involved in aeromedical evacuations, operational deployments and exercises, in addition to supporting medical assistant training.

TRAINING: After initial officer training, you’ll attend the Nursing Officer Initial Course. During your first year of appointment you’ll also complete the Aeromedical Evacuation Course, Aviation Nursing Officer Course and the Operational Health Support Course which relates to aeromedical evacuation duties and operational deployments.

METHODS OF ENTRY: Graduate, Undergraduate Sponsorship, Reserve and Specialist Reserve.

OPERATIONS OFFICER

As an Operations Officer in the Air Force Reserve you’ll be trained in preparation for your contingency role to support air operations. You’ll assist in the mission planning, tasking, coordination and monitoring of air operations within the Air Force as well as joint and combined air operations. You may be employed in a variety of air operations support roles in support units, flying squadrons, wings and higher Air Force and other ADF operational command headquarters. Operations may involve air defence and air strike missions in support of maritime and land operations. As you may be deployed in a tactical environment you are required to develop specialised ground defence skills and knowledge needed to perform your duties in an operational environment.

TRAINING: After initial officer training, you’ll complete the Operations Basic Course and serve part-time at a local Air Force base or Defence establishment.

METHOD OF ENTRY: Air Force Reserve.

PILOT

If you think you can handle being in command of a $50 million aircraft, a career as a Pilot could be the career for you. You’ll be part of an extremely disciplined team, flying some of the most advanced aircraft in the world, in some amazing and diverse environments. It’s exciting, it’s fast and we only take those who are a ‘cut above the rest’.

TRAINING: After initial officer training, you’ll attend an Aviation Medicine Course followed by a Combat Survival Course. Once completed, it’s onto the Basic Flying Training School. This is followed by an advanced course in higher performance aircraft. You’ll then commence advanced training on the PC-9, and ultimately specialise on a particular aircraft.

METHODS OF ENTRY: Australian Defence Force Academy and Direct Entry.
THE TRAINING WE GET IS UNSURPASSED. WE GET TRAINED BY THE WORLD EXPERTS IN THEIR FIELD.

ELECTRONICS ENGINEER OFFICER.
RADIOGRAPHER

Air Force Radiographers are assigned to just about every operational base in the country, which ensures a diverse and unique working environment. Using the very latest ultrasound units and image intensifiers, you’ll be performing a wide range of investigative procedures in some of the most diverse and exciting regions in the country or overseas.

TRAINING: After initial officer training, you’ll be posted to an Air Force base or Defence establishment to commence full-time employment. You will then undertake an Occupational Health Support Course.

METHODS OF ENTRY: Graduate, Undergraduate Sponsorship and Reserve.

SECURITY POLICE OFFICER

As a member of the Air Force Security Police you’ll find yourself detecting and investigating various offences, apprehending and prosecuting offenders and applying protective security measures. You’ll also become involved with security risk management and intelligence support to force protection.

TRAINING: After initial officer training, you’ll attend the Military Police Regimental Officer Basic Course before moving on to full-time employment in your chosen specialisation.

METHODS OF ENTRY: Direct Entry, Graduate and Reserve.
STEP TWO.

CHOOSE YOUR METHOD OF ENTRY.
AVENUES OF ENTRY.

AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE ACADEMY

The Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) is part of the University of New South Wales, located in Canberra. Graduates will receive a recognised degree from the highly regarded University of New South Wales. ADFA offers degrees in Engineering (Mechanical, Electrical, Civil and Aeronautical), Science, Arts, Technology (Aviation and Aeronautical Engineering) and Business. ADFA maintains a very high standard of teaching with lecturers and tutors at the top of their relevant fields. You’ll enjoy one of the best teacher to student ratios in the country and have access to fantastic campus resources and facilities. The study facilities at ADFA include a well-resourced library, modern labs, lecture theatres, and the latest computer equipment. The facilities are comparable to any university in the country. ADFA also offers opportunities for post-graduate research and study, leading to Graduate Diplomas, Masters and Doctoral degrees.

Your academic studies are just one part of life at ADFA. There are also military studies, physical training as well as leadership and management skills you’ll develop that will have you graduating with the finest academic and military qualifications possible.

The ADFA campus has around 23 hectares of sporting fields and an indoor sports centre, providing you with access to just about any sport that you can imagine. Plus you’ll find your accommodation on campus comfortable with private rooms, lounge and common areas.

Your Air Force Officer training commences with Academy Military Education and Training (AMET) conducted by the staff at ADFA. This will teach you general military and officer knowledge as well as the general skills and attitudes required of all officers in the Australian Defence Force.

Following AMET, you will complete specific Air Force Officer training. One of the big advantages of studying at ADFA is that, unlike regular university study, you’ll be paid between $26,211p.a. and $40,508p.a. to study plus receive a textbook allowance, free healthcare, and uniforms.

Your tuition fees are also paid by the Air Force. What’s more, you’re guaranteed a job as an officer in the Air Force when you graduate. All officers sponsored through ADFA have to complete a minimum length of service which guarantees employment for a period of time in the Air Force.

ELIGIBILITY: To be eligible for admission to ADFA, you will need to be at least 17 years of age on your date of entry. To qualify for entry into the University of New South Wales, you will need to be studying or have completed Year 12 (including English and three other subjects) and have results that are acceptable for entry to your chosen career. First year study at another university may also qualify you for entry into ADFA. In addition to the academic entry requirements, you’ll go through a selection process to determine whether you have the physical and mental attributes suitable to become an Air Force Officer.

ADFA EDUCATION AWARD: If you are currently studying Year 11, you could be eligible to apply for the ADFA Education Award. In recognition of leadership potential, and academic and sporting achievements, the top applicants will be awarded a laptop computer. To be eligible you must be in Year 11 and be studying subjects which meet the educational requirements of the University of New South Wales and the Air Force. Talk to your Defence Career Counsellor for more specific information or visit defencejobs.gov.au/ADFA.
DIRECT ENTRY OFFICER
There are several officer careers (Administration Officer, Logistics Officer, Pilot, Air Traffic Control Officer, Security Police Officer and Ground Defence Officer) that don’t require a degree and offer the opportunity to pursue an executive career.

ELIGIBILITY: To qualify you must have relevant work experience and/or have completed Year 12 with passes in English and at least three other subjects approved by the Air Force. Requirements can vary between roles. Speak to a Defence Career Counsellor or visit defencejobs.gov.au for more information.

GRADUATE OFFICER
If you already have a degree and wish to further your professional, management and leadership skills, the Air Force is the perfect place to do so. Your professional and technical expertise is much sought-after, and the Air Force offers attractive salaries and packages comparable to those in the civilian workforce.

ELIGIBILITY: You will typically have obtained your degree from an Australian university, institute or college approved by the Air Force. Where applicable you should be registered for your profession. However, degrees from overseas universities may be acceptable and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Some degrees may not qualify you for Graduate entry, but may still be recognised upon entry as a Direct Entry Officer.

UNDERGRADUATE SPONSORSHIP
Air Force Undergraduate Sponsorship is available for a variety of careers in the Air Force. This program enables you to complete your degree at your current university. The Air Force will pay you up to $40,500 p.a. to study; provide you with free healthcare; cover the cost of some of your books and equipment; provide an accommodation allowance; and pay your tuition fees.

ELIGIBILITY: To be eligible to apply for the Air Force Undergraduate Sponsorship, you must have successfully enrolled or be currently completing a degree suitable to Air Force requirements for the chosen officer role. You must also meet the Air Force’s entry requirements for officer entry. Air Force medical undergraduates may be sponsored for up to four years. Further information can be found at airforce.gov.au/undergraduate

GRADUATE MEDICAL/DENTAL SCHEME
If you already hold an appropriate degree qualification, you could be sponsored by the Air Force to qualify as a medical practitioner. If you’re accepted into the scheme, you’ll do a four year degree course at any Australian university that offers a graduate medical program. After completing two years residency at a teaching hospital, you’ll begin your career as a Medical Officer in the Air Force. While studying for your medical degree, you’ll receive a generous base salary of up to $60,330 p.a. as well as having all of your tuition fees paid for. In addition, all reasonable costs related to gaining admission to the course, including application fees and travel costs, will be reimbursed. When you graduate from the scheme, you’ll incur an Initial Minimum Period of Service which includes your sponsored study at university, residency training and period of service at an Australian Defence Force establishment.

AIR FORCE RESERVE
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. There are many different jobs available in the Air Force Reserve—jobs ranging from clerical and administrative roles to trade jobs such as plumbing and carpentry as well as those in technical areas and even the medical field. Selection standards for the Air Force Reserve are the same as those for joining the Permanent Air Force.

SPECIALIST RESERVE
The role of the Specialist Reserve is unique. Specialist Reservists are engaged to provide on an on-call basis, selected professional services that are not otherwise retained permanently in the Air Force. Entry into the Specialist Reserve is by selection to fill available vacancies. Officer entry into all elements of the Air Force Specialist Reserve is by competitive selection.

When you work in the Air Force Reserve or Specialist Reserve your pay is tax-free. You’ll also get free accommodation and food whenever you’re out training or on military exercise. Your uniform and equipment are free and any travel you need to do for initial training or employment training is paid for.

Further information about any of the jobs available in the Air Force as well as the avenues of entry and training requirements can be found at defencejobs.gov.au
INITIAL OFFICER TRAINING

Upon entering the Air Force as a Direct Entry Officer or Reserve Officer you’ll undergo the 16-week Initial Officer Training Course (IOC) at RAAF Base East Sale in Victoria. Most Reserve Officers undergo the part-time version that comprises five phases at Officers’ Training School and at their local Air Force Reserve squadron. You will cover the same topics as full-time officers, just over a longer period of time. You should complete your IOC within two years of entering the Air Force Reserve. Alternatively, you may complete the IOC on a full-time basis as a Reserve Officer. The course is a culmination of theory and practical training which teaches you the leadership skills you’ll need to become an accomplished Air Force officer. Leadership forms the core of your training at Initial Officer Course, however other major elements of the course are designed to introduce you to military life.

This school has an excellent reputation for transforming officer trainees into leaders with integrity, professionalism, loyalty, determination, pride and dedication to the Air Force. Leadership forms the core of your training but you’ll also receive instruction in ground defence, management, operations, communication, Air Force values, and military law. The school is a place of constant excitement and change, with a range of social and sporting activities to help you relax or enjoy with your mates. You’ll need a good level of fitness to gain entry, however any active person who spends time exercising or playing competitive sport should not have difficulty meeting the standards. If you attend ADFA you will undergo your initial officer training in conjunction with your ADFA military training.

“The amount of responsibility that a young person can have is challenging and very exciting.”

OPERATIONS OFFICER.
STEP THREE.
SEEN IF LIFE IN THE AIR FORCE IS FOR YOU.
Now that you know more about the range of interesting careers available and the various methods 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 defencejobs.gov.au

THE ROLE OF THE AIR FORCE.

The Air Force is an 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. Some of the high profile engagements of the Air Force include disease control in relief camps following the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami which involved over 70 aeromedical evacuations and 3,700 medical treatments on the island of Sumatra.

LIFE ON BASE.

IT’S NOT ALL MARCHING AND TRAINING

Once you’ve completed your initial officer training, you’ll be posted to an Australian Defence Force base or establishment for your specialist training, or to commence your employment. But don’t think that life on base means lecturers and theory all day. You’ll find the bases are places of constant excitement and change, with a range of social and sporting facilities to help you relax and enjoy your life outside of working hours.

OFFICERS’ MESS

The Officers’ Mess is the place that hosts everything from formal functions to everyday get-togethers with your friends. If you decide to live on-base, it’s probably where you’ll spend a great deal of your time eating, socialising and generally relaxing.

SPORTING LIFE

Whatever your sport or pastime, you’re sure to find plenty of people with similar interests on or off-base. Not only are traditional sports like Aussie Rules, rugby, netball, hockey, squash, golf, triathlon, cricket, skiing, tenpin bowling, bowls, soccer, softball, scuba diving and basketball catered for; you’ll also find there are clubs for sailing, rowing, fishing, water skiing, and gliding. You’ll find most bases have fully-equipped gyms, swimming pools and tennis, squash and basketball courts.

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. If you need a snack between meals, you can always drop into the base shop and purchase anything from a chocolate bar or a packet of chips to fruit juices, health bars and salads. If you have any special dietary needs, these can also be catered for.

FRIENDS

Given that so much of Air Force life is based upon working closely in a team environment, when 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 in any job. Given that your working hours are similar to those anywhere else, you can still catch up with your friends outside of the Air Force as well.

DISCIPLINE

Just like any other job, the Air Force has certain disciplinary standards that need to be maintained, especially where people’s lives are on the line. As an officer, you’ll need to be able to give and take orders throughout your Air Force career. You will find, however, that discipline is based on reason and co-operation.
"I learn one or two new things every day. You’re constantly learning on the job."

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL OFFICER.
WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT YOUR JOB AND BEING IN THE AIR FORCE?

I think it’s probably the challenges you face. Every day is different with a variety of civil and military aircraft coming and going all the time. Everything from super-fast military jets to trainee pilots in Cessnas. The other great thing about the Air Force is the stability and other benefits such as your healthcare is paid for, your accommodation is subsidised and you get the chance to travel overseas on deployments.

DO YOU GET ANY SPECIAL TRAINING?

You get plenty of opportunities for training. You can do a Training Officers’ Course, a Supervisors’ Course and even a Battlefield Operations Course.

WHAT HAS THE AIR FORCE TAUGHT YOU ABOUT YOURSELF?

I guess it’s taught me that I’m able to deal with just about anything that is thrown at me and my ability to handle stress.

WHAT DO YOUR FRIENDS THINK ABOUT YOU BEING IN THE AIR FORCE?

My friends are always curious about what I’m doing. They can’t believe how much money I’m earning. One of my friends was going to work in a chemist and leaving before me and getting home after me and I was earning three times what she was earning. She couldn’t believe it.

DO YOU BELIEVE THERE IS AN EQUIVALENT CIVILIAN JOB?

There is, but it’s very different. In the military you get to experience all four of the areas of air traffic control, whereas in civilian air traffic control you specialise in just one of them. So I enjoy the variety of the Air Force job.

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND YOUR JOB TO ANYONE THINKING OF JOINING THE AIR FORCE?

Definitely. In air traffic, you’ve got the best view in the world. You see some beautiful sunsets and sunrises and we build up some great friendships between each other whilst we’re in the tower. So if we’re working well as a team, it makes things a lot safer.

LIFE AS AN AIR FORCE OFFICER.

Flight Lieutenant, Debbie Owen – Air Traffic Control Officer

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE AIR FORCE?

Ever since I was a kid I was interested in aviation and the Defence Force looked interesting to me.

WHAT IS AN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL OFFICER AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

There’s four different positions within air traffic control. There are Planners who give clearances into or out of our airspace. Then there are Approach Controllers who control all the aircraft inside the airspace. Up in the tower you’ve got the Surface Movement Controllers who control all the aircraft on the ground. The last person is the Tower Controller who controls the runways and airspace sometimes out to five miles, and they’re the ones who say “clear to land” and “clear to take off”. So there’s a lot of coordination and interaction between each of the controllers as they hand off aircraft between each other.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL OFFICER?

You need to be good at multi-tasking—you could have up to five aircraft talking to you at one time along with the other controllers. We call it reacting to multiple inputs, so being able to multi-task and prioritise are very important and at the same time keep a cool head.

IS THE JOB CHALLENGING?

Yes, definitely. I learn one or two new things every day. You’re constantly learning on the job.

DESCRIBE A USUAL DAY?

We work shift work which is a bit different to a lot of people, so work begins at around 5:30am. We work for an hour and a half to two hours and then take a break. Then we start controlling again. Because you’re concentrating solely on your job, you can only work for a maximum of four hours in a row—so we knock off at 1:00pm.

WHAT ABOUT THE SOCIAL SIDE OF THINGS?

The team I’m in work similar hours and are pretty social so we go out quite a bit together and have barbecues or we might see a film.

WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

I enjoy playing hockey and touch football. I’ve also got a dog who is currently going through obedience training and he’s also being trained to go into old people’s homes.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE AIR FORCE?

Ever since I was a kid I was interested in aviation and the Defence Force looked interesting to me.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL OFFICER?

You need to be good at multi-tasking—you could have up to five aircraft talking to you at one time along with the other controllers. We call it reacting to multiple inputs, so being able to multi-task and prioritise are very important and at the same time keep a cool head.

IS THE JOB CHALLENGING?

Yes, definitely. I learn one or two new things every day. You’re constantly learning on the job.

DESCRIBE A USUAL DAY?

We work shift work which is a bit different to a lot of people, so work begins at around 5:30am. We work for an hour and a half to two hours and then take a break. Then we start controlling again. Because you’re concentrating solely on your job, you can only work for a maximum of four hours in a row—so we knock off at 1:00pm.

WHAT ABOUT THE SOCIAL SIDE OF THINGS?

The team I’m in work similar hours and are pretty social so we go out quite a bit together and have barbecues or we might see a film.

WHAT’S THE BEST THING ABOUT YOUR JOB AND BEING IN THE AIR FORCE?

I think it’s probably the challenges you face. Every day is different with a variety of civil and military aircraft coming and going all the time. Everything from super-fast military jets to trainee pilots in Cessnas. The other great thing about the Air Force is the stability and other benefits such as your healthcare is paid for, your accommodation is subsidised and you get the chance to travel overseas on deployments.

DO YOU GET ANY SPECIAL TRAINING?

You get plenty of opportunities for training. You can do a Training Officers’ Course, a Supervisors’ Course and even a Battlefield Operations Course.

WHAT HAS THE AIR FORCE TAUGHT YOU ABOUT YOURSELF?

I guess it’s taught me that I’m able to deal with just about anything that is thrown at me and my ability to handle stress.

WHAT DO YOUR FRIENDS THINK ABOUT YOU BEING IN THE AIR FORCE?

My friends are always curious about what I’m doing. They can’t believe how much money I’m earning. One of my friends was going to work in a chemist and leaving before me and getting home after me and I was earning three times what she was earning. She couldn’t believe it.

DO YOU BELIEVE THERE IS AN EQUIVALENT CIVILIAN JOB?

There is, but it’s very different. In the military you get to experience all four of the areas of air traffic control, whereas in civilian air traffic control you specialise in just one of them. So I enjoy the variety of the Air Force job.

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND YOUR JOB TO ANYONE THINKING OF JOINING THE AIR FORCE?

Definitely. In air traffic, you’ve got the best view in the world. You see some beautiful sunsets and sunrises and we build up some great friendships between each other whilst we’re in the tower. So if we’re working well as a team, it makes things a lot safer.
**ACCOMMODATION**

Comfortable living quarters, subsidised by the Air Force, are available on the base, although in most cases you 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 Defence Career Counsellors will be able to provide you with 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's similar to a regular super scheme, it is compulsory to contribute 5% and you can elect to contribute up to 10% of your salary towards it.

**HEALTHCARE**

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

**ONGOING TRAINING**

The Air Force wants you to maximise your potential. So throughout your career, you'll be given the opportunity to undertake further training in your chosen field, or perhaps even train in another field that will help you enhance your skills. The Air Force wants to ensure that you're getting the most out of your career and, more importantly, your personal and professional development is given adequate attention.

**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, Carers Leave, Long Service Leave or 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. 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.

Further information regarding pay and benefits can be found at defencejobs.gov.au
“YOU CAN’T IMAGINE THE FUN YOU’LL HAVE IN THE AIR FORCE.”

SECURITY POLICE OFFICER.
AIRCRAFT.
**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

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**F-111C**

**Role** Strike/Interceptor

**Engines**
- Two Pratt and Whitney TF-30 turbofans—each 9,500kg thrust

**Airframe**
- Length: 23.0m
- Height: 5.3m

**Wingspan**
- 21.3m extended, 10.3m swept

**Weight**
- 24,000kg basic, 51,846kg fully loaded

**Speed**
- Supersonic at sea level to Mach 2.5 at altitude

**Range**
- Ferry range in excess of 5,500km

**Ceiling**
- Above 50,000 feet

**Weapons**
- Harpoon anti-ship missiles
- Conventional bombs
- Laser-guided bombs
- AIM-9 Sidewinder infra-red missiles
- AGM-142 Stand Off missile

**Avionics**
- Digital flight controls
- Terrain-following radar
- Attack radar
- Pave Tack target system
- Internal/GPS navigation system

**Crew**
- Pilot, Air Combat Officer
### PC-9

- **Role**: Primary trainer/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
- **Speed**: 1000km/h
- **Range**:
  - (with two underwing tanks) 1850km, combat radius 650km
- **Ceiling**: 25,000 feet
- **Avionics**: VHF omnidirectional range/instrument landing system, two multi-functional cathode ray tube displays
- **Crew**: Pilot

### 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
### C-130J Hercules Medium Transport

- **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

### C-130H Hercules Medium Transport

- **Role**: Medium tactical and multi-role transport
- **Engines**: Four Allison turboprops (4,190 shaft horsepower each) driving 4 blade propellers
- **Airframe**: Length: 29.7m height: 11.8m
- **Wingspan**: 40.4m
- **Weight**: 70,450kg maximum
- **Speed**: 595km/h normal operations
- **Range**: 5,100km with 14,000kg payload
- **Ceiling**: 40,000 feet
- **Crew**: Two Pilots, Flight Engineer, Loadmaster, Air Combat Officer
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

737 BBJ

- **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**: 5,5600km (Canberra direct to Honolulu, Hong Kong or Tokyo)
- **Ceiling**: 41,000 feet
- **Crew**: Two Pilots and four crew attendants
C-17 GLOBEMASTER

- **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

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
STEP FOUR.
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU APPLY?
There are six basic steps in applying to join the Air Force. These are: Enquiry, Your Opportunities Unlimited (YOU) Session, Interviews, Physical Fitness Assessment, Officer Selection Board and Appointment.

1. **ENQUIRY**
   By calling 13 19 01 you will be connected to your Defence Career Counsellor 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 using My HQ at defencejobs.gov.au - after which you will be contacted to organise the next step in applying.

2. **YOU SESSION**
   The second stage of the joining process is Your Opportunities Unlimited Session, or YOU Session. This session begins with an assessment 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 Defence Career Counsellor.

3. **INTERVIEWS**
   After the YOU Session, you will be booked into 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 ADF.

4. **PRE-ENLISTMENT FITNESS ASSESSMENT**
   If you have been recommended for appointment you must undergo a Pre-enlistment Fitness Assessment (PFA) prior to entry including the Multistage Fitness Test (or shuttle run) to measure your aerobic capacity. The aim of the PFA is to determine if you are at a sufficient level of fitness to safely commence training. This assessment must be passed at some time during the eight weeks prior to enlistment. The required level to pass the shuttle run for the Air Force PFA is 6.5.

5. **OFFICER SELECTION BOARD**
   If you are pursuing an officer career or another specialist position, you will be required to attend an Officer Selection Board or Flight Screening Program (Pilots).

6. **APPOINTMENT**
   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 Defence Career Counsellor can speak to you about other ADF career options.
STEP FIVE.
WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?
Congratulations, you’re now just a step away from realising your career as an officer in the Air Force. But before you can commit, there are a few other things you should 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 appointment. However, additional age requirements apply to certain jobs. Check with a Defence Career Counsellor before making an application.

**IDENTITY**

As proof of your identity, date and place of birth, you are 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.

**INITIAL MINIMUM PERIOD OF SERVICE**

As an Air Force officer, you will initially sign up for a period that is predetermined by your chosen job. More information on specific lengths of service can be found at [defencejobs.gov.au](http://defencejobs.gov.au)

If you go through ADFA or are sponsored through a civilian university, you will be required to commit to a minimum period of service. This ensures the Air Force gains a return on the investment it will make in training you.

**HOW DOES IT WORK?**

Your initial minimum period of service will depend upon your chosen job and the scheme through which you are appointed (i.e. ADFA, Direct Entry, Undergraduate etc.). There is no requirement to remain in the Air Force beyond the completion of your minimum period of service. However, when you discontinue active Air Force service, you will be transferred to the inactive element of the Reserve for a minimum of five years.

**WHAT IF YOU 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 (first 90 days (Direct Entry Officers)) and before graduation day in second year for ADFA entry officers. 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.

**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 alternatively via the web at [defencejobs.gov.au](http://defencejobs.gov.au).

**CD ROM**

The officer CD ROM will give you detailed information on all the different ways you can become an officer—with videos, training profiles, virtual tours of military bases and multimedia downloads. Everything you need to figure out if you’re Air Force Officer material. Call 13 19 01 or log on to [defencejobs.gov.au](http://defencejobs.gov.au) to order your interactive officer CD ROM now. It could be the lead you’re looking for.
THE LAST STEP
CALL 13 19 01
defencejobs.gov.au