



Defence Families of Australia National Delegate SELECTION CRITERIA AND DUTIES

NATIONAL DELEGATES FOR DFA

Appointment

National Delegates are selected by the National Convenor and outgoing Delegate, and appointed by the Minister responsible for Defence Personnel, Materiel & Science.

Selection Criteria

- National Delegates must be the partner of a current full time serving member of the Australian Defence Force.
- Should preferably have had prior involvement with DFA and/or a demonstrated knowledge, empathy and understanding of Defence families & community.
- Should be available to attend both the annual National Conference (June) and the DFA Training week's (February) in Canberra as required.
- Must be available to liaise with local DFA members, Base Commanders, Managers and staff of DHA, DCO, Toll Transitions, DRHM and Defence as required.
- Must not be a serving member or permanent employee of the Department of Defence, DHA or Toll Transitions.
- Must not be employed as a Defence School Transition Aide.
- Have excellent communication, negotiation and organisational skills and have an ability to discuss and promote DFA issues with diplomacy and tact. Must also have respect for other people's individual opinions.
- Possess a sound knowledge of computing (including Microsoft Office) and internet skills to enable participation in consistent DFA communications via DFA email network, regional E Bulletin and web site, and in order to remain compliant with DFA and the Department's administration requirements i.e. the monthly claims process.
- Be willing and able to answer DFA National Delegate mobile phone during the week.



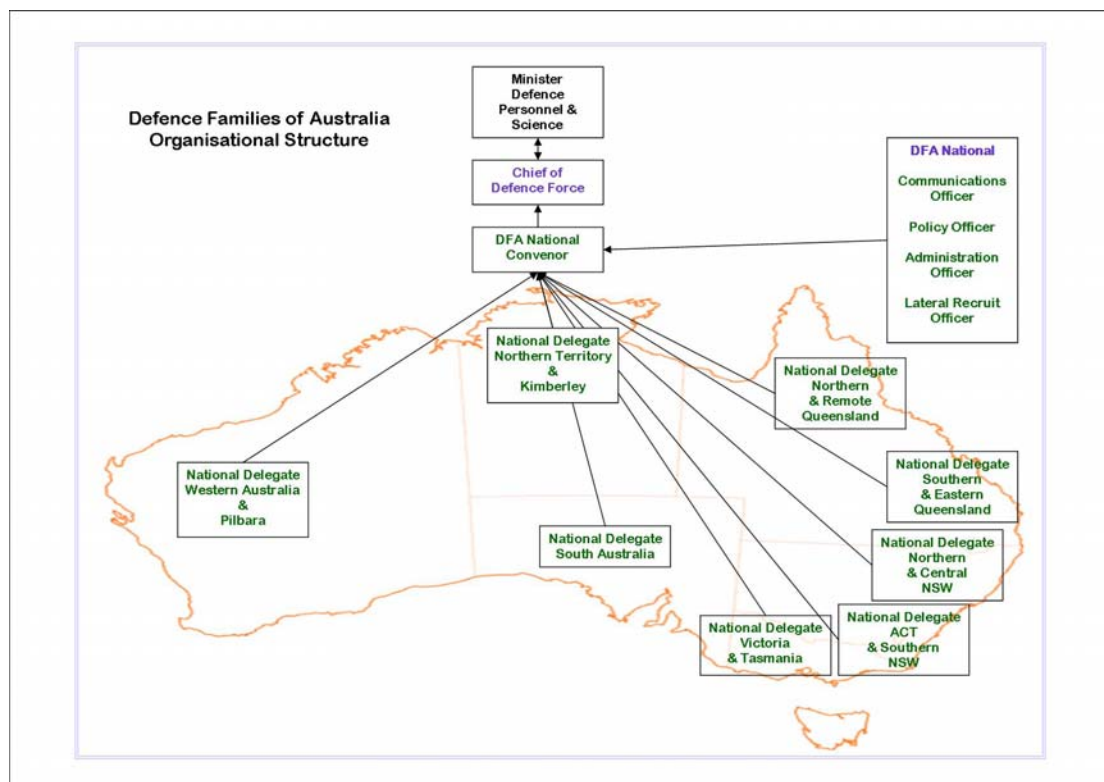


National Delegate Duties

- At Conference 2000 National Delegates voted on minimum work requirements. These duties were introduced to ensure nationally consistent workloads and profiles. A National Delegate will:
- Write introduction letters/emails upon appointment to all relevant parties in your region using the standard letter provided;
- Develop and maintain excellent working relationships with Regional Managers of DHA, DCO, Defence support services (eg: Customer Service Managers – Relocations & Transition) and Toll Transitions. This includes meeting or calling these managers at least every quarter and attending regional consortium meetings;
- Check email & phone every weekday unless otherwise agreed with the Convenor;
- Have contact with Commanding Officers/Units in your region quarterly through either meetings or forwarding on the DFA E Bulletin and establish, with their permission/assistance working relationships with Customer Service Centre, Chief Clerks, Liaison Officers, Chaplains or others as appropriate for contact as required;
- Maintain regular contact with Senior Representatives (at least once per month);
- Attend family groups or call family group coordinators every quarter personally or through delegation to Senior Representatives;
- Hold a regional meeting before and after the conference and forward items for the Conference agenda at least six weeks prior to each conference;
- Prepare submissions on current issues as required;
- Provide feedback to the Convenor on issues as requested;
- Provide reports on the above duties to the Convenor or Executive Committee on a quarterly basis;
- Produce in conjunction with National Communications Officer regional E Bulletin;
- Sign for accepting or discharging of the equipment which comes with the position (lap top computer, mobile phone, kit etc) to keep the DFA register of assets current;
- Maintain a contact list of all Commanding Officers, DHA, DCO and TOLL managers, CSM-Rs, Neighbourhood Centres, and Defence Community groups etc in the region.



- Prepare a written summary of current issues in Region to handover to new National Delegate with contact list, upon leaving the position; and
- Must always behave in a manner that will reflect favourably on the DFA and must not use the DFA for personal gain or to further personal issues.



Operations

DFA operates on national, regional and local levels. At the national level, the Executive Committee comprises of the National Convenor, the National Communications Officer, Policy Officer, Lateral Recruit Officer and Administration Officer plus eight National Delegates representing the following regions:

- ACT & Southern NSW: includes Canberra, Wagga Wagga, Albury/Wodonga
- Central NSW: includes Sydney Metropolitan, Richmond, Penrith, Wollongong, Nowra and Orange, Hunter, Singleton, Tamworth & Armidale
- North Queensland: includes Townsville, Mt Isa, Cairns, Thursday Island, Weipa, Mackay, Charters Towers
- South Queensland: includes Brisbane, Canungra, Rockhampton, Darling Downs, Amberley



- Victoria and Tasmania
- Northern Territory and Kimberley
- South Australia
- Western Australia and Pilbara

Background

Australia's Defence Force has a strong tradition of standing aloof from overt political activity. Its members are not permitted to comment publicly on political matters as members of the Defence Force. They are not permitted to form Trade Unions or to strike.

The traditional separation of the military from politics and the poor mechanisms for the articulation of their unsatisfied expectations can mean that Government and the Department of Defence are unable to assess the full extent of dissatisfaction accurately until the problem has reached significant proportions.

It was against a rising background of complaints from Defence members and their families made to the Minister for Defence on his visits to military bases, and increasing rates of separation, that, in 1985 the Minister for Defence commissioned Sue Hamilton from the Office of Status of Women to conduct a report into the problems encountered by Defence families. Ms Hamilton spoke to thousands of Service men/women and their families throughout Australia and in April 1986 produced a report that comprehensively detailed the problems of Defence families and suggested solutions. One suggestion was that a group be formed from a range of Defence spouses to advise on the implementation of the report's recommendations.

In 1986, an interim National Consultative Group of Service Spouses (NCGSS) was convened by the Department of Defence to act as a representative advisory group to assist the Department in the implementation of the Hamilton Report. The NCGSS was subsequently given a continuing role as an independent consultative group by the Minister for Defence, Science and Personnel Minister Ros Kelly and Chief of Defence Force General Sir Phillip Bennett, KBE, AO, DSO.

In 1992 after the NCGSF requested funding (previously all expenses were covered by the voluntary Delegates, including hosting National Conference) to operate the organisation, a review was requested by the Minister of Defence, Science and Personnel. In August of 1992 Mrs D.A. Dunn & Brigadier G.J. Murphy prepared a report stating *"there is a continuing amount of issues to concern the NCGSS, and there is at present no other independent organisation or system which performs the same functions. We therefore conclude that there is indeed a need for the NCGSS to continue with full support."*

The CDF General Peter Gration, AC, OBE recommended in 1993 that Defence provide financial support for the NCGSF. Second to that an independent office space was established by the CDF in Campbell Park to facilitate autonomous operations based in Canberra enabling NCGSF interactions.

The name NCGSS was changed after the October 1992 Conference to National Consultative Group of Service Families (NCGSF), then to more accurately reflect the evolving role of the group, on the 21st of August 2002, previous Patron Mrs Julia Anderson, launched the new name as **Defence Families of Australia (DFA)**.

