

A call for Australian Defence Force Chaplains

Providing spiritual, religious and pastoral ministry to Australian Defence Force members and families, in a diverse and challenging range of environments.



As a minister within Churches of Christ, this is your unique opportunity to serve God & your country - to actively witness and positively impact the lives of those that make daily sacrifices to protect our nation.

An Australian Defence Force Chaplain is a commissioned officer of the Australian Defence Force (Navy, Army, Air Force), in either a full time or part time (Reserve) capacity. As a Chaplain representing Churches of Christ you will remain an active member of a Churches of Christ congregation in your local area whilst serving in the Australian Defence Force. A Chaplain must be endorsed by the Churches of Christ Conference within their state of residence and remain in good standing.

Whilst responsible for religious, spiritual ministry and pastoral care, the role of a military Chaplain extends well beyond and differs from a local church ministry. Chaplains do not often share the settled life of local church ministers – they may experience relocation and associated family turbulence, as well as dealing with every aspect of service life.

An Australian Defence Force Chaplain is an integral part of the defence community they serve. Chaplains are expected to share in the dangers of armed conflict and its associated conditions, should those circumstances arise. As a chaplain, your role is to provide religious and spiritual ministry and pastoral care to all members of the ADF, regardless of faith, religion or denomination. Specific religious ministry will entail the normal practises of Churches of Christ.

The role encompasses the following generic roles:

- Religious Ministry
- Spiritual Ministry
- Pastoral Care
- Training
- Advice to Command, members and families
- Facilitate character development
- Administration and Staff Duties

For entry into the Australian Defence Force as a Chaplain, you will need to:

- have a sense of call to this ministry
- be fit and healthy,
- be under 56 years of age,
- have at least a Bachelor of Theology or Ministry,
- have several years of ministry experience,
- be an endorsed minister in good standing with Churches of Christ,
- be an Australian citizen, and
- begin by talking to your state church body, and a member of the Churches of Christ Defence Force Chaplains' Committee - before contacting Recruitment centres.

An Australian Defence Force Chaplain enters and serves via one of the following pathways:

Full time

Having satisfied the recruiting process and been commissioned in the Australian Defence Force (Navy, Army, Air Force), a Chaplain will complete the employment process and the required initial training and be posted to a military unit or base in Australia. The compulsory retirement age for a full time Chaplain is 60 years.

Part time (Reserve)

A minister within Churches of Christ may enter on a part time basis through the Reserve scheme. The Australian Defence Force (Navy, Army, Air Force) Reserve will provide you with the opportunity to utilise and further develop your skills in a part time capacity in a local military base or unit. The recruitment process is the same as for full time Chaplains, but the initial training may differ between services. The compulsory retirement age for a Reserve Chaplain is 65 years.

Australian Defence Force Reserve Chaplains' salaries are tax-free, and may provide another source of income for part-time church local ministers, while offering another vehicle for fruitful ministry.

For further information and for the process to recruitment into a ministry in the ADF as a Chaplain, please make contact with a member of the Churches of Christ Defence Force Chaplains Committee:

Barrie Yesberg (Navy) – 0458 715 520 (Coordinator of the Committee)

Peter Willis (Army) – 0477 390 669

Mark Willis (Air Force) – 0416 265 049

Janet Woodlock – 0405 758 286 (Federal Coordinator Churches of Christ in Australia)