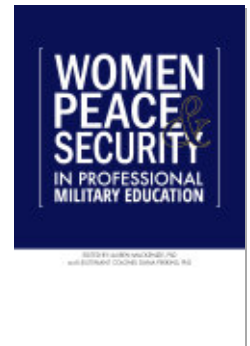




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Chapter Four. WPS Implementation: The Australian Defence Force

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Chapter Four

WPS Implementation

The Australian Defence Force

In researching how other UN member states have implemented WPS in the defense sector, Australia was referenced in scholarly articles as a positive example. Australia's report *Local Action, Global Impact: Defence Implementation of Women, Peace and Security 2012–2018* was published in 2018, giving a few years of practice to analyze and provide lessons learned.⁴⁶

In 2012, Australia launched its national action plan (NAP) on WPS establishing a whole of government approach.⁴⁷ The NAP specified 24 actions for the Australian government with the Department of Defence having a role in 17 of the actions. The Australian WPS defence implementation plan is coordinated and presented through six lines of effort: 1) Policy and Doctrine, 2) Training, 3) Personnel, 4) Mission Readiness, 5) International Engagement, and 6) Governance and Reporting.⁴⁸ This case study will briefly summarize each line of effort and report progress.

In terms of policy and doctrine (line of effort one), the Australian Department of Defence has made significant progress updating all key strategic guidance documents with WPS operational guidance. This includes but is not limited to the *Defence Corporate Plan*, the *Defence Business Plan*, *Defence Planning Guidance*, and *Australia's Military Strategy 2016*. Additionally, Australia has developed operational directives and orders that include a multitude of WPS considerations for current and future operations. Finally, the Australian Defence Force has developed and updated doctrine in support of integrating gender perspectives. An example of new doctrine is the Australian Defence Force Joint Doctrine Note on Gender in Military Operations.⁴⁹ In addition to doctrine at the Joint level, the Royal Australian Air Force's *Gender in Air Operations*, *Doctrine Note Series AFDN 1-18*, provides a holistic approach and consideration to gender in enhancing air mission success. Interviews with former Australian Defence Force GENADs and members of the Royal Australian Air Force provided insight into gender in operations. Subjects expressed that they were better able to incorporate gender perspectives into operations than their army counterparts due to the air force doctrine helping integrate gender into the planning process. Australia's emphasis on policy and doctrine as part of the gender mainstreaming process is commendable; however, much of the changes are at the Department of Defence level with little updates done at the Service level with the exception of the air force.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ *Local Action, Global Impact: Defence Implementation of Women, Peace and Security 2012–2018* [Canberra, ACT: Australian Department of Defence, 2018].

⁴⁷ *Local Action, Global Impact*, 6.

⁴⁸ *Local Action, Global Impact*, 18.

⁴⁹ *Local Action, Global Impact*, 26–29.

⁵⁰ *Local Action, Global Impact*, 31.

Line of effort two is focused on WPS training of defense personnel. This training includes individual and collective levels. At the individual level, WPS and gender analysis are taught at the Australian Defence College's Australian Command and Staff and Centre for Defence Strategic Studies Courses.⁵¹ The WPS agenda and gender concepts are included in predeployment training and are taught by an experienced GENAD. Furthermore, interviewees stated that the air force developed an online course that is mandatory for all members, which exposes the workplace to gender perspectives in operations. At the collective level, WPS practical scenarios are included in military rehearsal exercises. An example is the incorporation of WPS objectives as a critical part of Talisman Sabre 15, a biannual bilateral military exercise with U.S. counterparts. UNSCR 1325 was referenced in the training objectives and the scenario included gender-based issues. The exercise personnel and staff received pertinent WPS training and integrated core concepts of WPS into their planning.⁵² During the exercise, 12 GENADs provided recommendations and consultation.⁵³ Additionally, specialized training for Defence GENADs and GFPs are required to operate in those positions, while the Australian Defence Force operates its own course to provide required training. As of 2018, Australia had 53 women and 48 men trained as GENADs. While Australia has made concerted efforts to incorporate WPS principles into education, it is still missing from most Service- and entry-level training and education.⁵⁴

The third line of effort focuses on the GENAD and GFP framework and gender balancing efforts. The Australian Department of Defence has established 10 GENAD positions at tactical, operational, and strategic levels to advise (commanders) on gender perspectives. GFPs perform their role as an additional duty and are responsible for integrating WPS principles into their assigned units; however, it is not clear the levels to which these personnel are trained or implemented.⁵⁵ The implementation plan mentions working toward increasing the number of women, especially at senior levels, and details that one way they are doing so is removing all gender restrictions. Australia's advisor and focal point structure provides a way to normalize gender mainstreaming. However, the structure may serve as a limitation to the proliferation of gender perspectives and gender mainstreaming. The defence implementation plan does not mention structural or institutional changes associated with gender balancing such as recruiting efforts, retention, parental leave, or child care.

Line of effort four is mission readiness, which seeks to integrate WPS considerations and gender perspectives into the operational planning process.⁵⁶ The imple-

⁵¹ *Local Action, Global Impact*, 34.

⁵² Hutchinson, "Leading the Operationalisation of WPS," 124–43.

⁵³ Susan Harris Rimmer, "The Case of Australia: From Culture Reforms to a Culture of Rights," in *Women and Gender Perspectives in the Military*, 197.

⁵⁴ *Local Action, Global Impact*, 38.

⁵⁵ *Local Action, Global Impact*, 42.

⁵⁶ *Local Action, Global Impact*, 54.

mentation plan highlights a series of exercises and operations that integrated WPS. The fifth line of effort looks externally at international engagement on WPS issues with partner nations through seminars, joint training, shared education, and support of diverse infrastructure aimed at building partner capacity. Finally, line of effort six emphasizes the importance of reporting and governance. This lastline of effort, however, does not provide measures of performance and measures of effectiveness to enhance reporting.

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute reviewed Australia's implementation of WPS in a recent special report and noted that Australia has shown leadership in advancing the WPS agenda. The report goes on to say that while Australia has made significant advances in the implementation of WPS, significant inconsistencies and resourcing gaps are still prevalent.⁵⁷ The author argues that gender perspectives do not inform Australia's response to international crises, which undermines conflict prevention and stability. The general conclusions offered from two former Australian Defence Force GENADs on advancing gender perspectives in operations were focused on incorporating gender and WPS principles into planning doctrine to ensure a gendered analysis, including sex-disaggregated data, is embedded into all aspects of the planning process, especially wargaming. Interviewees also expressed shortfalls in measures of success and measures of performance due to effects being intangible and requiring leaders to be able to articulate how WPS affects the outcome of operations.

The Australian Defence Force WPS implementation plan provides insight and helps inform an implementation plan in the U.S. military. The Australian Defence Force's 2014 defence implementation plan provides eight years of lessons learned and exposes areas of greater emphasis and improvement.

⁵⁷ Louise Allen, *Australia's Implementation of Women, Peace and Security: Promoting Regional Stability* (Barton, ACT: Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2020), 6.