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Vol 2:

*Sexual
Offences*

DEFENCE INSTRUCTIONS (GENERAL)

Department of Defence
CANBERRA ACT 2600

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Defence Instruction (General) PERS 15-3 is issued pursuant to Section 9A of the Defence Act 1903.

(R.W. COLE)
Secretary

(P.H. BENNETT)
General
Chief of the Defence Force

LIST A - ISSUE NO. PERS A/2/85

NEW INSTRUCTION

PERS 15-3

Homosexual Behaviour in the Australian Defence Force

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PERS 15-3

HOMOSEXUAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE

INTRODUCTION

1. Homosexual behaviour is not accepted or condoned in the Defence Force. Defence policy makes adequate provision for the discharge of members who engage in homosexual activities where factors such as violence, coercion, public displays or interference with a minor accompany these activities.
2. Members can be and are regularly discharged for a variety of reasons not listed in the DFDA: eg failure of a basic training course, indebtedness, incompatibility with Service life, etc. ADF policy is that members who engage in consenting homosexual behaviour be treated in a similar fashion, sympathetically and with discretion.

AIM

3. The aim of this instruction is to state the policy of the ADF regarding homosexual behaviour.

POLICY

4. The ADF policy on homosexuality is that when a member admits to or is proven to be involved in homosexual conduct, consideration is to be given to the termination of that member's service.

REASONS FOR POLICY

5. Compelling reasons exist for the unacceptability of homosexual behaviour in the Services. These are:
 - a. Command and Morale. Homosexual behaviour is prejudicial to effective command relationships and to the maintenance of the high levels of morale and discipline necessary for the efficient functioning of the ADF.
 - b. National Security. Although this policy reflects sentiments somewhat different from those held within sections of the Australian community, there still may be a stigma attached to homosexual activity. Because of this, homosexual behaviour by members may present security risks.
 - c. Health. The health risks to persons engaged in homosexual activity are real and well documented.
 - d. Minors. Parents permit their children who are minors at law to join the ADF; this places the Services in the role of 'loco parentis'. This responsibility requires that the minors be protected from aberrant behaviour.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

6. Commanding Officers are reminded of the sensitive nature of the investigations into allegations of homosexual behaviour and of the need for sympathy, understanding and discretion when dealing with the member.
7. When allegations or admissions that a member is engaged in homosexual behaviour are substantiated, Commanding Officers are to consider processing the member for discharge in accordance with this policy and individual Service instructions, the member being informed of the decision and given the opportunity to make a statement in rebuttal.
8. Consequential applications for resignation or discharge at own request should generally be accepted.

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