

Working in the Australian Public Service - A toolkit for ADF veterans

This toolkit has been designed to provide ADF veterans with practical advice on applying for jobs in the Australian Public Service (APS).

The APS is a workforce of more than 140,000 Australians who are employed across the nation to deliver outcomes that benefit the Australian community.

The variety of roles within the APS is broad. We’re confident that ADF veterans will find jobs that are relevant to their skills and expertise within our 100+ APS agencies.

# The right APS job for you

The APS offers a variety of careers, allowing you to draw upon your unique military experience and skills.

The diversity of jobs available throughout the APS may come as a surprise to some. You can view, and apply for, all permanent APS jobs on the [APSjobs website](http://www.apsjobs.gov.au/) at <https://www.apsjobs.gov.au>. APS agencies also advertise permanent and temporary jobs through their web sites, job seeker sites and social media.

Jobs on the APSJobs website are grouped into broad classifications, which are listed below:

## Communications and Marketing

Communications and Marketing staff plan, develop, implement and evaluate information and communication strategies that create an understanding and view of organisations, their goods and services and their role in the community to internal and external stakeholders. Roles in this category include graphic design, indigenous and community engagement, media adviser, public affairs officer and communications officer.

## Engineering and Technical

Engineering and Technical staff plan, organise, direct, control, coordinate, or provide advice on the engineering and technical operations and tasks within organisations. These roles range from draftsperson, technician and electrician to civil engineer, cartography and examiners.

## Economics, Finance, Accounting and Audit.

All agencies require staff in this category for their operation, and qualified professionals are in high demand. Roles include procurement policy officer, payroll manager, quantity surveyor and contract managers.

## Facilities, Trade and Property

Facilities, Trade and Property staff provide a variety of administrative and manual tasks that may involve the use of hand tools, power tools, air tools and small heavy equipment. Examples of roles include logistics manager, support officer, resource coordinator and transport safety investigator.

## Human Resources

Human Resource staff plan, implement and evaluate staff recruitment, retention, training and development programs as well as assist organisations to achieve greater efficiency and solve organisational problems. Roles include HR advisor, project officer, security advisor and learning & development coordinator.

## Information and Communication Technology

ICT staff plan, organise, direct, control, coordinate and support the ICT strategies, plans and operations of an organisation to ensure ICT infrastructure and applications support an organisation effectively and efficiently. Network administrator, systems engineer, language analytics and Chief Information Officer are some of the roles available in this category.

## Intelligence, Security and Compliance

Intelligence and Security staff support military operations, policy operations, as well as warning and estimative intelligence. Compliance staff examine, assess, inspect and investigate compliance with legislation and organisational frameworks. Roles include senior security advisor, analysts and liaison officers.

## Legal

Legal staff support the provision of, or provide, legal advice, prepare and draft legal documents, conduct negotiations on behalf of clients, plead cases in court and tribunals, hear legal and other matters in court and tribunals, and interpret, analyse, administer and review the law. If you have a legal background you might be interested in roles including lawyer, legal assistant or case manager.

## Management, Business and Administration

Management and Business staff plan, direct, control, coordinate and have a significant leadership role within an organisation. Administration staff perform a range of administrative tasks in support of an organisation or a manager.

## Policy, Research, Program, Project and International Careers

Roles in this category include strategic systems analyst, safety director and facility strategic manager.

## Service Delivery

Service Delivery staff provide coordinated and structured advice, support and services to citizens and customers. Roles include information officer, grants officer and court support.

## Science and Health

Science and Health roles include natural and physical sciences, health and allied health professionals and welfare support workers.

# ADF rank *versus* APS Classification

Jobs in the APS have a classification level based on the duties to be performed.

The [APS work level standards](http://www.apsc.gov.au/publications-and-media/current-publications/worklevel-standards) describe the characteristics of work done at certain classification levels, and the value of that work. They are used as a way to allocate classification levels fairly and consistently across a wide range of job and agencies.

The table below is a guide for comparing ADF and APS ranks and classification levels for clerical duties that do not require the exercise of military command responsibilities.

It is not intended to be a statement of equivalent ranks and classifications.

The information below is sourced from the [ADF Pay and Conditions Manual](http://www.defence.gov.au/PayAndConditions/ADF/Chapter-1/Default.asp) (PACMAN)

| **Navy** | **Army** | **Air Force** | **APS classification** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Seaman | Private Lance Corporal | Aircraftman | APS 1 |
| Leading Seaman | Corporal | Corporal | APS 2 |
| Petty Officer | Sergeant Staff Sergeant | Sergeant | APS 3 |
| Chief Petty Officer  Warrant Officer  Midshipman  Acting Sub-Lieutenant  Sub-Lieutenant | Warrant Officer, Class 2 Warrant Officer, Class 1 2nd Lieutenant Lieutenant | Flight Sergeant  Warrant Officer  Officer Cadet  Pilot Officer | APS 4 |
| Lieutenant | Captain | Flight Lieutenant | APS 5 |
| Lieutenant Commander | Major | Squadron leader | APS 6 |
| Commanders | Lieutenant Colonel | Wing Commander | EL 1 |
| Captain | Colonel | Group Captain | EL 2 |
| Commodore | Brigadier | Air Commodore | SES Band 1 |
| Rear Admiral | Major General | Air Vice-Marshal | SES Band 2 |
| Vice Admiral | Lieutenant General | Air Marshal | SES Band 3 |
| Admiral | General | Air Chief Marshal | Secretary |

Key

APS Australian Public Service

EL Executive Level

SES Senior Executive Service

# Getting a job in the APS

## How APS jobs are advertised

APS agencies may advertise jobs through their web sites, job seeker sites, social media and APSJobs (<https://www.apsjobs.gov.au>).

## How to apply for APS jobs

APS job advertisements will tell you the process you need to follow, including required documentation and the closing date for applications.

Some APS jobs will ask you to demonstrate that you are the best person for the role by addressing specific selection criteria. We recommend you spend some time reading the guidance and information in [*Cracking the code*](https://www.apsc.gov.au/cracking-code), at <https://www.apsc.gov.au/cracking-code>, to help you with addressing selection criteria and the APS application process in general.

In most cases, candidates will need to nominate referees, including recent supervisors, to support their application.

## Assessing applications

Agencies also use a number of ways to assess applicants, depending upon their operational needs and the nature of the job. For example, applicants may be asked to submit a written application and/or their resume. There may be an interview and/or written or verbal testing.

Agencies are not restricted in the types of assessment methods they can use, as long as they assess and compare candidates fairly.

To better understand how you will be assessed and what the agency is looking for:

* check the agency web site
* read the job description
* download the selection criteria and/or documentation, if applicable
* call the contact person to find out more about the role and clarify any questions you may have.
* read Cracking the Code, at <https://www.apsc.gov.au/cracking-code>

## Decision to appoint, or promote

Decisions to employ or promote a person in the APS are based on merit. This means that:

* job vacancies in the APS must be advertised so that all eligible members of the community have a reasonable opportunity to apply
* applicants are assessed against the requirements of the positions and against each other.

## Additional information for Indigenous Australians

The APS offers a number of targeted employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians. Find out more at <https://www.apsc.gov.au/indigenous-employment>

You can also stay up to date with employment opportunities and connect with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and jobseekers via the [Indigenous Australian Public Service Careers Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/APSIndigenouscareers).

## Additional information for people with disability

There two affirmative measures in place to improve employment opportunities for people with disability.

Under the RecruitAbility scheme applicants with disability can progress through the selection process. Find out more through at <https://www.apsc.gov.au/recruitability-scheme-guide-applicants>.

Agencies can choose to restrict vacancies to people with disability. Find out more at <https://www.apsc.gov.au/affirmative-measure-recruiting-people-disability-guide-agencies>.

# Working in the APS

## Terms and conditions

Employees in the APS are engaged under the[*Public Service Act 1999*](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A00538) (the PS Act). The PS Act sets out the core terms and conditions of employment and sets out key obligations of all APS staff and their leaders.

Under the PS Act each agency head has the responsibilities of an employer, for the employees in his or her agency. This includes the power to hire and fire staff and to negotiate an agency Enterprise Agreement.

Agency Enterprise Agreements and policies determine many of the terms and conditions for employees, including pay rates and leave arrangements. These are set out in agency enterprise agreements and policies. Information about individual Enterprise Agreements can be found on agency web sites.

## A culture of integrity

Employees of the Australian Public Service (APS) occupy a position of trust. They are entrusted by the Government and the community to undertake important work on their behalf. With this trust comes a high level of responsibility, which should be matched by the highest standards of ethical behaviour from each APS employee.

Together the APS Values, the APS Employment Principles and the APS Code of Conduct set out the standard of behaviour expected of agency heads and APS employees. They provide the public with confidence in the way public servants behave, including in their exercise of authority when meeting government objectives. Find out more at <https://www.apsc.gov.au/integrity-aps>.

The PS Act requires APS employees and agency heads at all times to behave in a way that upholds the APS Values. Agency heads and Senior Executive Service employees must also promote the Values. All employees must inform themselves of their obligations under the PS Act.

## Indigenous Australians

The APS supports the employment of Indigenous Australians through its participation in the [Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy](https://www.apsc.gov.au/commonwealth-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-employment-strategy). Find out more at <https://www.apsc.gov.au/commonwealth-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-employment-strategy>.

## People with disability

The APS supports the employment of people with disability through the [As One: Making it Happen, APS Disability Employment Strategy 2016-19.](https://www.apsc.gov.au/disability) Find out more at <https://www.apsc.gov.au/disability>.

## Gender equality

The APS is addressing gender imbalance through ‘[Balancing the future - The Australian Public Service gender equality strategy 2016-2019.](https://apsc.govcms.gov.au/sites/g/files/net4441/f/FINAL-Balancing-the-future-the-Australian-Public-Service-gender-equality-strategy-2016-19.pdf) Find out more at <https://apsc.govcms.gov.au/sites/g/files/net4441/f/FINAL-Balancing-the-future-the-Australian-Public-Service-gender-equality-strategy-2016-19.pdf>

## Being a manager in the APS

All actions in the APS are governed by the APS Values, Employment Principles and Code of Conduct, including those that relate to our workplace relationships and our role as managers.

In particular, all our workplace relationships need to be respectful and all our decisions in relation to people’s employment need to be fair and transparent.

APS managers have a responsibility to deal with their employees in accordance with the relevant legislation, agency policies and the powers that have been delegated to them.

Whenever making a decision or taking action in relation to an employee, a manager will need to consider

* the APS Values and Employment Principles
* the agency Enterprise Agreement
* agency policies and procedures; and
* whether they hold the appropriate power to take action.

Managers also have a responsibility to ensure that each employee performs at their best. Performance, including under-performance, needs to be managed in line with all of the factors listed above.

## The role of the SES

Members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) have a role in the APS that goes beyond that of other leaders. Under the PS Act, the functions of the SES are to:

* provide APS-wide strategic leadership of the highest quality that contributes to an effective and cohesive APS
* provide professional/specialist expertise, policy advice, program or service delivery, and regulatory administration at a high level
* promote cooperation within and between other agencies including to deliver outcomes across agency and portfolio boundaries
* promote, by personal example and other appropriate means, the APS Values, the APS Employment Principles and compliance with the Code of Conduct.

The SES also has a role in supporting Secretaries as stewards of the broader APS. Stewardship looks to build for the future, continually developing the right capability so that the APS can always deliver the best outcomes for the Australian community.