

## OVERVIEW OF DFA

Defence Families of Australia (DFA) was formed in 1986 as an independent advocacy group of ADF spouses/partners to represent the views of Australian Defence Force families. Since that time DFA have been the official representatives of Defence families and has worked to improve conditions for all Defence families. Prior to August 2002 DFA was known as the National Consultative Group of Service Families (NCGSF).

DFA is a Minister appointed non-statutory advisory body of Defence. DFA was established to advise Government and Defence on families' concerns, provide a forum for families to raise matters and assist families in accessing the Defence information they need.

DFA has Ministerial authority to perform its business and does so with the full support of the CDF. DFA operates under a Charter jointly signed by the Assistant Minister for Defence and the CDF. The tasks of DFA as provided for by the Charter are:

- a. To provide advice to the Assistant Minister for Defence, the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF) and the relevant arms of the Australian Defence Organisation and stakeholders on matters affecting ADF members and their families, in order to inform policy development and decision making.
- b. To provide a forum through which ADF members and their families can raise issues affecting them individually or collectively.
- c. To assist families in contacting the appropriate persons or bodies on an issue.
- d. To advocate on behalf of individual ADF families or ADF families as a whole in order to promote outcomes that are beneficial to both the family and the ADF.
- e. To assist the families of ADF members who seek its help with advocacy to obtain information on the benefits and assistance available to them from Defence, their rights and responsibilities and the Defence policies that may affect them. This may include DFA assisting Defence and other relevant stakeholders in their efforts to inform all families of these benefits, assistance, rights and responsibilities, and policies – and any changes to them.

The aim of DFA has always been to improve the quality of life of Defence families and therefore the serving Member by:

- Representing the diversity of today's Defence families;
- Providing independent, accurate and honest advice to Government;
- Providing a recognised forum for the views of Defence families;
- Reporting and making recommendations to the Minister responsible for Defence Personnel and the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF);
- Influencing policy making that directly affects ADF families.

ADF families can contact DFA to represent them regarding an individual situation or to advocate an issue concerning many families.

For more information about DFA please visit our website at [www.dfa.org.au](http://www.dfa.org.au) or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/DefenceFamiliesofAustralia?fref=ts>

## **Our People**

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

- ACT & Southern NSW
- Central & Northern NSW
- North Queensland
- South Queensland
- Victoria & Tasmania
- Northern Territory and Kimberley Region
- South Australia
- Western Australia

DFA is supported in Administration functions by the Department of Defence.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION NATIONAL CONVENOR**

### **Purpose:**

The National Convenor's primary focus is to highlight issues affecting Defence families and to advocate to Government, the Department of Defence and external stakeholders on their behalf.

The position reports directly to the Minister responsible for Defence Personnel and the Chief of the Defence Force.

The National Convenor of Defence Families of Australia (DFA) is responsible for the running of the organisation, upholding its charter, and core values and has eleven positions that direct report to it including eight National Delegates, one Communications Officer, one Policy Officer and an Administration Assistant.

### **Key Responsibilities:**

1. Operations management including organising and presiding over DFA's annual conference and annual training week, staff management (providing regular feedback to the members of the National Executive Committee on their performance, identifying needs and facilitating training where possible) and budget management.
2. Keeping abreast of current issues affecting Defence Families nationally ensuring all families are being represented (tri services and from the diverse family make up).
3. Ensuring the delivery and implementation of the Defence Families of Australia strategic and communication plans and constantly reviewing to ensure relevance.
4. Building and sustaining strong relationships with Chief of Defence Force, Vice Chief of Defence Force, senior leaders within the Department of Defence and Department of Veteran Affairs, as well as the office of the Minister for Defence Personnel, to work towards achieving positive outcomes for Defence families.
5. Working effectively with key stakeholders, internal and external to the organisation to facilitate co-operation between organisations to streamline activity and enhance policy delivery. Recognising links between interconnected issues across Government departments including the Department of Defence, Department of Veterans Affairs, and stakeholders to these Departments in pursuing improvements and the awareness of the family experience in supporting the ADF.
6. Providing high level reports and recommendations to Government and Defence as required.
7. Arranging for advertising of Executive Committee vacancies, and selecting successful candidates in consultation with the outgoing National Delegate (if possible).
8. Representing the organisation at official events, launches, engagements and committees. The National Convenor can be asked to represent Defence families on high level strategic boards and committees at any time, and speak to Defence employees and stakeholders attending Command courses and training forums.
9. Membership to committees, currently: Ex-Service Organisation Round Table (ESORT); Defence Housing Australia Advisory Committee; Defence Community Grant Advisory Committee; National RSL Families Advisory Committee and others as required (these can change and vary).
10. Comply with any reasonable instruction that is given and cooperate with any reasonable direction from Defence in accordance with Defence Families Australia core values.

NOTE: The National Convenor may perform other related duties as negotiated to meet the ongoing needs of Defence Families of Australia, including attendance at functions and events outside of normal business hours, and travel around Australia to establish and maintain networks and assist National Delegates and volunteers.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

Applicants should address each of the selection criteria and provide examples which demonstrate their ability to perform the duties of the position.

1. Previous involvement and/or knowledge of DFA and a thorough understanding of the challenges faced by Defence families.
2. Demonstrate understanding of the organisational structure of Defence and the Federal Government.
3. Well-developed written and verbal communications skills including the ability to prepare high level submissions, reports, briefs and papers on military family related issues that will be reviewed by decision makers.
4. Proven ability to exercise initiative, discretion, sound judgment and flexibility when dealing with sensitive matters.
5. Strong consulting and interpersonal skills with examples of building and maintaining effective working relationships at all levels within the government and with key stakeholders.
6. Demonstrated skills in managing a diverse team including conducting performance appraisals, coaching and providing developmental opportunities and providing sound solutions to escalated issues.
7. Demonstrated experience in working within defined budgets and the ability to influence and negotiate for funding where required.
8. Flexibility to work inconsistent and sometimes unpredictable hours including some interstate travel.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

- Must be the recognised partner of a current full-time or active part-time member of the Australian Defence Force.
- Must reside in Canberra.
- Must not be a serving member or permanent employee of the Department of Defence, DHA or Toll Transitions.
- Must not hold the position of a Defence School Transition Aide or High School Mentor.
- Must have a current drivers licence and access to a car.

## **TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT**

The successful applicant is appointed for a term of 2 years by the Minister responsible for Defence Personnel at the agreement of the Chief of Defence Force (CDF). The role of DFA National Convenor comprises of part paid and part volunteer. Remuneration equating to approximately four days per week, is paid through the Department of Defence. The daily amount is set out by the [Remuneration Tribunal for Part Time Office Holders](#).

The successful candidate will be expected to commence the role in mid-August 2017, subject to CDF and Ministerial approval and security clearance prior to appointment.

## **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

### **The Selection Process**

The applicant is interviewed and selected by a panel that has knowledge of Defence Families of Australia. The successful application is forwarded to the CDF for approval and to the Minister responsible for Defence Personnel for appointment.

### **Your application should include:**

1. Your statement addressing each selection criteria outlining examples and achievements that demonstrate your claims. Please limit overall response to 1000 words.
2. Current Resume outlining your previous work experience including contact details of two referees.

### **To Submit Your Application**

All applicants are to submit their applications to the National Convenor by email to [convenor@dfa.org.au](mailto:convenor@dfa.org.au).

<p>Applications must be received no later than <b>close of business (5pm) on Friday 5th May 2017</b>.</p>
---

For enquires please contact Robyn Ritchie on 0410 626 103 or [convenor@dfa.org.au](mailto:convenor@dfa.org.au).