

EX-SERVICE PERSONNEL NOT UNIVERSALLY RECOGNISED FOR LIFE SKILLS, EXPERIENCE, PROFESSIONALISM & WORK ETHICS



The Voice from the Pavement - Peter Adamis 15 May 2014

Although it is with great pleasure to read about ex Defence Force personnel being recognised for their skills set and professional abilities this has not always been the case.

One hopes that the current Liberal government will make greater use of ex Defence Force Personnel and assist with raising the professional bar in industries that are lacking in leadership and human resource development and training. Unlike previous Labor governments who ignored the skills and professionalism of those dedicated to safe guarding Australia's interests, the current government has made a giant leap forward by recognising ex Defence Force personnel and their families.

Australian defence Force personnel after years of making the Defence Force a career retire into the world of work outside the umbrella of defence. In many cases, these members find it difficult to come to terms with the differences in workplace cultures and may drift from one job to the next until they find employment suitable to the skills and qualifications.

The Liberal Government has woken up to this fact and in light of the reduction in forces being deployed overseas are looking towards utilising these skills which were used effectively as a member of the Defence Force. However despite all the good work that is being undertaken by various Government agencies to employ the mature age members, many ex Defence Force members still find it difficult to accustom themselves to a new way of life and work.

Employment and recruitment agencies do their best to accommodate such highly skilled members in areas that would be most suitable and meet the needs of the employer and that of the member. However if there are insufficient challenges within the workplace, members become quickly bored and look elsewhere to utilise other skills. There are the few that make the transition quite well and cannot understand what the problem is. This is somewhat of a conundrum for those in the former and insufficient studies and research have been undertaken to understand the reasons why.

Peter Cosgrove and Duncan Lewis are both good examples of ex Defence Force members being effectively utilised and one hopes that their employment will create a greater understanding of the mindset and professional skills that ex Defence Force personnel contain.

During my time outside the world of Defence, I found that I had to review all of my skills and reconstruct them to meet the world of work. In some cases some skills were transferrable and others were handy to have according to the task that need to be undertaken. I found that to be truly effective, one had to return to tertiary studies in order to become competitive and in line with the new way of thinking and constructive use of age old concepts in a digital and technological environment. Those that did not seek further education were presumably happy to work in manual labor, supervisor in industry, coordinators and tasks that did not tax their capabilities.

Agencies in each capital city or main town that can conduct induction training and on the job employment tasks and mentoring for Defence force personnel contemplating on leaving the Australian Defence Force. These same agencies can then identify early and prior to the separation of members jobs and suitable employment opportunities. These induction periods can be undertaken over a twelve to eighteen months period on a part time basis for all serving defence force personnel.

Quality assurance concepts and procedures will have to be considered and implemented if the concept is to be productive for all stake holders concerned. Such agencies can be subsidised by the Government as part of their mature age contribution to assisting members remain in the work force.

Furthermore the agency can be tasked with follow-up programs to monitor the progress of ex Defence Force Personnel to gauge the effectiveness of the program and whether these same members require further skills, education and qualifications to remain effective contributors to the Australian workforce.



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