

# International Women's Day 2024

Celebrating the service  
of Military Women

1 March 2024  
10am -2pm  
RAAFA Bullcreek



# WOMEN

## IN THE AUSTRALIAN MILITARY

The history and roles of Australian women in the military have seen significant evolution, marked by remarkable contributions and a shift towards greater inclusion and gender equality.

The Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS), established in 1941, was a pivotal development for women in the Australian military. The AWAS was notably diverse in its roles, with women serving in non-medical capacities for the first time, participating in vital defence units, and even being posted overseas, such as in New Guinea during World War II. At its peak in January 1944, the AWAS had over 20,000 active members, although it was demobilized after the war ended in 1947.

Women's involvement in the military continued to evolve post World War II. The Korean War and the full employment era led to the formation of the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps (WRAAC) in 1951, addressing the severe manpower shortage. The late 1970s and early 1980s saw the integration of female soldiers into the Army at large, culminating in the disbandment of the WRAAC in 1984, as women became an integral part of the regular army.

In the contemporary context, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) has embraced principles of strong leadership, diversity, opportunity, flexibility, and zero tolerance for gender-based harassment and violence to drive cultural change and reform. This approach is seen as essential for increasing the representation of women in the military, particularly in leadership roles and traditionally male-dominated fields. The focus is not only on increasing the numbers but also on creating a supportive and inclusive culture.

Despite these advancements, challenges remain, such as balancing military service with family responsibilities and overcoming stereotypes about gender roles in defence. There's a continuous effort towards cultural change, recognising the value of diversity in enhancing the ADF's capabilities and effectiveness.

These developments in the roles and recognition of women in the Australian military signify a shift in societal attitudes towards gender roles and highlight the indispensable contributions of women to Australia's defence and national security.



# WORKING SPIRIT/RSLWA AND WOVEN ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Working Spirit and RSLWA, in conjunction with the Women Veteran Employment Network (WOVEN), have established themselves as pivotal organisations in supporting veterans transitioning to civilian life, with a special focus on female veterans. These organisations, guided by the visionary leadership of Karyn Hinder, have been instrumental in providing crucial resources and assistance to veterans in Western Australia. Since its inception in 2016, Working Spirit has been a symbol of empowerment, assisting veterans in finding suitable employment and adapting to civilian life. In 2019, this mission was further expanded with the creation of WOVEN, dedicated to harnessing and nurturing the unique talents, experiences, and resilience of female veterans.

Central to Working Spirit's philosophy is a deep understanding of the challenges faced by veterans after service, a perspective enriched by Karyn Hinder's own military background in the Royal Australian Air Force and the Australian Army. The organisation offers an array of services tailored to the needs of veterans, such as job placement, mentoring, and skills development, all aimed at facilitating a smoother transition into the civilian workforce.

WOVEN, on the other hand, focuses on realising the exceptional potential of female veterans in the job market. Recognising their unparalleled training in leadership, resilience, and adaptability, WOVEN endeavours to place these skilled individuals in roles where their diverse experiences and commitment to lifelong learning will be highly valued. By connecting female veterans with suitable employment opportunities, WOVEN not only assists these individuals but also enables businesses to benefit from their unique skill sets.

This year's International Women's Day event, hosted by Working Spirit and RSLWA, will focus on celebrating the extraordinary achievements of female veterans and supporting their continuous journey towards success in civilian life. The event aims to highlight the crucial role these organizations play in empowering female veterans, showcasing their contributions, and fostering a supportive community. It will serve as a platform to reinforce the commitment to these veterans, ensuring they receive the recognition, support, and opportunities they deserve. Through this event, Working Spirit, RSLWA, and WOVEN will continue to champion the cause of female veterans, upholding their spirit of service and empowerment, and making a lasting impact on the lives of veterans and their families.

**- BRONWYN DOAK**

*Bronwyn Doak embodies the spirit of resilience and advocacy. Having endured the unimaginable loss of her two daughters in a tragic plane crash, Bronwyn faced another challenge when her sons were diagnosed with Usher syndrome. This genetic disorder left them deaf from birth and at risk of losing their vision as well.*

*Bronwyn embarked on a journey to raise awareness and funds for Usher syndrome research. She spearheaded a significant fundraising initiative to support the Lion's Eye Institute in Perth, focusing on research that could potentially offer treatments for conditions like Retinitis Pigmentosa, which affects those with Usher syndrome among others. Her efforts were instrumental in securing a critical piece of equipment – a stem-cell robot – which holds promise for advancing research in this field.*

*Bronwyn's role goes beyond fundraising. She's deeply involved in her children's care, navigating the complexities of their condition with unwavering commitment. Her dedication extends to sharing her journey and insights, providing invaluable support and inspiration to others facing similar challenges.*

*Her story is more than personal; it's a testament to the power of women's contributions to societal progress. Bronwyn's advocacy demonstrates how women, when supported and empowered, can be formidable agents of change. Her efforts not only support her family but also drive progress in healthcare and research, benefiting the wider community.*

*Bronwyn Doak stands as a beacon of hope and determination, showcasing the profound impact of investing in women to accelerate societal advancement. Her journey is a poignant reminder of the transformative power of love, resilience, and advocacy in overcoming life's greatest challenges.*



**- OAM - NOONGAR WOMAN - STAFF SERGEANT - AUSTRALIAN REGULAR ARMY**

*"I aim to look after the welfare of veterans and their families so we can improve their lives. I have heard how poorly treated Indigenous World War II veterans were, so I wanted to help vets and their families as much as possible, especially as many are not getting the pensions or other support they are entitled to. If each and every one of us can make the most of our opportunities and come together, not just as Aboriginal people, but as a whole community, as part of the reconciliation process."*

**- Di Ryder**



# Aly

*Aly Bannister is a Multi-Award-Winning Career Coach with 30+ years' experience of partnering with female job seekers, Defence Spouses, small business owners, local government, and global organisations to support career success.*

*Most recently Aly has been recognised as one of the Top 15 Coaches in Perth - 2023.*

*Previously she has won the Prime Minister's Employment Awards for Excellence in Supporting Spouse Employment.*

*In addition, she is a successful Author of a best-selling, motivational, straight-talking book called Get Your Rear into Gear – Job Searching tips for Career Success As well as her children's book: Johnny the Leprechaun – Breaking School Rules.*

*Aly started her business in 2018. Since then, she's built a reputation of enabling and empowering women to build confidence, increase knowledge, upskill, and make positive career choices.*

*And amassed over 175 x 5 star Google reviews in the process.*

# WORKING SPIRIT

# History

By way of introduction my name is Karyn Hinder and I am the Founder of Working Spirit assisting our veterans and military members transition into employment post their military service.

I launched Working Spirit in November 2016, after completing a Certificate IV in Small Business Management through the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) supported by The Princes Lead Your Own Business Program (PLYOB Program). In Late 2016, I was invited by the US Chamber of Commerce to attend and observe transition summits and programs at Camp Pendleton Marine Base in San Diego.

The PLYOB Program is part of the Princes Charities Australia (started by His Royal Highness Prince Charles) and is in partnership with RMIT to support transitioning Australian Defence Force (ADF) Personnel to start a small business or consultancy.

To give you a little insight into 'Working Spirit', it is a not-for-profit registered charity with DGR status. The idea for the charity was born after a very close friend and a colleague of mine whom I have had the privilege of serving with, was going through tough times, whilst also having

to deal with the stresses of finding meaningful employment and adjusting back to mainstream life outside of the ADF.

Over my military journey, I have learned many things from my service both here and abroad. Something I am extremely passionate about is the difficulty for serving men and women to find employment post their military service. What is even more distressing is the flow on effect of injury, anxiety, stress, depression, and other major symptoms, which lead to difficulty in gaining employment, confidence, and hope.

Working Spirit's goal is to simply to help veterans move into employment both in the Public and Private Sector whilst highlighting the workforce potential of these military veterans. Working Spirit wants businesses to "capture the talent" that comes from their military service and get our Military Veterans hired. Military Veterans have many intangible skills that they can bring to the table, over and above any technical skills.

I am passionate about supporting our military veterans into civilian employment pathways post their military service and proud to say we have placed over 400 veterans into employment since Nov 2016.

Kind Regards, Karyn Hinder.

Founder Working Spirit



**TRANSITION**  
EMPLOYMENT PORTAL

## REWARDING WORK FOR EVERY VETERAN AND THEIR IMMEDIATE FAMILY

Looking for work? Changing Careers? Or maybe you want help to find your passion and purpose? Working Spirit and RSLWA are proud to present the Transition Employment Portal (TEP), which is a job matching platform designed specifically for companies/business to connect directly with veterans and their families.

The TEP allows veterans and their family members (aged 15+) to create a profile and launch their profile which can be matched with job opportunities by employers/ In addition to job matching services, the platform is free to use for veterans and their families. The TEP is the first of its kind in Australia and is a valuable resource for companies who are seeking to give employment opportunities to our veterans and their families.

**REGISTER AT [WWW.TEP.ORG.AU](http://WWW.TEP.ORG.AU)**



**RSLWA**

[rslwa.org.au](http://rslwa.org.au)

## Our History is One of Service

In 1916, many Australian veterans returning from war experienced issues from the extensive lack of support available. This led to the formation of The Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL) – a veteran-run organisation with a national presence.

Today RSLWA is a place to come together with established community groups and programs that enable veterans and their families to thrive. We provide experienced Advocates that help veterans lodge compensation claims to get the medical treatment they need, employment services to guide their transition into meaningful work, and financial support for those few experiencing hardship. We host regular commemorative events and engage the veteran community through 112 locations around Western Australia.



**RSLWA**

[rslwa.org.au](http://rslwa.org.au)

## Career Support

Our free job readiness program provides expert coaching, ensuring opportunities for all, regardless of experience or age. Our highly-skilled career consultants can support veterans with:

- Career advice and navigation
- Translating military experience
- Crafting effective CVs and cover letters
- Accessing training programs





**CHEVRON**

**MACMAHON**

**MPX**

**PERTH TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

**ROHK EXPLORATION AND EQUIPMENT**

