



**SUPPORTING FEMALE VETERANS  
TO THRIVE THROUGH  
EMPLOYMENT POST-SERVICE**

# YOUR LEADERS

## KARYN HINDER

FOUNDER WORKING SPIRIT

Joining the Australian Defence Force, whether that be the Navy, Army or Air Force is a daunting and yet exciting prospect! I remember being full of trepidation, and yet prepared to do something greater than who I felt I was at the time, as a young fresh faced 25 year old. I thought my parents had done a great job modelling principled living and teaching me good manners and what it was to have a work ethic. I thought, as I walked through the gates for my Army training, that I was well prepared for life. Little did I know, that it was going to take a lot more determination and grit to become a highly trained professional. One that exhibited qualities of teamwork, integrity, loyalty and respect - under fire, so to speak. My parents had taught me well, but it was done from a relatively privileged and safe platform, without too much hardship or stress.

Now as I reflect on both my Army and Air Force careers, I feel thoroughly satisfied and grateful for having the opportunity to participate in and experience the training and job experiences the Australian Defence Force has offered me. I have transitioned into civilian life with confidence and skills that are easily integrated and beneficial to employers and businesses in the civilian sector. The great news is, I was not alone, and had the pleasure of working with many ADF personnel who exhibit the same qualities. In particular, those women who were drawn to and have had Defence Force careers. They encouraged and inspired me, through their ability to understand, nurture others and thrive in diverse environments, when they only form approximately 12 - 15% of the total workforce.

I strongly encourage companies and small business in Australia to "Capture the Talent: and start hiring our exceptional Australian Female Military Veterans.



## SENATOR THE HON LINDA REYNOLDS CSC

MINISTER FOR DEFENCE INDUSTRY;  
MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
AND NORTH QUEENSLAND RECOVERY

All companies seek employees with a strong work ethic, professionalism, loyalty, effective communication, problem-solving skills and leadership. Today's Veterans are the epitome of what employers require.

The big myth is that Veterans are older men with war wounds. Today's Veterans are often in their 20's and 30's and are ready, willing and able to bring their skills and knowledge to new endeavours.

Female Veterans have much to offer to Australian employers. They are highly qualified and experienced and ready to make significant contributions in the private sector. Despite their abilities, many ex-defence personnel have difficulty gaining employment post-service and this can be particularly challenging for women. This is largely due to employers not understanding the unique skillsets ex-service personnel have and can offer them.

The skills, knowledge and experiences I gained through my military service has been readily transferable in my civilian career and now as a Senator and Minister. It is no secret that we need to do more to ensure the well-being of our service personnel when they transition into civilian life. This is why as Chair of the Parliament's Defence Sub-Committee I initiated a Parliamentary inquiry into Transition from the Australian Defence Force (ADF), which will also examine for the first time the extent of the difference between the experiences of transitioning women and men.

As patron of the Women Veteran Employment Network (WOVEN), I commend the work that this excellent organisation intends to do to assist female Veterans transitioning into employment. Congratulations to Founder Karyn Hinder and her team on establishing this wonderful initiative.

I urge all employers to take a look at what today's veterans have to offer your business - I guarantee you will be impressed.

# BUSINESS BENEFITS

An untapped resource - 'unlike any other industry female veterans have the most comprehensive leadership training and tested experience in the Southern Hemisphere. Female veterans are physically and mentally resilient, adaptive and agile. They model compassion and courage, leading by example and leaning forward to achieve the best outcomes in a timely manner.

Female veterans have a comprehensive and broad range of leadership, diversity and team development skills. They are an extremely well-educated group

benefiting from a comprehensive employment and occupation training continuum, enhanced and supported through university education in civilian institutions. Post military career they remain committed to education and learning, either excelling in like industries or retraining to take on new careers. They understand the importance of dedication to service and work life balance, reinforcing that their principles are entrenched in a strong work ethic based on trust, loyalty and respect.



**“IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNISE  
THE TALENTS OF OUR FEMALE  
VETERANS AND WORK TO HELP  
FIND THEIR PURPOSE POST  
THEIR SERVICE CAREER.”**

**KARYN**

- AIR FORCE VETERAN  
- FOUNDER OF WORKING SPIRIT



**“I AM WHO I AM,  
WHERE I AM, BECAUSE  
OF MY SERVICE”**

**LAUREN**

- NAVY VETERAN  
- CLAIMS ADVOCATE/NETWORKING  
MARKETING PROFESSIONAL



# OUR VETERANS

Female veterans, like their male counterparts from the services, face similar challenges when it comes time to transition to civilian employment. Not dissimilar to their female civilian colleagues, also fail to recognise their high value and unique skill set, particularly those gained through their military training and service. Working Spirit recognises the challenges female veterans face and are actively working to change both the internal and external narrative.

Working Spirit's primary goal is to support female veterans through career transition. Securing worthwhile employment and careers post-service ensure our female veterans enjoy the same standard of job satisfaction as they did in service or as their civilian counterparts. Positive transition experiences ensure our female veterans continue to thrive and transfer their valuable skills to the civilian workplace creating meaningful change.



**“THE ADF EXPOSED ME TO A MYRIAD OF EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES WELL OUTSIDE THE NORM, AND IN DOING SO PROVIDED ME WITH THE MOST UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP MY PROBLEM SOLVING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS, AND OVERALL RESILIENCE - ALL KEY CHARACTERISTICS I EMPLOY EVERYDAY IN MY SMALL BUSINESS”.**

## **CHERIE-ANN**

- AIR FORCE VETERAN  
- FOUNDER OF INDIRA ORGANICS



**“MY SERVICE HAS ENABLED ME TO TRANSACT MY INDIVIDUAL SUCCESS...EVERY POSTING AND RELOCATION, NEW APPOINTMENT, NEW WORKPLACE, DEPLOYMENT EXPERIENCES HAVE PREPARED ME FOR WHAT I DO NOW... ALWAYS, HOWEVER, STRIVING TO DO BETTER”.**

## **PAULA**

- ARMY VETERAN  
- DEFENCE HEALTH COMMUNITY  
RELATIONSHIP OFFICER



**“DESPITE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES AND HARDSHIPS IT WAS AN HONOUR TO SERVE! AND IF THERE IS ONE PHRASE THAT IS A TESTAMENT TO OUR RESILIENCE AND CONTENTMENT POST SERVICE, IT WOULD BE IN THE WORDS OF MY DRILL SERGEANTS ‘EYES FRONT, QUICK MARCH”.**

## **KELLIEGH**

- ARMY VETERAN  
- CEO INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FIRST RESPONDERS  
AND PEER SUPPORT  
- FOUNDER OF NOT FOR PROFIT EYES FRONT



**“I AM PROUD OF EVERYTHING I HAVE DONE, AND I HAVE THE ARMY TO THANK FOR THAT”.**

## **JACINTA**

- ARMY VETERAN  
- HR DIRECTOR CARNIVAL CRUISE LINES



**“I ABSOLUTELY LOVED BEING A PILOT AND FLYING. I ACCOMPLISHED MORE THAT I EVER DREAMED I WOULD AND I FEEL EXTREMELY LUCKY AND BLESSED TO HAVE THE CAREER I HAD. FROM MY SERVICE CAREER I GAINED INVALUABLE LEADERSHIP AND DECISION MAKING SKILLS, MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND TEAMWORK SKILLS PLUS A DEGREE”.**

## **CHERISH**

- USAF VETERAN  
- AVIATION LECTURER/BUSINESS OWNER/CONSULTANT  
- WORKING SPIRIT VOLUNTEER



# CAPTURE THE TALENT

STEPS TO HIRE FEMALE VETERANS

REGISTER YOUR COMPANY DETAILS AT  
[WWW.WORKINGSPIRIT.ORG.AU](http://WWW.WORKINGSPIRIT.ORG.AU)

THE WORKING SPIRIT TEAM WILL BE IN  
TOUCH TO SHOW HOW YOU CAN  
“CAPTURE THE TALENT”  
BY HIRING A FEMALE VETERAN

