

**DEFENCE RESERVES EMPLOYER SUPPORT AWARDS 2022**  
**REMARKS BY**  
**HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC,**  
**GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA**  
**BALL ROOM, WEDNESDAY 27 JULY 2022**

**[VICE-REGAL SALUTE IS PLAYED]**

Please be seated.

Good evening. I have great pleasure in welcoming you all to this ceremony for the Tasmanian Defence Reserves Employer Support Awards. These awards importantly recognise employers who support Reservists in the Australian Defence Force.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our First People. I stand for a future that respects and acknowledges Aboriginal stories, culture, language and history.

May I also acknowledge Major General Douglas Laidlaw, Head of Joint Support Services Division within Joint Support Group. General Laidlaw is a Reservist with extensive operational and staff experience. He is by profession, a barrister, and is self-employed, so therefore has a very supportive employer who enables his Reserve service!

Among us, too, are Major General Greg Melick, Rear Admiral Steve Gilmore, Brigadier Matt Burr and Commissioner Darren Hine.

But most important tonight, I acknowledge all of the employers of Reservists for their continued support.

Our Defence Reserve contributes to our national security objectives by augmenting our permanent force. This role includes supplementing the capabilities of the permanent force, and also providing capabilities that either do not exist, or do not exist in the required numbers, within our permanent force.

The capability of our Reserve needs to be constantly maintained. This places an importance on regular training, which predominantly takes place in blocks of times to minimise a person's time away from home, work or education.

However, the trainee reservist may take some months of training before acquiring the level of knowledge and skill to enable involvement in operations either at home or abroad.

If our Reserve numbers are lost or reduced, as occurs from time to time, these numbers can take considerable time, effort and cost to recreate and rebuild.

Recent announcements regarding the expansion of our Australian Defence Force to more than 100,000 by 2040, means that there will be a further requirement to recruit, train and maintain Reserve forces at even higher readiness.

This expansion will require the ongoing support of employers. This support is critical to enable Reservists to attain and maintain an appropriate level of professionalism. These Reservists will then become a valuable part of the overall Australian Defence Force capability.

None of this is possible without the support of employers, small and large, who accept the inconvenience of losing a staff member for them to participate in exercises or operations. Defence Reserve and Employer Support operates together to achieve these aims. On behalf of a grateful community, I thank all of those employers who have been nominated for and will soon receive the awards recognising their contribution to Reserve capability. I thank you for your valued support of your Reserve employees.

In conclusion, may I say that the Office of the Governor of Tasmania is proud to continue to be associated with these awards. We are delighted that these awards are held at Government House each year. It is a privilege for me to present the awards and support the important work of our Reservists. I acknowledge and thank employers for their support provided to our Reservists to do their part in our Defence.

Thank you.

Official Secretary ...