

**REMARKS AT THE RESERVE FORCES DAY PARADE
BY
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The objective of the Reserve Forces Day is to raise the profile of the Navy, Army and Air Force Reserve, to recognise former and serving Reservists (including those who served in the Citizen Military Forces (CMF), and Citizen Air Force (CAF)) and to thank partners and employers for their support.

Presently there are about 45,000 Active and Stand-by Reservists and they comprise no less than an incredible 45% of the total Australian Defence Force. It is quite clear that Australia would not have an adequate Defence Force were it not for the Reservists. No longer a group on remote standby to be called up in case of some drastic emergency, today's reservists are men and women who actively participate on a regular basis, side by side with full time members of the Defence Force at home and overseas; in combat and on the all-important peacekeeping duties.

Maintenance of this part of Australia's Defence Force is in large measure dependent upon the families and civilian employers of the reservists understanding the importance of the role that the reservists play. Without the support of those employers and those wives and husbands who stay at home and look after the families while their partner goes off in defence of our country—often a grave risk of death or being wounded Australia simply would not have an effective defence Force. So today is the day that we not only recognise the service that the reservists give our country but also the indirect, but

just as important collateral service that the wives, husbands, children and employers also give this country

This scheme which enables Australia to keep an effective defence force at the ready is a two-way street. Obviously, without reservists our country would not have an adequate Defence Force, but service in the Reserves also provides employers with employees who acquire skills and develop personal qualities that they can, and do, bring back to their workplace to the benefit of their employers and, of course, their fellow employees.

So today, right across Australia we celebrate Reserve Forces Day in recognition of the important contribution that is being made, and has been made by the 1.25 million serving and former members of the Nation's Reserve Forces and the equally important contribution made by their families and employers.