

Defence **LGBTI** Milestones

**After pressure from the US, the Australian Army adopts a policy to arrange medical discharges for homosexuals.**

**JUNE  
1944**

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***Truth* runs a cover story reporting on an “unsavory cell of homosexuals” in the national service training camp at Puckapunyal, discharging five men immediately.**

**JUNE  
1956**

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**Royal Australian Navy adopts a policy on “Abnormal Sexual Behaviour” in addition to an existing policy on “Unnatural Offences”.**

**1969**

***CAMP Ink* publishes a story about a dismissed lesbian from the WRAAF; mainstream coverage prompts the Defence Minister to order the services to come up with a consistent policy on homosexuality.**

**1973**

**First tri-service approach to homosexuality establishes a framework whereby service police investigate all cases. Those found to be homosexuals may either request their own honourable discharge or be discharged dishonourably.**

**1974**

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**Five members of the Gay Ex-Services Association are turned away from laying a wreath at Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance.**

**ANZAC DAY  
1982**

**A Court of Inquiry investigates police practices relating to homosexuality at the RAAF Academy. The Court of Inquiry recommends not discharging four cadets because police evidence may be considered inadmissible.**

**APRIL  
1982**

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**Defence Instruction  
DI(G)Pers 15-3 updates the ban  
on gay and lesbian service.**

**NOVEMBER  
1985**



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**An article in *Outrage* causes a stir when it names three RAAF Police who had been going undercover to catch gays and lesbians.**

**APRIL  
1991**

**A lesbian dismissed under the ban files a complaint with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission. The HREOC enters discussions with the ADF about her case and the ban more widely, but the ADF resists lifting the ban.**

**1990-92**

**After Defence Minister, Senator Robert Ray, and Attorney-General Michael Duffy present their cases, the Keating Cabinet decides to lift the ban on gay, lesbian and bisexual military service. This does not include transgender service.**

**23 NOVEMBER  
1992**

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**G-Force forms as a support, advocacy and social group for serving gays, lesbians and bisexuals. The group would last until 1998.**

**JUNE  
1994**

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**Notwithstanding opposition within the ADF hierarchy, G-Force marches in the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.**

**MARCH  
1996**

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**DI(G)PERS 16-16 formally bans transgender service, saying anyone who wishes to transition must leave the ADF.**

**20 APRIL  
2000**

**The partner of a deceased Second World War veteran lodges a complaint to the UN Human Rights Committee when he was denied a spousal pension. The UN finds in the complainant's favour, but the Howard Government refuses to recognise same-sex couples for veterans' pensions.**

**2002**

**DEFGLIS is founded as a support and advocacy group for gay, lesbian and bisexual Defence members. In 2011 they would change their name to the Defence LGBTI Information Service.**

**2002**



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**New ADF rules on de facto spouses recognise same-sex couples.**

**DECEMBER  
2005**

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**Department of Veterans' Affairs begins to recognise same-sex de facto couples.**

**JULY  
2009**

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**ADF contingent at Sydney  
Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras  
allowed to march in uniform for  
the first time.**

**MARCH  
2013**

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**DEFGLIS begins annual rainbow wreath-layings, with one of the surviving GESA members laying Melbourne's wreath at the Shrine of Remembrance.**

**ANZAC DAY  
2015**

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**DEFGLIS** hosts the first  
annual **Military Pride Ball.**

**SEPTEMBER**  
**2015**

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Lesbian and Gay Archives), Lin Tobias for the panel design.**

**CURATORS:**

**A/Prof Noah Riseman (Australian Catholic University)**

**A/Prof Shirleene Robinson (Macquarie University)**

**Dr Graham Willett (Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives)**



# SERVING IN SILENCE?

Australian **LGBTI** Military  
Service since World War II