I would like to begin by dwelling for a few moments on the concepts of management and leadership. Management and leadership are very different functions that draw on quite different aspects of our personalities.

Management is about directing and controlling the activities of others to achieve common goals. Leadership is about inspiring others to direct and control their own activities, to continuously revise and extend the common goals, and to achieve as a team that which is beyond the reach of individuals.

Many of us throughout our careers have been taught the habits of good managers. Management requires of us the ability to analyse situations, evaluate options, plan courses of action, manage time, measure performance, review progress—essentially a highly methodical process.

Leadership draws much more on our instincts and our emotions. Leadership requires of us the ability to feel. Leadership requires of us the observable commitment to a set of values.

Management comes from the head; leadership comes from the heart.

In the military, we work in an environment that is overwhelmingly male dominated, that has a strong tradition of applauding those characteristics and behaviours that are considered traditionally male: an environment that on occasion requires its men and women to place their lives at risk.

I can guarantee that there are few in the Australian Defence Force today who would allow themselves to be managed into harm’s way. This is the stuff of leadership. The vast majority of members in the Australian Defence Force share the values of their leaders and will wholeheartedly follow the course that they set, having done their own careful consideration and intelligent evaluation.

The Senior Executive in Defence subscribes a set of values comprising professionalism, loyalty, integrity, courage, innovation and teamwork. These are the values which guide the behaviours that we seek from our subordinates and ourselves. These are the values that provide the framework for our leadership style.

In considering any perspective on leadership, context plays a significant role.

Today, I am joined by three military colleagues, each of whom has hands-on leadership experience: LCDR Jan Noonan from the Navy, LTCOL Alison Creagh from the Army and Warrant Officer Jen Riches, a fellow Air Force compatriot.

We would like to share with you a number of perspectives on leadership that are influenced by a wide variety of situational contexts.

We will attempt to provide some historical background on each of the three services, specifically about women’s roles within each service. Each of my colleagues will give you an insight into their own experience and background, their personal credentials on leadership. Each of us will discuss a number of perspectives that we have experienced.

Some of the perspectives we will discuss will have clear and easily identifiable translations to other professions. A couple may be uniquely military.

A perspective, which all three of my colleagues will comment on, is leadership in an operational environment rather than a support environment. We use the term “operational” here to refer to being deployed, perhaps in East Timor, perhaps in Bougainville, in the Persian Gulf, or in Afghanistan.

All of my colleagues have experience of leadership in the operational environment in each of their services. All have been deployed in United Nations operations within the last three years.

A second perspective we will examine is leadership in confined quarters, such as onboard a ship, and how that may vary from leadership of a widely dispersed staff, who may reside in dozens of different locations.

Thirdly, we will look at whether leadership approaches vary between large and small organisations.

Inevitably, we will look at the perspective of gender, whether female leaders vary significantly in their style from male leaders.

The fifth perspective we will discuss is leadership level. In the military, our rank structure is divided into non-commissioned ranks and commissioned ranks and within both, we consider that there are junior and senior leadership levels. We will look at what it means to be a leader as a non-commissioned officer and how that may vary from officer leadership.

Finally, each speaker will examine their own service and discuss whether any difference exist in leadership between the Navy, Army and Air Force.

Leadership Training in the Australian Defence Force

Before hearing these perspectives however, I would like to set the scene by describing very briefly the leadership training provided to members of the Australian Defence Force.

The military put enormous investment into leadership training of staff at all levels, starting at quite
junior ranks and building on knowledge and skills as personnel progress through the rank structure.

For officers, each service has an initial period of training which varies in length from service to service. The Navy trains its Direct Entry Officers at the Royal Australian Naval College, HMAS Creswell at Jervis Bay, the Army at the Royal Military College Duntroon in Canberra, and the Air Force at the RAAF College Point Cook.

These are not tertiary institutions, although all of them were in the past before the establishment of my own organisation, the Australian Defence Force Academy. Today, these three colleges provide the basic officer training in leadership, management and military skills for their respective services.

For young men and women who enter the officer ranks through ADFA, much of this leadership and military skills training is provided throughout the duration of their three-four year university education, programmed in the early mornings, the occasional weekend, and during breaks from academic studies.

The training is delivered either by my own staff or by the staff of the Single Service Colleges mentioned earlier. Opportunities to practice leadership within ADFA are realised not through a cadet rank hierarchy, but rather through volunteering for or being appointed to leadership roles.

These can range from being the president of the Cadets' Mess Committee, to the manager of one of the sporting teams, to the lead organiser of a specific major activity, such as the annual athletics carnival.

Every cadet is required to exercise and demonstrate their leadership skills in field exercises in which they lead a small team through a physically and mentally demanding field task. These leadership challenges are in addition to major undertakings involving over 100 staff and support personnel supervising and role-playing. Leadership ability is formally assessed and cadets do not graduate from ADFA unless they meet the standard.

Navy and Air Force cadets complete their full officer training by the time they graduate from ADFA. For Army cadets, they undertake a further year's training at Duntroon. Not all officer training is about leadership and management, but a good deal of it certainly is.

Mid-career training is provided for selected officers at the major or equivalent rank, normally eight to 10 years into their careers. Until 2000, this training was undertaken separately by each of the three services.

The Australian Command and Staff Course is now conducted as a joint 12-month course at the Australian Defence College, Weston Creek. Military Officers from all three services and Australian Public Service Officers from Defence are provided with the knowledge and skills to prepare them for command and for senior staff appointments in the department.

Senior officer training, normally for military and public service officers of colonel or equivalent rank, is also provided at Weston Creek in a similar joint environment. Officers attending the Defence and Strategic Studies Course will normally have in excess of 15 years experience and the course will provide an understanding of global and strategic issues in today's environment, as well as management and leadership training in preparation for the most senior positions in Defence.

In recent years, more and more work environments in Defence have become fully integrated, recognising the fundamentally joint nature of most military operations.

It is therefore sensible and logical that leadership and management training is becoming more and more common to support that integration. Australia is well progressed along the path of a smooth continuum of joint leadership training for its officers.

For the non-commissioned ranks, leadership training also begins at a junior level and is undertaken in all three services during the promotion courses that are delivered at each rank level.

At every stage, personnel must pass their management and leadership training to be eligible for promotion.

Leadership training begins with basic skills focused on managing small groups of people performing hands-on tasks in a tactical environment.

The focus of the training at each higher rank increases in sophistication and complexity, focusing on larger groups, dealing with more demanding situations, and introducing greater emphasis on values and behaviours.

At this time, there is no joint leadership training for non-commissioned ranks. All is conducted in single service environments.

Finally, it is important to note that all military personnel at every rank level are formally assessed by their officers. Ongoing assessment not only permanently records how well personnel are performing their assigned duties. It also documents how well they are meeting their management and leadership responsibilities, how well they demonstrate the values and behaviours of their service. Failure to deliver in these areas will inevitably affect career progression.

In setting the scene for our discussions, I hope I have shown you that we in Defence, and in particular the three services, are very serious about this topic. Essentially, we in the military are in the business of leadership.

Introduction to Jan Noonan

I would now like to hand over the podium to LCDR Jan Noonan, a member of my own staff at ADFA. Jan is the Officer Commanding Navy Squadron. In that role,
she is responsible for the development and wellbeing of 120 second, third and fourth year Navy Midshipmen. Jan provides an important role model for these future leaders of the Navy.

A Navy Perspective

It is indeed an honour to be invited here today to speak from a military perspective on leadership. I will focus specifically on leadership in the Royal Australian Navy as we adapt to changing strategic circumstance, technological innovation, and differing national needs and expectations.

In this complex world, it is not likely that anyone, civilian or military, will go along without meeting a challenge, or even adversity. However, the challenges to naval officers are truly unique, for they must have the capacity to simultaneously love their country, their service, their family, shipmates and the sea.

As noted in the introduction by Air Commodore Hammer, leadership in the military can be examined from a number of perspectives.

The two points about leadership in the maritime environment that I wish to focus on today are the challenges of leading our men and women in confined quarters and the leadership styles employed in an operational environment compared to peacetime.

Women In The Navy – Some Historical and Personal Facts

As the theme of today's conference is focussed around the performance and leadership of female leaders in Australian society, it is important to provide a brief history on the employment of women in the Royal Australian Navy.

I will also highlight the fact that indeed in the Navy the achievements and advancement of women may be greater than many of you realise.

Under no circumstances by preventing the role of women leaders in the Navy do I wish to undermine the achievements of male officers. Indeed regardless of sex and specialisation, my peers are technically and tactically proficient, are professional in the conduct of their duties and have made positive contributions to the Navy.

When considering the employment of women in the Navy it is important to understand that a number of major developments have occurred since the 1940s when women were first allowed to join the Australian Defence Force.

Women contributed during World War Two and the Korean War while there was a well-defined threat. However, between these war years, their service was not considered necessary. But away from the crash of the cannon and the glory of victory, there is another story; that of the reality that women were fighting for equality in the Navy.

A number of barriers were broken during the 1960s and 70s including the granting of equal pay and the ability of women to continue to serve in the Navy after marriage.

The Navy's policy of making billets available at sea for women began in the mid-1980s when the Navy population of women was about 5 percent. All women recruited after 1984 were advised that they were eligible for service at sea.

This was a key development for women for it is onboard a ship where all the action happens. However, substantial numbers of women at sea did not occur until the end of 1990. At this time, the total population of women in the Navy had reached 12 percent and that number has now stabilised at approximately 15 percent, while the percentage of women at sea has reached over 10 percent and is accelerating.

As each year passes, women are rising to many new challenges. The images that you see demonstrate that women are having successful careers in the Navy in diverse fields of employment.

Some of the major achievements for women in the Navy include the appointment of the first female commanding officer in 1988, the deployment of females to the Gulf in 1990, and the commencement of submarine training for the first females in 1998.

So many of the women from Generation X have broken free of the constraints previously imposed on them by traditional societal values. They have sought challenging and non-traditional careers and are integrated fully into our ships at sea. Clearly, progress has occurred.

The limitations that still exist for current-serving women in the Navy are so numerically small that it is almost insignificant.

In January 1988, I joined the Navy along with 116 other midshipmen and commenced my studies at the Australian Defence Force Academy. Our class of 117 was made up of 90 males and 27 females. As the year progressed the demands of training took their toll and by the end of our first year only 87 midshipmen remained.

A further two years of training at ADFA saw many more midshipmen fail, resign or transfer from the academy. My graduating class totalled just 67 midshipmen: 48 male and 22 female. The wastage rate over the three years at the academy was 30 percent for my male counterparts, whilst just 19 percent of females departed.

Whilst statistics can be presented in a number of ways, I will breakdown these numbers in two further steps. Of the 67 midshipmen that graduated from the Defence Academy in 1990, I will focus on the accomplishments of our female officers, as it is the members of this specialisation that can command our
Leadership in Operational Environment

With an appreciation of the demands of leadership 1000 miles away, the question now turns to whether leadership styles employed in an operational environment differ significantly to the leadership skills and attributes displayed at sea during peacetime.

Leadership at sea is unlike any other. The maritime environment is tiring, demanding, and unforgiving. However, in my experience leadership styles do not differ significantly at sea regardless of whether the ship is undertaking law enforcement tasks, long periods of surveillance, support operations or peacetime exercises. I first gained operational experience in the maritime environment in 1992 when HMAS Tobruk spent six months in the Somalia Area of Operations in support of Operation Restore Hope.

Most recently, I gained further experience whilst in command of HMAS Labuan, working directly for the United Nations Transitional Authority in East Timor.

However, in each sea posting between these two operational deployments, the leadership styles I have viewed and employed at sea have been similar and equally demanding. Peacetime operations require nearly the same degree of commitment and effort and they too can be arduous and unremitting. Officers and sailors in seagoing units must live and work for long periods in very close proximity to each other.

Even our most modern ships are cramped and confined and all are subject to the effects of weather and sea state. Regardless of the ship's tasking, the crew must be constantly alert to the possibility of emergencies and the unexpected.

A battle ready state must be maintained whether a ship is tasked with peacetime exercises or deployed in an operational environment. Dependent upon the class of ship, "battle ready state" may include the ability to refuel other ships, conduct boarding, beaching or surveillance operations. Maintaining the ship's ability to perform these functions is the primary responsibility of the captain.

They must be able to demand the utmost from their people and systems without exhausting them beyond the point of no return. This balance of effort also applies to command team themselves, since they must be able
to maintain their personal efficiency and conserve their strength for critical periods.

Leadership as a Woman in the Navy

Traditionally, leadership in the Navy has been dominated by the masculine values of competitiveness, hierarchy, toughness, discipline and rules. These values are still vital and should not be swept aside.

There are many occasions at sea when orders need to be obeyed instantly and without question. This leadership style is necessary in both the operational and peacetime environment. Indeed some of the most demanding tasks, I have ever faced at sea, were during border patrol.

As the executive officer in a patrol boat my duties included that of the ship’s boarding officer. The dangerous situations that our boarding parties face during these patrols often mirror operational scenarios. I recall one specific incident when, after many days at sea in poor conditions, our ship was tasked to investigate a merchant ship involved in possible drug trafficking or people smuggling.

As time was critical, there was no opportunity to embark agents from the Federal Police or Customs.

Leading an armed boarding party onto a 97 metre vessel in the darkness of night required me to employ all of the key elements of “traditional masculine leadership” that I would use in an operational environment under arduous conditions.

This form of leadership provides the framework by which personnel can operate effectively under the strain, shock and fear of maritime operations.

There is no doubt that an additional and different set of values is also necessary for successful leadership in the Navy. These values include respect for people and differences, trust, integrity, cooperative teamwork, innovative risk-taking and an open approach to people.

At sea, you bunk with people from all walks of life. You are part of a team that is built on friendship, tolerance and respect, a team that works and plays together and usually ends up the best of mates.

Successful leaders, be they male or female, will need to employ not only their particular strengths but consciously respond to the demands of a situation, be it operational or in peacetime, by selecting the most effective style drawn from a broad repertoire.

In summary, in my opinion, I have no doubt that there are many similarities between leadership styles employed during operational taskings and peacetime exercises in the maritime environment.

I am equally confident that it is widely acknowledged that effective leaders do not come in one mould. In today’s Navy, gender is not the issue of leadership at sea. When a leader is regarded as being competent this is the overriding issue.

It is vital that we continue to encourage women to advance as leaders in the Navy. There will be a percentage of women, as there is a percentage of men, that will have their advancement facilitated or inhibited as a direct result of background characteristics and life experiences whether they be personal or work related. This is human nature.

The challenge that faces us today is to ensure that as leaders in today’s Navy, women are fair, consistent, resilient, assertive, energetic and optimistic. I am certain women leaders in the Navy are striving for excellence and we are demonstrating all of these attributes now.

Introduction to Alison Creagh

I would now like to introduce Lieutenant Colonel Alison Creagh to present an Army perspective on women in uniform.

An Army Perspective

In July 1944, approval was granted to recruit and train the first women for the Australian Women’s Army Service or AWAS. The AWAS was to be an auxiliary force to the Army.

These women were paid two-thirds of the salary paid to their male equivalents, they were not allowed to serve overseas, they were not allowed to carry weapons and only single women were allowed to serve.

Some 24,000 women served during World War Two. They operated searchlights and radar at fixed defence sights and as communications specialists. They also served as drivers, clerks, storemen and mechanics. They were employed in roles that made a difference and allowed their male counterparts to deploy overseas.

Later in the war, small numbers of women were allowed to deploy overseas to locations like Tarin Kowt and Rabaul in New Guinea.

Of course, women served as nurses as they had done in the Boer War and World War One. Nurses served in the same locations as any deployed Australian forces and faced similar threats as their male colleagues. However, employment for women in the Army was strictly limited to wartime and in 1945 women were demobilised from the AWAS.

It was soon recognised that women played an important role during World War Two and that they should be considered as part of the military work force again.

In 1950, the Women’s Royal Australian Army Corps or WRAAC was established with an initial strength of a mere 236 women. These numbers quickly grew, but pay and conditions were still two-thirds of that paid to men and only single women were allowed to serve.
Making the Link

Women were required to discharge on marriage and they could not serve in combat units. They were not allowed to carry weapons, they went through segregated training and were restricted to mainly administrative employment categories.

Over time, women's conditions of service improved. In the mid 70s, the Army began to examine areas of gender discrimination and a number of employment categories were opened up to women.

Equal pay was approved in 1978 and around that time the regulations changed in both the public service and the Defence Force, allowing women to remain in the Army when they chose to marry and have children. In the mid 80s women started training with their male counterparts.

However, women were still limited to service in non-combat units.

For the Army, this limitation still applies today with the Sex Discrimination Act of 1984 permitting service chiefs to discriminate by preventing women from serving in combat units.

This means that we can't serve in areas such as infantry, armour, artillery and combat engineers, but all other areas are open to us.

The chief of Army and his predecessors have chosen, for numerous reasons, to exclude women from serving in these areas, although these employment limitations are regularly placed under review.

To date, the most senior rank held by a woman has been that of a colonel. We presently have a female colonel in the Army. Women have been promoted to warrant officer class one, which is the highest rank available to soldiers. Currently, 2,500 women or 10.4 percent, serve in the Regular Army with one quarter of these women being officers. Roughly 2,000 women or 14.6 percent, serve in the Army Reserve.

Women in the Army, carry weapons, serve overseas on operations and occupy command and leadership positions. The current commanding officer of the Army's officer training institution, the Royal Military College, Duntroon, is a woman.

Women now have more opportunities and options than in the past and women are required to command, lead and manage in a variety of situations and roles in a range of conditions and environments and under varying degrees of pressure and stress.

So, as a woman in an Army uniform, what qualifies me to talk about leadership?

Firstly, like all officers, I have been provided training in command, leadership and management throughout my 17 years in the Army.

This training has been conducted throughout my career and has been put into practice regularly. I was in the first training course to conduct integrated officer training in the mid 80s. Since then I have led small, medium and large teams of soldiers and civilians in an office environment, on exercises and on operations overseas in Cambodia and East Timor and during the Sydney 2000 Olympics. I am one of the first females in the Army to have commanded a sub-unit on operations. I might add, that not all officers, either male or female, have been fortunate to have had such opportunities.

So what are the issues for me as a female Army officer? Is there a difference in how I lead in different environments, for example, on operations versus an office environment?

Is there a difference between managing medium and large teams where I classify medium teams to be in the order of 15 to 50 people and large teams are from 50 to 350? Do I need to lead and manage differently from my male peers?

Is there a difference in leadership styles between the services?

Leadership in the Operational Environment

To address the first question of differences in leadership between environments it is worth using my experience from my service in Cambodia and on my return to Australia.

In 1993, I deployed to Cambodia as part of the Australian Force Communications unit supporting the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia. I was in Cambodia for the elections and shortly after we were advised that the U.N. would withdraw from Cambodia to allow the Cambodian people to rule for themselves.

As the quartermaster, I was responsible for all the stores and equipment which were distributed in over 57 locations throughout the country. I had a medium size team of 38 soldiers who assisted with preparing the equipment and stores for return to Australia.

My team worked seven days a week for four months, averaging 16 hours a day at the start and 20-hour days towards the end. They worked on a shift regime preparing 15,000 tonnes of stores and equipment, including 120 vehicles, for return to Australia meeting Australian Customs and Quarantine Regulations while also meeting the requirements of the U.N., the ADF and the Army.

We worked in poor conditions with Cambodian heavy lifting equipment and Cambodian workers who had little regard for occupational health and safety.

The security threat was still present and the threat of theft had escalated as the local population realised that the U.N. was withdrawing. Armed patrols of Australian soldiers secured our compounds night and day. The soldiers faced not only the mental and physical stresses of preparing paperwork, accounting for the equipment and stores, cleaning and packing the stores into containers, but also the physical hazards from the environment including aspects of safety, personnel under pressure due to fatigue, living in each
other's pockets for ten months, seeing them day and
right regardless of whether you liked them or not, and
then the additional pressure of the security threat.
I had worked with most of these men and women for
10 months so I knew them well and could read their
emotions. I knew about their families, I knew what
sports and hobbies they enjoyed and I knew how they
responded to mental stress.
My job was to provide them guidance on how to
conduct the redeployment, but more importantly, I was
there to motivate them when they were low, gauge their
physical and mental well being and try to keep them safe.
Fundamental to this was the need for me to keep myself well
and in tune with their most basic needs. Furthermore, I needed to
keep them focussed on our goal of returning the equipment to
Australia while remaining safe and uninjured. They needed to
work as a team throughout and could not let petty disputes or
disagreements prevent us from achieving the goal.

Most of the time I needed to use an authoritative
leadership style to direct the team, with little chance for
the team to be involved in the decisions. I told them
what tasks needed to be completed, provided them
with the resources, but I did not tell them how to do the
tasks. They knew what we had to achieve and they
were determined to achieve that end state.
In November 1993, we achieved the goal and all our
equipment and stores were loaded onto a ship for
return to Australia. We returned for a short three week
break before unloading the stores on the docks in
Melbourne and moving them to Broadmeadows where we
spent nine months doing more accounting checks,
refurbishing the stores and equipment and returning
them into the Defence supply system.
To do this task I had a smaller team of 13 soldiers
made up of the same men and women who had
worked for me in Cambodia. We were working in a
baracks environment with much of the job being office
work. We had several civilian staff.
The physical environment was much kinder with hot
and cold running water, heating and cooling when
required and civilization available when you wanted it.
We had the luxury of not living in the same area all the
time and the ability to go home to our family, home and
personal effects at the end of the day.
Once again, I needed to keep the team focussed on
our goal of finalising the equipment for return into the
supply system within the nine-month period. While the
soldiers were well motivated, it was sometimes hard to
keep them interested, as there were other distractions.
Here I needed to use a more participative style of
leadership so that the soldiers could feel that they were
contributing to the decision process. This allowed them
to structure their work requirements within the goals I
established. Once again, we achieved our goal and the
team was disbanded towards the end of 1994.
In short, there is a difference in the leadership styles
used in different environments. There needs to be. You
need to gauge the environment, the circumstances and
the people in your team and use a leadership style that
will best achieve the outcomes required.

Leadership of Large Versus Small
Organisations

Now to the question, "Is there a difference between
managing medium and large teams?"

Once again I can best portray this from personal experience.
In September 1999 I deployed to East Timor as part of the
International Force in East Timor.
For the first three months I
was the second in command of a communications unit of 250
soldiers and officers. We
provided communications and
administrative support to
General Cosgrove and his
headquarters.

I managed the unit’s deployment to East Timor
including ensuring the stores and personnel were
prepared properly and moved into East Timor
effectively to enable us to establish communications
quickly and efficiently. The security environment was
stressful, the conditions were unpleasant and there
were many unknowns. As a leader, it was difficult to
ensure that all the 250 soldiers were well informed of
what they were about to do.
It was important to ensure that they had as much
information as we could give them so that they could
do their jobs. We carried weapons so it was important
that the security threat and the rules of engagement
were clearly understood. I had to trust the chain of
command and hope that the information was being
accurately passed down to the lowest levels in the
organisation.
I had to ensure that rumours were dispelled quickly. I
had to ensure that the soldiers were motivated and
understood the role that they were about to play and I
had to gauge morale and ensure that problems were
dealt with quickly. While I knew most people in the
unit by sight and a large number by name, it was
difficult to see all of them and speak regularly with
them, so it was definitely a challenge to gauge the
morale in the unit.
In December 1999, while still in East Timor, I took
over another communications unit of 65 soldiers. The
remainder of the unit, some 30 soldiers, was still in
Australia. Here it was much simpler to convey
information. The unit had bonded well and their
morale was good. I was able to speak with everyone in
the unit regularly. Over Christmas and New Year, when
everyone misses their families most, I was able to share
stories and photos with them. The smaller group gave
me the opportunity to use a more personal approach to
leadership.
So there is a difference between how you will lead
Making the Link

and manage a large organisation by comparison with a small organisation. You need to be in tune with the challenges imposed by communicating your intent and keeping the organisation focused on the right goals. It is much easier to do this in a small or medium organisation than it is in a large organisation.

Leadership as a Woman

Now to the question "Do I need to lead and manage differently from my male peers?"

This is a difficult question to answer and it has received different responses from my male and female peers. Most of my female colleagues have indicated that we lead in the same way as our male counterparts. Most of my male colleagues strongly suggest that female leadership styles are different. Indeed they consider that the way female leaders are received by both male and female soldiers is different from a male leader. So why these disparate views?

I think it's true to say that we receive the same training on leadership, command and management and therefore have the same building blocks to develop as leaders.

But as Air Commodore Hammer outlined in her introductory remarks, leadership draws on our instincts and our emotions. So some part of leadership style is likely to be a learned response while other parts are likely to be more instinctive. One of my female peers indicated that she felt women in leadership roles tend to be more conciliatory.

I think her observation is reasonable, however, this concept does not necessarily fit well with the idea of women as war fighters where we can be required to make tough life or death decisions that need to be strongly and emphatically delivered without soldiers questioning our resolve.

The conciliatory and participative approach does seem to fit more successfully in an office environment where we may work with military and civilian staff than with soldiers in combat units. It is not necessarily instinctive to us, it may be more instinctive to our male peers. If we choose not to operate in the combat areas, then we are well served with our leadership skills and training and our leadership instincts will continue to serve us well.

The conciliatory and participative approach does seem to fit more successfully in an office environment where we may work with military and civilian staff.

Leadership in the Army

The final question for me to comment on is if there is a difference in leadership styles between the services.

The Army values encourage each individual to display teamwork, initiative and courage. These values are instilled in all soldiers and officers at the start of their careers.

We are expected to uphold these values in all our work regardless of the task we are set. The Army tends to work in a close environment, but not as close as that found in the Navy.

Army tends to work in teams ranging from three or more soldiers through to units of three or four hundred soldiers. All these teams and sub-units are required to be independent and the commanders and leaders at every level may be required to operate independently at varying times with little or no guidance.

There are certainly similarities between the Army and the other services and once again, the fundamentals of leadership are the same.

However, I think it's fair to say that the requirements to physically face the enemy in combat and the ability to deploy into the field with a pack on your back are what set the Army apart from most aspects of the other Services.

While women are not required to serve in combat units, we are all trained and expected to meet these
requirements to certain degrees. Do these physical demands then mean that women in the Army will find it more difficult to lead given that we generally do not display the same strength as men?

Do I have problems as a leader if I can’t keep up with the rest of the unit?

Once again these are difficult questions to answer. One of the leadership principles we are taught is to lead by example. I am of the belief that physical strength is not the issue.

More importantly, the issue is to be fit and as strong as possible and be able to demonstrate that you are participating to your maximum capacity.

Often a more powerful leadership example is set by those who are less physically capable, but have the mental determination and intestinal fortitude to achieve a satisfactory outcome.

This is an issue that is gender neutral. An extremely fit male who coasts will be outshone by a less fit male who works to his maximum capacity. This is equally true for women.

Having said all of this, the most important issue as a female leader in the Army is not to be seen as the last person in the unit to finish things, but they physical or mental challenges, and to ensure that you participate.

So essentially, I think that leadership issues in the Services are much the same. However, I think the physical demands in the Army may sometimes present different leadership challenges for both men and women.

I have presented my views on leadership for women in today’s Army. I believe we have come a long way in the 17 years that I have been in the Army, and we have certainly come a long way since the AWAS and WRAACs of yesteryear. I think we have a long way to go, but we have the opportunity to serve Australia in the best way possible.

Women leaders in the Army have achieved remarkable things, but we can’t rest on our laurels. We are generally well received and accepted by men in today’s Army, but we will need to keep performing and developing as leaders.

We are increasingly being presented with opportunities and we will need to ensure that we embrace these opportunities.

The Army is a great and worthwhile career for women with the possibility for leadership at every level. We have the opportunity to make a difference in the Army, the Australian Defence Force and in Australian society and we intend to make that difference.

Introduction To Next Speaker

Warrant Officer Jen Riches will now present an Air Force perspective on women in uniform.

An Air Force Perspective – Jen Riches

Women have evolved from the 1940s into where we are now in today’s Air Force as a result of the efforts and success of our first servicewomen who faced discrimination and dogmatic patronising attitudes. In 1941, the Women’s Australian Auxiliary Air Force was formed to support the war effort so as to enable the release of airmen for frontline duties.

They were employed to work alongside airmen in Air Force hangars, stores depots, radar and signal sections, kitchen areas and office environments where their duties ranged from accounting, machine operators, gas instructors, parachute packers, flight mechanics, mess stewards, meteorological assistants, wireless mechanics and telegraphists.

By 1944, women were employed in some 61 different trades, with approximately 27,000 women serving in the Women’s Australian Auxiliary Air Force during the War Years.

The formation of this service was not only the first but also the largest of the three women’s services formed during the Second World War years.

The Women’s Australian Auxiliary Air Force was disbanded at the end of the war, only to be reformed in 1947 and renamed as the Women’s Royal Australian Air Force in 1950.

This was as a result of the shortage of males filling positions in the RAAF.

History showed that females were indispensable.

The Women’s Royal Australian Air Force or (WRAAF as it was commonly referred to), was a separate service from the male Royal Australian Air Force with its own rank and pay structure.

Women proudly served their country in the WRAAF until the amalgamation with the RAAF, the male service in 1977. Females were equal to the males they worked with except for pay, however this was only for a short period. The women in the RAAF were viewed with a high degree of scepticism and on occasion open resentment. There are currently only a hand full of officers and airwomen who were originally a part of the WRAAF, serving with us today.

We currently have women fulfilling positions in every category and mustering with the exception of ground defence, where women are still not represented, and surface finisher and electropolisher where they are barred for health reasons associated with emery-toxicity.

I believe that our major milestone was the achievement of having females employed as air crew. Our first pilots were recruited in 1987, and to date we have had female pilots and navigators employed on transport and maritime patrol aircraft as well as fast jet aircrew navigators on F-111’s.

We have had one of only a few female test pilots in
Making the Link

the world and a prestigious roulette pilot. We also have non-commissioned female crew working on transport and maritime aircraft.

Over the years women have been given the opportunity to compete for promotion and job opportunities along with male members; however there has been slow progression for women to reach the more senior ranks in significant numbers.

Today's figures show that females make up 14.9 percent of the Air Force, 3.8 percent are officers in senior management positions.

The highest ranked female, not only in the Air Force but also within the entire Australian Defence Force, is Air Commodore Julie Hammer.

We are continually dealing with retention issues across all ranks. It was stated in May this year the number of women as a percentage of all personnel in each of the services has dropped by nearly 20 percent over the past three years.

This could be as a result of many of our support roles such as administration, catering and logistics, which employed many female serving members, having been commercialised.

As a result of our focus becoming more combat role related than in past years, we are now required to proceed on ground defence training exercises, which require members to be away from home for up to six weeks at a time.

I feel that as a result of this it has become difficult for women to combine their family responsibilities and commitments with a fully dedicated service career. These are in my view, the main reasons for the rate of discharges from females being on the increase.

Since becoming a part of the RAANB we have had females serve on either peace-keeping duties or operations in places such as Srinai, Cambodia, Somalia, Rwanda, Bougainville, East Timor and currently the Middle East. Some 15 percent of those Air Force members deployed to East Timor in the first 18 months were females.

I have been in the RAAF for almost 19 years, having initially joined as a cook trainee at the age of 17. Throughout the years I have faced many challenges that have helped form the leader that I am today.

As a result of life experiences, training and career challenges I have developed my own leadership style and abilities. I believe my upbringing and the values imparted to me whilst growing up have strongly influenced my role as a leader, particularly values such as compassion and integrity.

Throughout my career progression, I have undergone leadership training at various levels by participating in promotion courses.

Whilst participating on promotion courses you are challenged physically, intellectually and emotionally. You are removed from your comfort zone, placed in situations where you are expected to make decisions whilst fatigued, under pressure and in an unfamiliar environment.

As a leader I have faced many challenges at the various levels of management. After just one week in my current role, I had to organise and conduct a service funeral for a 17-year-old trainee. Providing support to all members involved from the commanding officer down to newly graduated trainees was emotionally challenging.

My involvement with the initial setting up for the arrival of the first displaced persons from Kosovo in 1999 provided another challenge. Seeing the look on the faces of those arriving in a foreign environment, miles from their homes with nothing but the clothes on their back, will be something I will always remember.

Serving in East Timor on operations for six months was probably the most professionally demanding of all my experiences. I had to provide emotional support to my troops, particularly during the Christmas and Easter period, whilst at the same time deal with my own homesickness and emotions.

My biggest mental and physical challenge came as a result of being away from my initial trade as a cook for five years, during which time I was employed both as an initial recruit and officer instructor, teaching general service knowledge, drill and ceremonial, ground defence and weapons.

I was the first female to have been employed as a military skills instructor at Officer Training School, working in an environment with 10 other male instructors.

On completion of this, I was posted back to the cook's trade as a sergeant in charge of 30 staff, among whom were three male corporals, each having 18-20 years in the Air Force. I had to prove to these members that I was worthy of being promoted ahead of them, even though I had not worked within the trade for five years.

I left the cook's trade as one of only three female sergeants within the Air Force in December 2000, to fulfill my career goal of becoming a warrant officer disciplinary.

I am now one of only two female warrant officer disciplinaries in the Air Force; there are currently 25 in total. I am responsible for assisting and informing my base commander on all issues relating to the discipline, morale and well being of all members on the base.

I am responsible for the conduct of all drill and ceremonial occasions and provide guidance to all members on various protocols. As a warrant officer, I am the connecting link between commissioned officers and airmen.

The biggest challenge with my current role is having to go from fulfilling the role of a compassionate leader providing guidance and counselling one minute, to playing the role of the disciplinarian or discussing policy with senior management the next. It is a very

The biggest challenge with my current role is having to go from fulfilling the role of a compassionate leader...to playing the role of the disciplinarian

[Image: A black and white photo of a person]

[Image: A black and white photo of a person]
demanding and rewarding role that enables me to be a role model for members of all ranks.

Leadership in the Operational Environment

I served in East Timor for six months, from December 1999 until June 2000, as a seargant cook under both the Australian lead coalition and the United Nations.

Whilst on operations, I felt initially that a more direct leadership style was required. This was to ensure that members reacted instinctively to orders. The reason for this was the real threat of danger to not only you as an individual but all members within your unit.

All members were required to carry weapons with real bullets 24 hours a day; therefore as the leader it was your responsibility to ensure your people remained switched on.

There was more pressure on you as a leader on operations to project a motivated and positive approach, since a negative demeanour spreads and affects others more rapidly than in a normal non-operational environment. This is because members don’t have their normal stress and emotional outlets and the environment can be like a “pressure cooker”.

One could not always display a direct style of leadership though, you also had to show a more approachable, compassionate side, not that one wouldn’t do this in a non-operational environment, you were just more aware of the need to be on operations.

There was a need to have a closer personal relationship with staff with family and support structures being so far away.

This relationship developed as a result of discussing more personal issues on a more regular basis and ensuring members were maintaining contact with family and friends. You became more “tuned in” with the troops’ emotional and physical states.

By the time I left East Timor, I felt that I knew family members whom I had never met as a result of talking to and sharing moments with the troops.

I feel the biggest challenge of being a leader is balancing the direct and compassionate leadership styles. To enable us to achieve this we must hold the professional ability to maintain distance from the rank; this is expected as a result of our culture and is respected by our subordinates.

Leadership within the non-operational environment allows a more consultative approach, we can be more inclusive, allowing subordinates to have more input toward achieving tasks and decision making which affects them, not only as a group but also an individual. In the normal work environment, one does not become as involved in our subordinates personal life as they have their family and support mechanisms around them.

Leadership by Non-Commissioned Officers Versus Commissioned Officers

Having looked briefly at the varying leadership styles and approaches in an operational and non-operational environment, I would now like to discuss the comparisons of senior non-commissioned officer (SNCO) and commissioned officer management from my perspective. SNCOs are responsible for the “hands on side of things”.

They are the immediate supervisor of the “workers” on the floor and are responsible for leading people that perhaps in general, are initially less experienced, more hands-on focussed and need greater guidance.

At the commencement of their careers, they are generally followers, progressing as leaders as they work their way up through the ranks. Senior NCOs focus on achieving the initial task at hand. Our experience and education in leadership is mostly through on-the-job experience, with training in leadership given at each promotion level.

At senior management level, officers are responsible for seeing that the focus on the task is in the right perspective and are more involved with policy than the hands on side of achieving the task or the more minor personal problems of the troops. Officers are responsible for developing and leading those officers more junior to themselves as well as senior NCOs. Warrant officers and senior NCOs are responsible for developing and leading their subordinates.

As a result of the senior NCOs being the more experienced trade member, junior officers will tap into the senior NCOs knowledge; hence we also have a role in developing junior officers.

Upon joining the Air Force, those officers who attend Officer Training School on their 15-week initial training course receive instruction on the various styles of leadership. They are provided with a great deal of theory and some practical training, and are then sent out into the Air Force as junior leaders. These members develop as leaders as a result of their experiences and guidance from senior members throughout their careers.

The role of senior NCOs and officers at the various management levels is to:

- Lead and manage people,
- Achieve common tasks and goals, though with a different emphasis,
- Lead by example and develop subordinates.

Personally, I do not believe that the way in which an officer leads is different to that of senior non-commissioned officers. Nor do I believe that my leadership style differs to that of my male peers. Our level of management and roles may vary; however as leaders, we all have concerns for the health, welfare, morale, development and discipline of our
subordinates. The way in which issues are dealt with may differ, with the fundamentals holding more emphasis at the more senior officer level. We are all responsible for maintaining a high standard of discipline through training, example, encouragement and counselling.

In summary I have discussed briefly the history of women and their changing roles and achievements within both the Women’s Australian Auxiliary Air Force and the Royal Australian Air Force.

The first females to serve their country at times faced discrimination, loneliness and resentment. However as a result of their efforts, camaraderie of shared hardships and the success of those first service women, we are now graduating females in almost all categories. With our fast jet navigators, pilots, aircraft technicians and women holding senior management positions, we have indeed come along way.

I have discussed the style of leadership required whilst an operations in comparison to a non-operational environment as being more direct and yet at the same time more compassionate; this being as a result of the element of danger involved and the emotional stress element of individuals being so far away from home. I have also given my view on the different leadership roles of the senior non-commissioned officer compared to the commissioned officer; the main difference being the emphasis on the practical completion of the goal or task compared to the management and policy side of achieving the goal or task.

In conclusion, I feel that regardless of gender, rank or at what level of management you are, your leadership style is influenced by your environment, your level of knowledge, communication skills, compassion, motivation, professionalism and experience, not only within your trade, but life experience. I do not believe that an officer leads in a different manner than a senior non-commissioned officer; their level of management and role in general vary; however we all have concerns for the health welfare, morale, development and discipline of our subordinates.

Conclusion

Thank you, I would now like to hand over to Air Commodore Hammer to conclude our presentation.

Final Perspectives

My own perspectives on leadership stem from over 25 years in the RAAF, serving primarily as an electronics engineer in the fields of aircraft maintenance, avionics, systems engineering, management, technical intelligence, electronic warfare, and command, control, communications and intelligence (C3I) systems acquisition and support.

Unlike my colleagues, I have not had the privilege of serving on deployed operations.

However, I have commanded an operational unit, the Electronic Warfare Squadron, and as you are aware, I am currently commanding the Australian Defence Force Academy.

Leadership in a Dispersed Organisation

Before summarising the various perspectives we have discussed today, I would like to touch on one final aspect: leadership in a dispersed organisation.

Throughout 2000 and 2001, I filled the position of director, general information services services, an innocuous sounding title.

I was responsible for the operations and support of Defence's fixed communications and computer systems throughout Australia. This position gave me the opportunity to focus on the challenges of leadership in a very large dispersed organisation.

My branch comprised almost 1500 staff in 170 Defence locations throughout Australia.

We supported Defence’s large mainframe computers, the wide area communications networks across Australia and to major fixed sites and deployed forces overseas, and on the computer systems operating at the various levels of security classification.

Altogether, we supported about 85,000 desktops, making us one of Australia’s largest information technology service delivery organisations. My challenge was to lead this group of military, public service and contractor staff in such a way that they all felt part of the same team, were all focussed on the same goals, and were all driven by the same enthusiasm to deliver a high quality service to their Defence customers.

Leadership in such an organisation required quite a different approach to that which I had used in commanding the Electronic Warfare Squadron, an Air Force unit of about 180 people all located in very close proximity in two buildings.

In the information services branch, I had an enormous diversity of cultures, skills, ages, remuneration levels and physical locations. It was never going to be possible for me to meet every staff, let alone get to know them. Even to personally reach all my 800 Canberra staff, based in six different locations, was a significant challenge.

But ultimately, I found that the motivators for all the different elements within the branch were very similar. People wanted to know what the vision for the organisation was, and how they fitted into that vision as individuals. They wanted to know how they were personally contributing to the overall operational...
capability of Defence. They wanted to come to work, be treated fairly and be allowed to do a good job. They wanted to be recognised and rewarded for doing a good job. They wanted to be challenged in their work and they wanted the opportunity to develop and improve their skills.

To fulfill my role as the leader of this organisation, I needed to focus a huge effort on vision and communication. We needed to develop a clear picture of where the organisation was headed in the future and how we were going to get there.

We needed to understand why the future organisation would be more fulfilling for staff than the current one. I needed to use a range of communication methods from personal briefings to newsletters to emails.

Most importantly though, I needed to cascade the right leadership style delivering the right messages through my directors and regional managers. Getting the whole organisation on the same wavelength, aligned to the vision and understanding their place within that vision was my most important task.

Summarising Our Perspectives

Over the last hour or so, we have considered a range of perspectives on leadership in the military environment which my colleagues and I have drawn from our combined 76 years of military service. I offer the following summary of our discussions.

All of my colleagues have discussed leadership in an operational environment, on deployed operations, and all have concluded that a more directive approach to leadership is required in such situations. We should not be surprised by this conclusion and can make an analogy with civilian emergency situations of high urgency and stress where action is imperative and consultation is inappropriate.

The leader determines what needs to be done and gives unambiguous instructions. Rigorous training, along with respect and confidence in the leader in such situations, ensures that the team carries out their orders.

One aspect of leadership mentioned by all of us is the need to create the vision for the organisation, focus the team on what goals are to be achieved, what tasks are to be undertaken. Jan Norman noted that as a leader, there is little difference in leadership style required while on deployed operations as opposed to exercises or training. I would conclude that effectively, any occasion when a ship is at sea must be considered an operational environment.

By contrast Alison Creagh and Jen Riches observed that a more consultative leadership style is compatible with peacetime activities, especially in normal office or barracks situations within Australia.

My colleagues also noted that leadership in an operational environment places additional demands on the leader. Military personnel on deployed operations work extremely long hours under arduous conditions, frequently in hazardous, even dangerous circumstances.

Being perceptive and responsive to the individual stresses and concerns of team members is of enormous importance in a situation where the normal support mechanisms of home and family and the release provided by leisure activities are absent.

The leader must maintain both physical health and mental strength to be able to support the team when a crisis is encountered. In particular, the leader must achieve that fine balance between camaraderie with the team and keeping some distance from them to maintain respect and authority.

Leadership in confined quarters, in dispersed organisations, in large and small organisations—all of these situations require the particular focus of the leader on vision, teamwork and communication.

The mechanisms which may be employed will be different and the leader must have a diversity of skills to be able to foster one-on-one relationships in a small team or in a confined environment, to being able to project their personality and influence by a variety of direct and indirect means of communication in large and dispersed organisations.

There appears to be little difference between the three services in the styles of leadership, with all leaders requiring a variety of styles in their repertoire, to be employed as the specific situation demands.

It is likely however that the frequency with which these situations occur may well vary between the three services. Nor does Jen Riches believe there is a significant difference between leadership at non-commissioned and officer levels, the difference primarily being the type of activity being undertaken by the team.

Finally, on the issue of gender, I found Alison Creagh’s discussion most illuminating and thoughtprovoking. Alison, like Jan and Jen, acknowledged that all leaders need to have a range of leadership styles that they can draw on as the situation dictates, but she went on to suggest that some leadership styles come more naturally to women than to men, and vice versa.

Whether it is due to women’s innate nature or their social conditioning, for our generation at least, a more consultative and collaborative leadership style sits most comfortably with most women.

Many men are also at ease with this style, while some require effort to operate in that mode. On the other hand, women may not be as comfortable with a directive style of leadership, although in the military they must certainly have the skills and training to employ such a style when it is needed. It will be interesting in the future to observe what style of
leadership sits most comfortably with the young women of Generation X.

The Future

Looking to the future, we are now experiencing a new generation of young people in the military, young men and women who are highly intelligent, who have well-developed skills to seek and find information, especially electronically. Who question what is being told to them and ask of them, who wish to be consulted and have a say in their tasks and duties.

These young men and women need to understand the reasons for any actions. The loyalty and obedience being asked of them comes from an intellectual level as well as an emotional level.

They will be expected to make their own moral and ethical decisions, and they will be held accountable for them. They will not follow leaders out of blind duty as may have occurred in some previous generations. They will only follow leaders who earn their respect.

Some of us who are leaders today may need to evolve our leadership styles to win over these young people. For some, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible. For others, it will line up with our own comfort zone.

Future leadership opportunities for women in the military can only continue to expand. Competency studies are currently being undertaken on a number of the combat roles from which women are excluded.

The outcomes of these tests and studies will be the definition of competencies, which an individual, whether they be a man or a woman, must meet in order to be accepted in that role.

On conclusion of these studies, a determination will be made as to whether it is appropriate to open certain combat roles to women.

For women to continue to increase in senior leadership roles in the military, we must be successful in not only our recruitment but also in our retention of our talented women. We do not bring in our senior ranks in the military through lateral recruitment from other employment sectors. The only way to the top in the military is by progressing through every stage of the organisation, by coming up through the ranks.

Senior executive status is virtually impossible to reach in under 20 years service and so it is imperative that we retain women in the profession of arms for such periods.

Conditions of service to foster retention are of critical importance: maternity provisions, parental leave, and flexible work practices. Above all, we must inculcate within our culture an attitude of acceptance that it is entirely reasonable to have a career break for the purpose of having children, and that women should not be perceived as any less serious about their careers for having done so.

While I am confident that we will continue to hear the tinkling of glass, as further ceilings are broken, there is still much to be done to achieve a more level playing field for women in uniform.