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Australian Government

Defence

Inspector-General of the
Australian Defence Force

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2025

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Foreword from the Inspector-General

This is the second Strategic Plan developed by, and for, the Office of the Inspector-General Australian Defence Force (OIGADF). The first strategic Plan covered the period 2020–2022. At the time that Plan was issued, the significant global and national events which have since occurred could not have been predicted. As an office which operates nationally, the natural disasters across Australia and the COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected OIGADF operations. These events coincided with significant increases not only in IGADF’s public profile but also in the number of submissions and referrals to OIGADF. Notwithstanding the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, significant achievements were made against the original Plan which represent continuous improvements in inquiry and complaint handling.



As IGADF enters its twenty-first year, reflecting on the past will assist in clarifying and planning for the future. IGADF was originally established in January 2003 to promote trust and justice in the ADF and to ensure all Australian Defence Force personnel have access to and are part of a fair and impartial military justice system. The aim of overseeing the quality and fairness of Australia’s military justice system remains fundamental to IGADF’s purpose.

The additional responsibilities IGADF has had since July 2014 – in relation to the statutory Redress of Grievance scheme, Military Police professional standards, and inquiries into service deaths – are consistent with IGADF’s fairness and justice role. We help Defence maximise the ADF’s operational effectiveness by helping supervisors, managers and commanders maintain discipline, order and good governance. At the same time, we ensure individuals’ rights to respect, fair treatment and a fair hearing.

To achieve these outcomes we have a set of shared IGADF values. These values are the cornerstone to achieving our vision and mission.

This Strategic Plan is deliberately different to the strategy in the last Plan. It is focused on setting out our shared vision for the Office. This Plan will act as a guide and will be underpinned by supporting processes and procedures to ensure we are trusted and promote fairness in the ADF and Defence Communities.

A large, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. M. Gaynor'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

James Gaynor CSC
Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force

OIGADF Vision, Mission and Values



Vision: Everyone trusts IGADF to independently examine concerns about Defence



Mission: Provide impartial, fair and independent decisions, and oversight of matters concerning Defence



Values: Respect. Integrity. Independence. Impartiality

Summary of Accomplishments from the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan

The 2020-2022 Strategic Plan identified five goals and, at a high level, described strategies to achieve these goals. The synopsis below provides a snapshot on our achievement against the strategies.

Strategy	Outcome
S1. Produce internal processes for OIGADF functions	Partially Achieved
S1.1 Revise Directorate procedures	Achieved
S1.2 Develop and implement internal consultation strategy within OIGADF	Partially achieved and ongoing
S1.3 Develop an internal strategic risk assessment	Partially achieved and ongoing
S1.4 Finalise and implement Complexity Project	Achieved
S2. Develop and implement communications plan	Achieved
S2.1 Develop and implement stakeholder engagement strategy, including engagement plan with Chiefs of Staff of Service HQ and environmental commanders –	Achieved
S2.2 Undertake promotion and education activities to increase exposure to the work of OIGADF, including participating in Defence wide education courses	Achieved
S2.3. Develop and monitor customer feedback forms issued at appropriate points (eg. Request feedback after advice of a decision)	Initiated and ongoing
S2.4 Develop and implement a branding strategy, including re-development of all OIGADF products	Achieved
S2.4.1 Revise web pages (intranet, internet)	Achieved
S2.4.2 Revise brochures and other brand publications	Achieved
S3. Develop and implement recruitment and retention strategy	Initiated and ongoing
S3.1 Design and issue Staff Health Survey (for benchmarking purposes)	Initiated and ongoing
S3.2 Develop and implement internal training plan with a focus on individual and organisational skill development and professionalisation	Initiated and ongoing
S3.3 Duty and function statement review	Initiated and ongoing
S3.4 Increased and improved engagement with Career Management Agencies (first quarter CY) –	Initiated and ongoing
S3.5 Talent identification (ie. targeted recruitment)	Initiated and ongoing
S3.6 Cross-skilling	Initiated and ongoing

PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS	
Achieved	Full achievement of performance goal.
Partially Achieved	Some, but not all, aspects of the performance goal were achieved
Initiated and Ongoing	Achievement of results which, when extrapolated over an extended period, would result in the performance goal being satisfied.

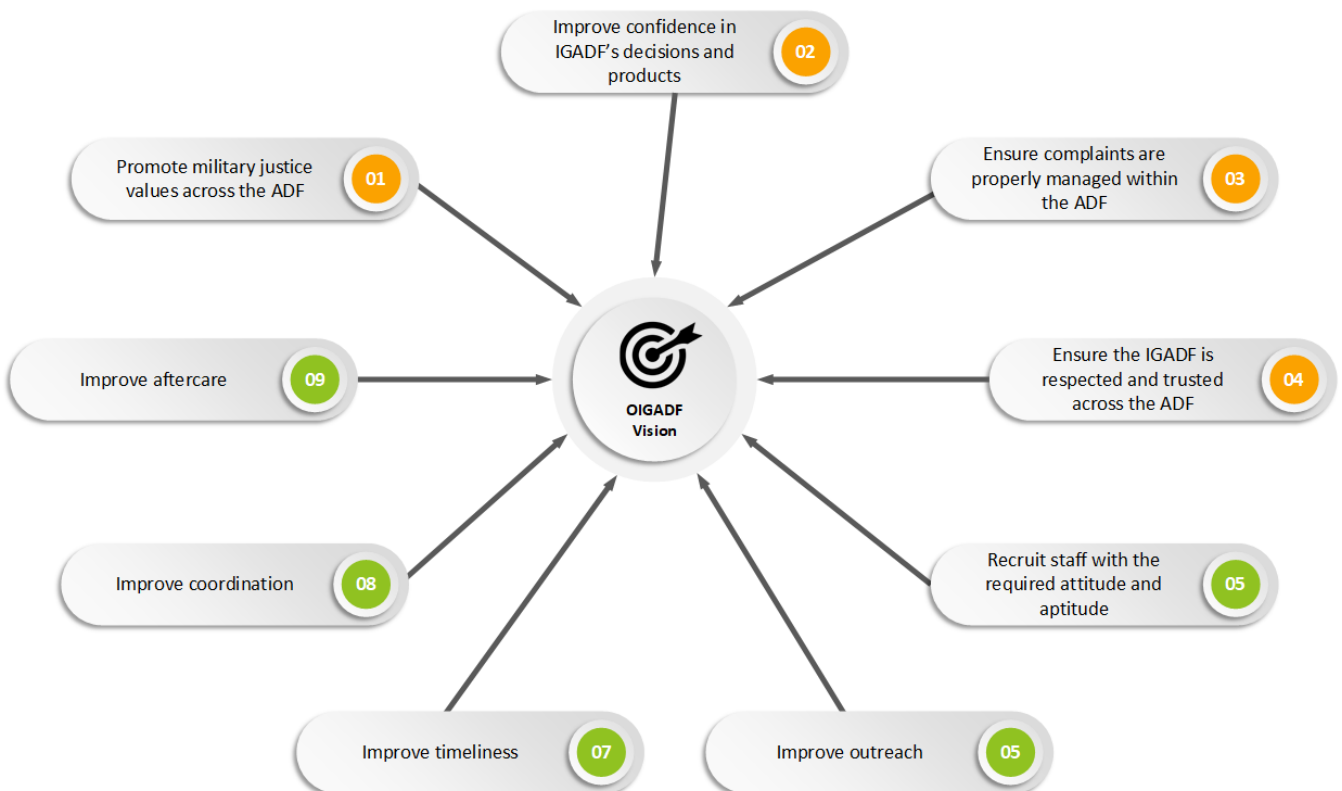
Strategic Plan 2023-2025 Summary

The IGADF and staff, collectively OIGADF, strive towards being trusted by all stakeholders and promoting fairness in the ADF. We have set our mission and values to achieve this vision.

Our values are important. We Respect ourselves, our work and everyone we deal with. We act with Integrity. We uphold the Inspector-General’s Independence. We are Impartial in our work and in our decisions.

We have identified nine strategic goals to achieve our vision.

- ◆ promote military justice values across the ADF
- ◆ improve confidence in IGADF’s decisions and products
- ◆ ensure complaints are properly managed within the ADF
- ◆ ensure the IGADF is respected and trusted by all
- ◆ recruit staff with the appropriate aptitude and attitude to undertake IGADF work
- ◆ improve outreach
- ◆ improve timeliness
- ◆ improve coordination
- ◆ improve aftercare

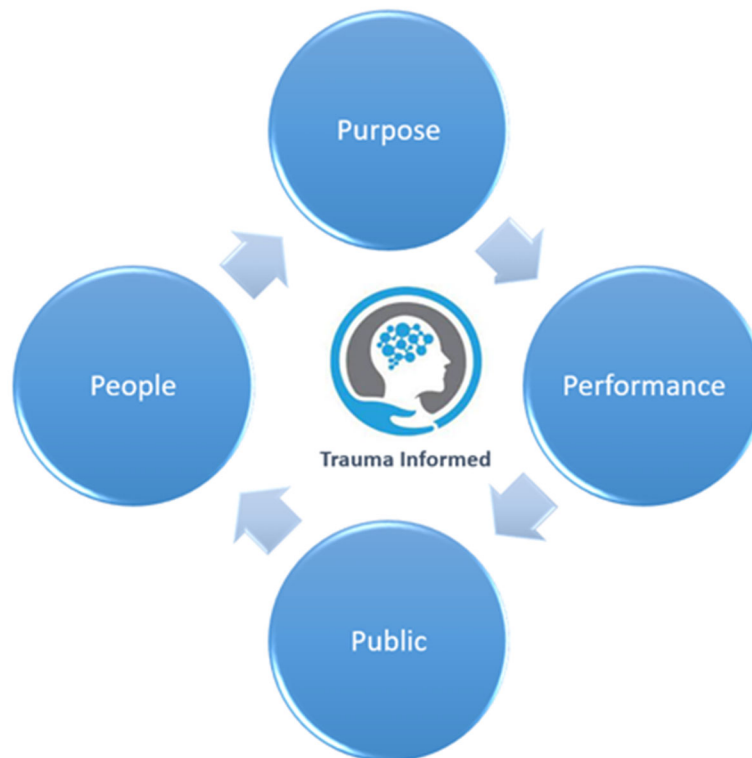


To achieve our vision we have identified:

- ◆ specific strategies that underpin each goal
- ◆ qualitative and quantitative measures to track progress

The strategic goals cross four streams:

- ◆ OIGADF purpose: This is what we do.
- ◆ OIGADF performance: This is how well we do it.
- ◆ OIGADF public: This is who we do it for.
- ◆ OIGADF people: This is who does it.



Reporting: The IGADF reports on his progress annually via his Annual Report to Parliament.

Strategic Overview

Our purpose

Established in 2003, the IGADF is a statutory office appointed by the Minister for Defence. The OIGADF is an integrity, oversight and inquiry body.

The IGADF operates independently of the military chain of command and Departmental civilian line management. The Secretary for Defence and Chief of the Defence Force provide APS and ADF staff to assist the IGADF to perform his statutory role and functions. Where required, IGADF is also supported by specialised professional service providers. This Strategic Plan will refer to the IGADF and staff collectively as the OIGADF.

IGADF has a staff of about 150 people, which includes Australian Public Service employees, and members of the Australian Defence Force. About 40 are full-time and the others part-time, all of whom are made available to IGADF under a statutory arrangement. Essentially, this means those staff work for IGADF and not Defence.

Over the past few years the volume and complexity of my work has changed. OIGADF receives hundreds of submissions and complaints about Defence each year. OIGADF continues to adapt to the changes. To do this OIGADF has recruited some more staff, and explored ways we can use technology to improve our processes.

Broadly, the IGADF functions and powers are to:

- ◆ inquire into or investigate matters concerning the military justice system;
- ◆ conduct performance reviews of how ADF units apply the military justice system;
- ◆ advise on matters concerning the military justice system including making recommendations for improvements;
- ◆ promote military justice values;
- ◆ inquire into or investigate the deaths of ADF members; and
- ◆ review complaints submitted by ADF members under the statutory redress of grievance scheme.

Our environment

The ADF's operational capability relies on a military justice system that achieves an appropriate balance between the need to enforce and maintain a high level of order and discipline, while maintaining and protecting the individual rights of ADF members.

The military justice system comprises four main elements:

- ◆ disciplinary investigations, prosecutions and proceedings (including Discipline Officer infringements, charges, subordinate and superior summary proceedings) under the *Defence Force Discipline Act 1982*
- ◆ adverse administrative action (including administrative sanctions (eg censures and formal warnings) and involuntary separations from the ADF)
- ◆ the conduct of administrative inquiries (including fact finding and Inquiry Officer Inquiries)
- ◆ the complaints mechanisms for ADF members.

OIGADF has seen an increase in general submissions and complaints made under the redress of the grievance scheme. The complexity of these complaints has also increased. This increase, coupled with ongoing highly complex and sensitive inquiries requiring experts with legal, military and operational experience, has significantly increased the workload of staff at OIGADF.

Our strategic response

OIGADF will evolve its processes over the life of the Strategic Plan to ensure it achieves its mission and meets the challenges the office faces.

OIGADF will remain true to our mission and continue to provide ongoing oversight of the health and effectiveness of the military justice system and an avenue for alleged failures of the system to be independently investigated and remedied.

Approach to risk

The OIGADF operates in a complex and evolving environment. Defence and the ADF is continually adapting to new capabilities and ways it conducts operations. OIGADF must be able to keep pace with Defence to ensure OIGADF's oversight remains effective.

The submissions and complaints received by the Office are increasingly complex requiring us to be more agile and aware of how we undertake decision-making.

We operate in an environment which presents the following external risks: judicial challenges to OIGADF decisions and processes; adverse findings by external review bodies; loss of confidence by ADF members and the Australian public in the military justice system; and reputational issues.

Additionally, failure by Command to implement OIGADF recommendations may affect the military justice system and in turn our reputation and credibility. While internal risks relating to budget, capability, recruitment and retention are not unique to OIGADF, we must remain vigilant to continue managing these risks.

In the short term, we will undertake an internal strategic risk assessment with the view to achieving an integrated approach to risk management. This approach will build capability and resilience to enable us to meet our goals.

A strategic approach to risk management does not prevent adverse events from occurring, however it will enable the OIGADF to identify, mitigate, monitor and evaluate risk to reduce the likelihood of adverse or detrimental events impacting the organisation.

Capabilities

To deliver on our Strategic Plan, we must have enduring capabilities in place. These capabilities must enable us to optimise our resources while remaining agile within our operating environment.

Making sound business decisions and allocating appropriate resources in response to organisational need is critical to success. Capability planning will enable OIGADF to understand its current capabilities and prioritise future investment in resources to enable us to achieve our strategic goals.

Our workforce

A high performing workforce is driven by strong and visible leadership, integrity, shared values, and professional integrity. We have a responsibility to each other to provide a supportive workplace and environment to enable us to perform these functions to the best of our ability. As a responsible organisation, IGADF strives to provide education and awareness as well as delivering appropriate strategies and trauma informed processes to mitigate the risk of harm to our colleagues and those we engage with.

The OIGADF is an integrated organisation drawing on expertise of permanent military members, APS employees, experienced Reservists and professional service providers. To continue to deliver our functions our workforce needs to be professional, agile, capable, trained and diverse.

We are committed to supporting our workforce to develop the skills and knowledge they need to meet our investigative, inquiry, audit and engagement roles through a trauma informed lens. Ongoing workforce planning ensures structures, governance, professionalisation and job design allows our staff to work and deliver outcomes successfully.

Governance and review

Effective governance is essential to delivering our prescribed functions and meeting our goals ethically, transparently and with integrity.

This Strategic Plan provides the framework for OIGADF to ensure ongoing and effective planning. As we progress, we will continuously review the Strategy to capture progress and adjust as required to ensure we are working to achieve our vision and mission.

Goals and strategies

- ◆ **Goal 1 – Promote military justice values across the ADF - we will continue to promote fairness in the military justice system in everything we do.**
 - *Goal Statement:* A fair and effective military justice system is crucial for the operational effectiveness of the ADF.
 - *Goal Strategy:* OIGADF must strike an appropriate balance between the need for command to maintain and enforce discipline, and protecting the rights of ADF members. IGADF's statutory role to promote military justice values will ensure the military justice system remains fair and effective
 - *Goal Measures:* Success in promoting military justice values is not easily measured. OIGADF success is measured through positive ratings for confidence as identified in Military Justice Performance Audits.

- ◆ **Goal 2 – Improve confidence that IGADF's decisions and products are timely, fair, impartial and accurate.**
 - *Goal Statement:* OIGADF makes decisions on a range of matters relating to the ADF. The outcomes to such matters as assessments, inquiry reports, military justice performance audit reports and outcome correspondence must be timely, fair and accurate.
 - *Goal Strategy:* We will continually improve the timeliness of our products. We will also communicate clear reasons for our decisions. In the event a person does not agree with our decision, we aim to ensure they understand why we made that decision.
 - *Goal Measures:* Improved confidence through feedback and minimise successful challenges against IGADF decisions to external review bodies. We will monitor our adherence to timelines.

- ◆ **Goal 3 – Monitor the effectiveness of all complaint handling within the ADF.**
 - *Goal Statement:* Complaints and the decisions and products which result from them must be timely, fair, impartial and accurate. The ADF and the Australian public must be confident in the integrity of the complaint handling process.
 - *Goal Strategy:* Our aim is that a recipient of an OIGADF decision feels heard and respected, leading to improved confidence in OIGADF decisions. We have demonstrated improved decision making timelines since the introduction of this system and will continually seek to reduce the time taken to finalise OIGADF inquiries and redress of grievance. We also work closely with Command to ensure the substance of the complaints are properly managed. We will continue to educate Command, ADF members and the Australian public on the complaints mechanisms available to them.

Goal Measures:

- 100% of complaints received by IGADF are acknowledged within three business days.
- Military Justice Performance Audits continue to survey confidence in IGADF and its handling of complaints.

◆ **Goal 4 – Strive for OIGADF’s work to be respected and trusted**

- *Goal Statement:* The identification of systemic failures and flaws is important to minimise unacceptable behaviour and other misconduct in the ADF and also where failures and flaws in broader ADF activities might risk harm to ADF members.
- *Goal Strategy:* The IGADF conducts inquiries, investigations and audits and through these activities, identifies failures and flaws in systems, policies and processes are identified, and reported so they can be remedied.
- *Goal Measures:* Our measure of success is that no external review body overturns IGADF outcomes.

◆ **Goal 5 – Recruit staff with the required attitude and aptitude to undertake the work of the IGADF and achieve outcomes.**

- *Goal Statement:* A professional, skilled and motivated workforce is key to enabling IGADF to fulfil his statutory role.
- *Goal Strategy:* We will develop an inclusive and flexible workplace. We will invest in training and skill development to professionalise our workforce. We will actively seek to recruit talented people and engage with career management agencies and human resources to attract and retain the best people. We are also mindful that the work of the OIGADF can be stressful and may expose our people to vicarious trauma. We will look after our people through our value of respect, and through upskilling in mental health awareness. We are open to supporting people to work flexibly to achieve an appropriate work life balance.
- *Goal Measures:*
 - Success is measured by having a staff vacancy rate no greater than 15% of our establishment and our general attrition rate will be less than 10%.
 - OIGADF staff receive relevant training as outlined in the IGADF welfare policy.

◆ **Goal 6 – Improve outreach.**

- *Goal Statement:* IGADF operates in an increasingly public way. Community and stakeholder engagement occurs at all levels within OIGADF and it is a core activity supported by all staff.
- *Goal Strategy:* We will work collaboratively with members and families, external organisations and networks to educate and strengthen trust in OIGADF, and to provide transparency, where applicable, about the inquiries conducted. Through this goal, the OIGADF relationships with the ADF and Service Communities will be strengthened to enable a comprehensive and integrated service.
- *Goal Measures:*
 - OIGADF will carry out 10 engagement/outreach activities annually.
 - Improved public engagement should lead to increased interest and interaction with the office. Success can be measured by the number of activities OIGADF participates in.

◆ **Goal 7 – Improve timeliness.**

- *Goal Statement:* There is confidence in OIGADF's technical competence to examine matters. While complexity increases the time taken to examine and resolve matters, confidence can be increased further by improving timeliness of report delivery, without reducing quality of outcomes.
- *Goal Strategy:* OIGADF will examine its current delegation model to ensure decisions are being made at the most appropriate level. The model encompasses monitoring and accountability and is enabled via an authorisations and delegations instrument. The instrument will be updated as required to support the goal.
- *Goal Measures:*
 - All submissions to the office are acknowledged within three business days.
 - Assessments, including professional standards matters, will be finalised in 16 weeks
 - Military justice performance audit reports will be finalised within 90 days of the audit.
 - Once all documentation for a complaint under the redress of grievance scheme is received, 85% of ROG complaints will be finalised within 90 days after IGADF takes sole-carriage of the complaint.
 - Barring exceptional circumstances, Inquiry reports into the death of ADF members will be completed within a median of eight months from the date Inquiry directions are signed.

◆ **Goal 8 – Improve internal coordination.**

- *Goal Statement:* OIGADF coordination practices are fundamental to ensuring OIGADF achieves effective and efficient outcomes for individuals and organisations involved in an IGADF matter.
- *Goal Strategy:* Good coordination contributes to delivery and achievement of strategic outcomes. Effective coordination reduces waste and improves operational effectiveness, by removing duplication of effort, establishing quality standards and enabling timely decision-making.
- *Goal Measures:*
 - Oversight matters progressed to the IGADF or an OIGADF delegate for decision are actioned within 10 business days.
 - Material produced is consistent and in accordance with the IGADF's style and preferences.

◆ **Goal 9 – Improve aftercare.**

- *Goal Statement:* OIGADF is a review body and examines Defence issues to identify and remedy suspected failures in the military justice system. After OIGADF has examined an issue its role changes. Part of the role becomes Departmental liaison and post-inquiry witness follow-up.
- *Goal Strategy:* Appropriate aftercare follow-up is a significant part of the identification and rectification or deterrence of systemic issues in the military justice system. Aftercare ensures that Defence acts on IGADF reports, and underpins one of the IGADF's core roles, assessing the health of the military justice system. Aftercare also provides IGADF with feedback from participants in an IGADF process to ensure its practices meet its mission, vision and values.
- *Goal Measures:*
 - All complete IGADF matters are followed-up with Defence within 90 business days to understand the steps Defence is taking to implement findings and recommendations.
 - IGADF follows-up with certain individuals involved in IGADF matters within 90 business days of IGADF finalising a matter.
 - Feedback is provided to the executive group (IGADF, DIGADF and Directors) on a monthly basis or as needed.