

ADF FINANCIAL SERVICES CONSUMER CENTRE

By Defence. For Defence.

# Starting your ADF career

# INITIAL TRAINING WORKBOOK



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# **ABOUT THIS WORKBOOK**

This workbook aims to get your finances off to a strong start by laying the foundations for good money management, and helping you develop the good financial habits you need to be successful with money.

This guide can be used alone or in conjunction with a personal finance brief, video presentation, or the online resources available at **adfconsumer.gov.au**.

#### **HOW TO USE THE WORKBOOK**

Read the information that explains the financial benefits a career in Defence can provide and how to make the most of your time at Defence. Consider how you can make changes to the way you manage your money that will better set you up for success, and then use the guide and checklist make it happen.

#### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

On completion of this workbook you should:

Have an understanding of the real value of your ADF employment package
Be able to complete an accurate personal budget
Understand the difference between bills you have committed to pay and optional spending
Be able to set a financial goal and calculate how much to save from each pay to achieve it
Understand how to set up your banking to make managing your money easier
Be able to take appropriate steps to maximise your superannuation entitlements
Know how to manage debt effectively, minimising the chance of getting into financial difficulty
Understand the benefit of insurance and decide what to insure
Understand your tax lodgement obligations
Understand the importance of having a valid up to date will
Know where to find our guide on investing
Have some practical knowledge on avoiding scams
Be able to take the necessary steps to build a solid foundation for good money management

# WHAT DO YOU GET IN DEFENCE (THAT'S DIFFERENT FROM OTHER EMPLOYERS)?

As well as the opportunity to serve your country, a career in the Navy, Army or Air Force provides you with job security, interesting work, a broad range of opportunities, and a fulfilling lifestyle.

Let's take a look at some of the benefits you'll receive in more detail:

# SALARY AND ALLOWANCES

In the ADF you'll earn a regular, reliable, competitive salary that usually increases every year. You'll have the opportunity to progress through the ranks, further increasing your pay.

You'll also receive a comprehensive package of allowances to recognise the unique nature of military life, your posting location, the performance of certain tasks or specialised skills that you have, or have acquired.



#### **SUPERANNUATION**

Superannuation is a compulsory retirement saving scheme. It's a way of putting money away now to live off later in life. You'll need your super to generate an income for you when you stop working. The more you accumulate, the more lifestyle choices you will have when you retire, or maybe the earlier you can retire.

If you **joined the ADF after 30 June 2016**, your super will be paid into an **accumulation super fund**. Your retirement benefit will be a lump sum based on contributions and investment returns accumulated throughout your working life. You can choose the fund your super is paid into. If you do not make a choice, it will be paid into ADF Super.

For accumulation fund members, Defence pays super at a rate of 16.4% of salary and most allowances, well above the legislated minimum requirement.

If you joined the ADF before 1 July 2016, please contact the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC) at **www.csc.gov.au** to find out about your **defined benefit** super scheme.



### STATUTORY DEATH AND DISABILITY COVER AT NO COST

Due to the nature of military service, it can be difficult for ADF members to obtain death and invalidity cover at a reasonable cost. However, if you are an accumulation super fund member, for example an ADF Super member, and a member of the permanent forces or a reservist on continuous full-time service, you are automatically covered for death and invalidity through ADF Cover. This doesn't cost you anything and is separate to any super benefits you may have. You can find out more about ADF Cover at www.csc.gov.au.

#### SUBSIDISED HOUSING

During initial training you'll usually live on base. When you move on to a posting location you may have the option to live on base, or off base in a service residence or private rental. Either way, accommodation is usually subsidised. There are also a range of subsidies available if you want to buy a home in your posting location.

#### **SPORT AND FITNESS FACILITIES**

You won't need to pay for costly gym memberships, as in the ADF part of your working day is likely to involve a work-out. Most bases have good sport and fitness facilities, and some have special interest clubs for specific activities.



#### **MEDICAL AND DENTAL**

As an ADF member, you will receive free medical and dental care from ADF doctors, dentists and nurses working in modern, well-equipped clinics and hospitals. This means you are unlikely to need private health insurance.

As Defence covers your medical expenses you will not be accessing the Medicare system. For this reason, most ADF members do not pay the Medicare levy, which means you keep an extra 2% of your pay in your pocket.

## **UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT**

You will be issued with uniforms and your Military Salary includes an allowance to maintain your uniform. Most of the equipment you need to do your job will be provided to you. So there's very little you'll need to put your hand in your pocket for.

#### **NEED HELP?**

We have created a calculator called the Employment Package Estimator to help you estimate the value of all of these additional benefits and calculate the real value of your ADF employment package, you can find it at **adfconsumer.gov.au/adfemploymentpackageestimator/.** 



# HOW CAN YOU MAKE THE MOST OF IT?

Now that you have a better understanding of the benefits a career in Defence can offer, we want you to make the most of this opportunity.

The path to financial security may be easier than you think. To get started you'll need to do a budget, set at least one financial goal and develop a plan to achieve it. Be disciplined with your banking and bill payments, get to know your superannuation and you'll be off to a great start. Take things one step at a time and continue to educate yourself along the way.

#### **DO A BUDGET**

Having a budget that accurately reflects your current income and expenses provides you with information you can use to set realistic financial goals and decide what's most important to you.

To do a budget you'll need to list the income you receive from all sources and then deduct your expenses. Expenses could be broken down into financial commitments (bills and expenses you have committed to) and discretionary expenses (nice to haves such as takeaways, entertainment, gifts and streaming services).

You could do this on paper, use a free budgeting app, or use the budget calculator at **adfconsumer.gov.au/budget-calculator/**.

If you show results fortnightly, you'll know how much you need to set aside each pay to cover all of your bills. Don't forget to include those bills that come in less frequently like car rego and insurance or gifts you give throughout the year.

	Budget Calculator	
	How to use:	0.000
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When it comes to discretionary spending, we suggest setting yourself a limit from each pay. This means you will still have some money to spend on whatever you want, but you won't be spending your bill money or savings. It's about exercising a bit of personal discipline.

#### **NEED HELP?**

For help on budgeting, read the Budgeting Money Guide at **adfconsumer.gov.au/your-money-guides/budgeting/.** 

#### **HOW TO DO A BUDGET**

To complete an online budget you can email yourself, or to download an Excel version to your own device, go to **adfconsumer.gov.au/budget-calculator/**.

For a simple budget, use the worksheet below to record income and expenses. Leave fields blank if the income or expense item doesn't relate to you and add in any items not currently listed in an appropriate category.

Your 'NET RESULT' is the amount you have left over to save for goals.

# NOTES

#### **CALCULATING FORTNIGHTLY EXPENSES**

Weekly expense x 2 = Fortnightly expense Monthly expense x 12  $\div$  26 = Fortnightly expense Quarterly expense x 4  $\div$  26 = Fortnightly expense Annual expense  $\div$  26 = Fortnightly expense



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# **SIMPLE BUDGET**

#### Enter income and expenses into the white boxes. Payment frequency is fortnightly.

	Type of income	Fortnightly
	Salary or wage net (after tax and deductions)	\$
2	Bonuses, allowances and pensions (after tax, if applicable)	\$
2	Partner salary or wages (after tax)	\$
	Investment income (e.g. interest, dividends or rent)	\$
	Centrelink benefits (e.g. family tax benefits, income support)	\$
	Child support received	\$
	TOTAL INCOME	\$

Financial commitments	Fortnightly
Car loan	\$
Personal loans	\$
Credit & store cards	\$
Buy now pay later	\$
SUB TOTAL	\$
Household expenses	Fortnightly
Rent or mortgage	\$
Food & groceries	\$
Gas	\$
Electricity	\$
SUB TOTAL	\$
Other regular expenses	Fortnightly
Phone/mobile	\$
Internet	\$
Laundry and dry cleaning	\$
Petrol	\$
Parking & tolls	\$
Vehicle registration	\$
Vehicle insurance	\$
Public transport & airfares	\$
SUB TOTAL	\$
Discretionary spending	Fortnightly
Pay TV & streaming services	\$
Clothes and shoes	\$
Restaurants and takeaway	\$
Alcohol and cigarettes	\$
SUB TOTAL	\$
Total expenses	Fortnightly: <mark>\$</mark>
TOTAL INCOME TOTAL EX	PENSES = NET RESULT
\$	\$

## **SET FINANCIAL GOALS**

To be successful in any field, you need the ability to form, commit to, and work towards meaningful goals, exercising discipline to achieve them.

Think about what you want to achieve financially over the next:







#### **NEED HELP?**

If you're not sure where to start, pick a single goal, write it down, decide when you want it, and work out how much you need to save each pay to reach it.

Having a written savings plan makes it real and keeps you accountable. Saving for large purchases is also cheaper as you won't be paying interest and you can often negotiate a better price for cash.

Your budget tells you how much you have available to save each pay so you'll know if your savings plan is realistic. If the amount you want to save does not match the amount left over in your budget, you'll either need to look for expenses you can reduce or adjust your goals so they are achievable. TIP

If you don't already have an emergency fund, a good shortterm goal might be to open an online savings account and build a buffer of 3-6 months' worth of expenses, to act as a safety net for when life doesn't go according to plan.

**Example:** The following table is an example of what your savings plan might look like.

Goal	Amount	Timeframe	Fortnightly Savings
Holiday	\$5,000	1 year	\$192
Car	\$20,000	2 years, 6 months	\$308
Total Fortnightly savings to reach current goals			\$500

## **CREATING YOUR OWN SAVINGS PLAN**

Use the table below to write at least one savings goal. Record what your goal is and how much it will cost. Use the savings goals calculator at **moneysmart.gov.au/saving/ savings-goals-calculator** to help you work out either; how long it will take to reach your goal based on how much you can save from each pay, or how much you will need to save each pay to reach it within a specified timeframe.

To calculate manually:

#### Goal amount ÷ Number of pay periods = Fortnightly savings

#### Goal amount ÷ Fortnightly savings = Number of pay periods (Timeframe)

Goal	Amount	Timeframe / Pay periods	Fortnightly Savings
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
Total Fortnightly savings to reach curre	nt goals	1	\$

#### **NEED HELP?**

For more tips on setting financial goals and saving, read the Saving and Goal Setting Money Guide at **adfconsumer.gov.au/your-money-guides/saving/.** 

# **OPEN SEPARATE BANK ACCOUNTS**

After you've done a budget and set at least one financial goal, it's time to put a system in place to help you get there. Having separate bank accounts for bills, spending and savings can make managing your money easier. You can even have your pay automatically split into each account.

#### SEPARATE YOUR PAY INTO ACCOUNTS FOR:



Opening a new account can be as easy as clicking a 'new account' button while you're logged in to your bank. Make sure your bank doesn't charge account fees and if there are conditions attached to the account, for example the need to deposit a minimum amount each month to earn interest, make sure you can satisfy the conditions.

If your bank doesn't offer suitable accounts, use a comparison website to find a financial institution that does. Opening an account online via a financial institution's website is usually a simple process. If you haven't banked with them before you'll have to provide identification, which can often be uploaded electronically.

When you open a new account, take down the BSB and account number, so that you can start depositing money into it straight away.

BANK:	
ACCOUNT NAME:	
BSB:	
<u> </u>	
ACCOUNT NUMBER:	

## **CHANGING YOUR PAY DISTRIBUTION**

Whichever payroll system you are using, when you nominate a bank account for your pay to go into, you can usually nominate additional accounts. Enter the details for each account you want your pay split into and nominate an amount for each account. One account will receive the balance of your pay rather than a set amount. We suggest setting your savings account as your 'balance' account so any extra cash, such as extra allowances or a pay rise, defaults to saving, not spending.

**Example:** Here's an example of how you might split your pay through the payroll system:

Bank	BSB	Account#	Amount
My Bank (bills)	032-345	9876 5432	\$400.00
My Bank (spending)	032-345	2345 6789	\$300.00
My Bank (saving)	732-345	1598 7532	Balance

#### **DISBURSEMENT DETAILS**

#### **NEED HELP?**

If you're not sure how to do this, ask your pay clerk.

## **AUTOMATE BILL PAYMENTS**

Set up direct debits or credits for regular bills so that you don't miss a payment. Missed or late payments can incur fees and/or penalty interest.

Most credit providers, for example phone and utility providers, have a direct debit facility that you can set up yourself by logging into your account. This also means you can login at any time to change or cancel the direct debit.

For other regular payments, such as rent, set up a recurring payment from your bank account, preferably coinciding with when your pay hits your bank account, so that your bills are paid on time, every time.

Putting automatic payments in place not only saves you time and effort but you'll be building a positive credit history that may help you in the future when you want to borrow money to say, buy a home.

**To set up a direct debit** for a bill, register for online services via the service provider's website and then look for a direct debit option. Alternatively call the service provider to set it up over the phone.

**To set up a direct credit**, login to your bank and select the 'make a payment', or similar, option. Enter the payment details and look for a 'recurring' option. You should be able to set the payee, payment amount and payment frequency, as well as either an end date or an option that is ongoing until you cancel the payment.



### **MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SUPER**

Superannuation is compulsory, tax effective, saving for retirement. It's a way of putting money away now to live off later in life.

If you have more than one super fund, consolidating your funds into one can save money on fees and make it easier to manage and keep track of.

You can **choose to make additional personal contributions** either before or after tax. While you're in training and your income is lower, making after-tax contributions to super could make you eligible for a government co-contribution. Here's some examples of how much you could receive:

Taxable income (pa)	Maximum co-contribution payable	Fortnightly contribution to get maximum co-contribution
\$39,000	\$500	\$40
\$42,000	\$428	\$33
\$45,000	\$328	\$26
\$50,000	\$161	\$13

To read more on government super contributions, go to

www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Super/Growing-your-super/Adding-to-your-super/ Government-super-contributions/.

As your income increases, and eligibility for the co-contribution decreases, you may get a greater benefit by making pre-tax (salary sacrifice) contributions to super, saving you tax. Salary sacrificed contributions are taxed at 15% when they are received by your super fund, which is likely to be less than your marginal tax rate.

You can also **choose how your super is invested**. If you don't make a choice your money is usually invested in a 'Balanced' investment option. Other investment options may generate higher average returns.

# NOTES


#### WHY YOU SHOULD CARE ABOUT SUPER NOW

Taking an interest in your super now can mean a lot more money in your pocket down the track. For example, a 21-year-old ADF member, with an income of \$65,000 pa, employer contributions of 16.4% and a current super balance of \$15,000, estimates their super balance at retirement. The graph shows the difference between getting:

- An average return of 6% pa, and
- An average return of 8% pa.

# RESULTS



The result shows that compounding investment returns over the member's working life could potentially increase their super balance at age 60 by more than \$320,000. If the member also salary sacrificed \$50 each pay into super, their balance at age 60 could be around \$427,000 higher.

## SORTING OUT YOUR SUPER

To make **after tax contributions** to super, login to your super account and look for instructions on how to make personal contributions. This will usually be in the form of BPay details or direct deposit details with your account number as the reference. Login to your bank account and copy the super contribution details carefully into a payment. Make the payment recurring to say, coincide with your pay going in each fortnight.

To make **before tax (salary sacrifice) contributions** to super, **contact Smart Salary on 1300 476 278**. Don't be tempted to salary sacrifice other items you don't need and hadn't planned on purchasing.

To **change your investment option**, go to your fund's website and read about the different investment options on offer, including how your money will be invested under each option and what the long-term average returns (5, 7 and 10-year) are. Choose an option you are comfortable with, taking into consideration your super will be invested for a long time, then login to your account and look for a 'Choose investment' option.

#### **NEED HELP?**

Contact your super fund and ask as many questions as you need to be comfortable making these decisions.



# HOW TO AVOID GETTING INTO FINANCIAL TROUBLE

By now you have a better understanding of the real financial benefits of a career in the ADF and you've thought about some of the ways you can make the most of it. Now let's look at ways to avoid making some common mistakes that could undo all your careful planning.



## **KEEP DEBT LEVELS UNDER CONTROL**

Sometimes it's necessary to borrow money, for example when you want to buy a home, however borrowing money for assets that decrease in value, like a motor vehicle, or to fund a lifestyle, can quickly get you into trouble. Some of the benefits of keeping debt levels to a minimum include:

- · Less stress in life and relationships
- Being in a better position to take advantage of other opportunities that may arise
- Saving money by not paying interest on unnecessary borrowings
- Being able to make repayments on loans, such as home loans, comfortably
- Building a good credit rating that will enable you to negotiate better deals in the future
- Not being at risk of bankruptcy, which could jeopardise your security clearance, and your ADF career.

If you do need to borrow money, for example when buying a home, look for a loan that can be repaid early without penalty should your circumstances change in the future, and make sure the repayments will still be manageable if say interest rates go up or your income is reduced.

## **BE CAREFUL WITH 'BUY-NOW-PAY-LATER'**

Be very careful using buy-now-pay-later (BNPL) schemes, such as Afterpay, Zip Pay, Klarna, Splitit, Openpay, Humme, Brighte and the like. They may not charge interest but they do charge fees if you are late with a payment, in fact you could say they count on you being late and paying fees.

It's easy to spend more on purchases using a buy-now-pay-later scheme than if you were paying cash for the same item, and according to ASIC's November 2020 BNPL report, around a third of all BNPL users have paid at least one missed payment fee, and many went without necessities, like food, to make BNPL repayments.



number of active

BNPL accounts

FY 2018-19

value of BNPL transactions in FY 2018-19

\$5.6

number of BNPL users that have paid at least one missed payment fee

1-in-3

age of BNPL users most likely to miss a payment

18-34

million amount of missed

payment fees paid FY 2018-19

Source: ASIC Buy now pay later: An industry update Report 672 | November 2020

## **INSURE THE THINGS YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE**

Having insurance means that if an 'insured event' occurs, such as theft, fire, accident or natural disaster, the insurer will replace or fix the items you had insured. You are effectively transferring the risk of loss over to the insurer, for a fee.

When comparing different policies, look at what's not covered as well as what is. Insurance isn't cheap if it doesn't cover you for what you need covered.

When trying to decide what belongings to insure, consider the consequences of losing the item. For example, if your car was written off in an accident or storm, could you afford to replace it? Do you need it to get to work or other activities? If your home was robbed and you lost all your electronic devices, could you afford to replace them or be prepared to live without them? Considering the financial consequences of losing the item will help you decide whether you should insure it.

In a nutshell, if you can't afford to lose something you need to insure it. For more information, read the Insurance Money Guide at **adfconsumer.gov.au/your-money-guides/insurance/**.



## **INSURING YOUR POSSESSIONS**

Make a list of the possessions you can't afford to lose, such as motor vehicles, phone, laptop, tablet or other portable electronic equipment, household contents, including linen, clothing and shoes, jewellery and tools. Estimate the cost of replacing each item. Take into account that most things will need to be replaced with 'new for old', however motor vehicles are usually insured on a 'market value' or 'insured value' basis.

POSSESSION	COST TO REPLACE \$	INSURE (YES / NO)

Use a comparison website to find suitable insurance policies. Check the policy fine print for details on what is and isn't covered. Insurance can usually be bought online via an insurer's website.

## DON'T INVEST IN SOMETHING YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND

For longer term goals, investing in assets like shares, property, and managed investments may help you reach your goals sooner. But don't ever feel pressured into making an investment. Always take the time to understand exactly how the investment works, consider the pros and cons and read and understand the fine print.

All investments carry risk so it's important you understand and accept the risks of any investment you take on. Ask for help if you need it, and be wary of anything that seems too good to be true, because it probably is!

To learn more about investing read the Investing Money Guide at **adfconsumer.gov.au/your-money-guides/investing/**.

## **PAY YOUR TAXES**

When lodging your tax return each year, by all means claim legitimate deductions but don't be tempted to make dodgy claims as you may get yourself into trouble. Nobody wants a tax audit. For more information on what ADF members can and cannot claim consult the annual guide produced by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) which you can find at www.ato.gov.au.

## LOOKOUT FOR SCAMS

Scams target people of all backgrounds, ages and income levels across Australia. There's no one group of people who are more likely to become a victim of a scam, we are all vulnerable at times. Knowing how scammers work can help you avoid falling victim yourself. Go to the Scamwatch website www.scamwatch.gov.au to learn about different types of scams and what to look out for.

If you receive an unsolicited offer via phone, email, text, social media, or any other means, always consider the possibility it could be a scam. If you think it may be a legitimate, contact the company directly using details you have sourced yourself. Don't give out personal information over the phone unless you have made the call and it's for identification purposes. Don't allow someone to access your computer remotely unless it's an IT service you have contacted.



Here's how the most common scams of 2020 targeted victims:



# **TOP 10 SCAMS BY AMOUNT LOST**

Source: www.scamwatch.gov.au/scam-statistics

# **TOP 10 SCAMS BY REPORTS**



Source: www.scamwatch.gov.au/scam-statistics

## LEARNING HOW TO AVOID BEING SCAMMED

Go to **www.scamwatch.gov.au/** and click on 'Types of scams'. Spend some time reading about ways scammers have invented to get hold of your cash and the warning signs to look out for. This is one area where a healthy dose of scepticism can be your friend. Being familiar with some of the tactics used to scam money out of you or steal your identity can help you avoid falling victim to a scam.

It's estimated that only a fraction of scams are actually reported and that losses to scams are much higher than the statistics suggest. This is because many people either don't know they've been scammed or are just too embarrassed to admit it. Don't become a statistic, get educated, stay wary.

**TYPES OF SCAMS** 



Source: www.scamwatch.gov.au/types-of-scams

## HAVE AN UP TO DATE WILL

A will is a legal document that states how you would like your assets distributed when you die. If you die without a valid will your assets will be distributed according to the laws in your state, which may not be in line with your wishes. We recommend seeing a lawyer to help you prepare your will (ADF LEGALOs can usually assist); and we strongly suggest that you don't use a will kit. Store your will in a safe place (Defence stores wills of permanent members and some reservists) and tell your executor and next of kin where it is. Whenever your life changes significantly, for example, you get married, have children, separate or get divorced, review your will and make sure it continues to reflect your wishes.



# CHECKLIST

#### Have you got it sorted?

Managing money doesn't need to be hard, you just need to apply the same discipline to your finances as you do in your job. Take these actions to set yourself on the path to financial success:

ТОРІС	SUGGESTED ACTIONS
ADF employment package	Understand the real value of your employment package by using the Employment Package Estimator at <b>adfconsumer.gov.au/adfemploymentpackageestimator/</b> .
Budgeting	Use the Budget Calculator at <b>adfconsumer.gov.au/budget-calculator/</b> to see where your money is going and what's left over to save.
Goal setting	Set at least one financial goal, decide when you want it, and work out how much you will need to save each pay to achieve it.
Banking	<ul> <li>Set up separate accounts for bills, spending and savings.</li> <li>Split your pay into your separate bank accounts.</li> </ul>
Bills	Set up direct debits or credits for bills so they get paid on time, every time.
	Decide whether to make extra contributions, either before or after tax. For 'after tax' contributions, set up a recurring payment from your bank account. For 'before tax' contributions, contact Smart Salary on 1300 476 278.
Superannuation	Choose how you want your super invested and login to your account to change your investment option.
	Learn about your super on your fund's website.
	Minimise debt for things that go down in value (e.g., cars), save up for them instead.
Debt	Always look for a loan you can pay off early without penalty.
	Don't be tempted to overspend when using buy-now-pay-later schemes.
Insurance (personal	Insure personal possessions you can't afford to lose, including car, home and contents.
possessions)	Keep insured values up to date.
Investing	It you're thinking about investing, read the Investing money guide at adfconsumer. gov.au/your-money-guides/investing/.
Income tax	Submit your tax return on time each year, and don't be tempted to make dodgy claims.
Scams	Visit the Scamwatch website <b>www.scamwatch.gov.au</b> to learn about common scams and how people have been caught out.
Will	Have a valid will and keep it up to date.
Need more help?	Contact the ADF Consumer Centre via the website at <b>adfconsumer.gov.au</b> .

# ADF FINANCIAL SERVICES CONSUMER CENTRE

Helping members and their families through independent financial education

adfconsumer.gov.au adf.consumercentre@defence.gov.au



Scan to visit our website for more helpful tips and resources