

**Submission – 26 February 2026 Judy Anne Lambert (ex CPOET)**

**Defence Amendment (Sexual Assault Prevention, Intervention and Response Commission) Bill 2025 – Parliament of Australia**

**I write to support the bill being presented to Parliament in the hope that these changes may help those that have and will suffer at the hands of their peers and superiors.**

My name is Judy Lambert nee Phillips, I served in the Women's Royal Australian Naval Service, Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and the RAN Reserves.

I joined in 1977 and after 48 years 8 Months of unbroken service, reached Compulsory Retirement age from the Australian Defence Force in October 2025. I retired at the rank of Chief Petty Officer in the Weapons Electrical Engineering Category (CPOET)

In my time serving in Establishments, Fleet Maintenance and the last 30 years within the Patrol Boat environs, I can say that the handling of inappropriate behaviour/sexual abuse has not improved. I am not saying that there has not been progress or that no one is trying. I was part of the Good Working Relations later became Equity and Diversity. I was part of the New Generation Navy team, hoping to make a difference. I don't think we act quickly enough and Bases/Ships should not investigate their own people. Hopefully, the passing of the bill will solve these issues.

**110ZMA Object of this Part** - I understand the ideal of zero tolerance. This is not going to happen when perpetrators are recruited into the Defence Force. Start prevention by being more stringent in the recruiting process. We contracted civilians to recruit defence members. Start asking the right questions, check personnel during initial training. Let Defence go back to recruiting their own people. Senior NCO's are pretty good at sorting the riff raff.

**110ZMQ Reporting system function**

**110ZMS Evidence Collection function**

With unrestricted reporting and the official investigation, realistic time frame for resolution needs to be achieved. What is a realistic time frame, is it a month, 6 months – ask some victims.

I joined in an era when women were treated with a little bit of respect. Of course there were those that pushed the limits. If you had an issue, it was sorted out by your mates. Not such an acceptable solution these days, now most seem to look the other way. The Navy used to be a family, sailors were your brothers and everyone looked out for each other. This is not the case today. The ADF is an organisation like no other – it has many dedicated individuals that go above and beyond, but for those not suited or really don't like it, let them discharge.