

Question on notice no. 96

Portfolio question number: 100

2017-18 Additional estimates

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, Defence Portfolio

Senator Fraser Anning: asked the Department of Defence on 28 February 2018—

- (1. How many Muslims currently serve in the Australian Defence Force please break down by service?
2. Are there any special recruitment processes underway to increase Islamic recruitment within Defence?
3. Is it true that the Navy recruiting website promotes a 'devout Muslim' as part of its current recruitment advertising?
4. Was Mohammadu Nawas Saleem granted access to Defence bases?
5. Are there any plans to place another imam on the Religious Advisory Committee to the Services?
6. Are there any Islamic chaplains employed by Defence please break down by service?
7. Have any special mosques or Islamic prayer rooms been established on Defence bases?
8. Has there been any training given to Defence members to help them manage 'devout Muslims'? Please provide details of this training?

Answer —

1. As at 28 February 2018, there were 93 members (23 Navy, 49 Army, 21 Air Force) serving full time in the ADF that identified in the Defence human resources system as Muslim. There were also 62 personnel (4 Navy, 50 Army, 8 Air Force) that undertake Reserve Service (Service Category 3 to 5) who have identified as Muslim.
2. No.
3. The Navy recruiting website contains campaigns and initiatives to encourage a diverse range of candidates to consider applying to join the Navy. The webpage referred to was launched in June 2017, where 11 Navy members from diverse backgrounds share their personal experience of joining the Navy. One of the 11 individuals in the campaign is of Muslim faith and is associated with a caption that states "Experience equality for all. Navy provides a supportive working environment

that embraces religious and cultural diversity, and has an equal opportunity policy for all." The campaign does not specifically target Muslims.

4. Please refer to response provided to written Question 132.

5. Please refer to response provided to written Question 132.

6. Defence does not comment publicly on individuals and their access privileges.

7. Defence will consider recommending another Imam for appointment to the Religious Advisory Committee to the Services to facilitate advice to the Services to support Muslims in the ADF.

8. Yes. There is one Islamic Chaplain undertaking reserve service in the Royal Australian Navy.

9. There are no special mosques or Islamic prayer rooms on Defence bases, however, multi-faith prayer rooms are provided at a number of Defence sites for quiet devotion and prayer. This is consistent with Defence's aim to provide an inclusive work environment that respects, values and utilises the contributions of people of different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives, and is underpinned by the Defence Multicultural Policy and the Defence Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2012-2017.

10. Prior to deploying on operations, personnel receive cultural training of which religious considerations form one aspect. Defence Force Chaplains also act as a religious advisor to Commanders as required, including on operations. The Defence Force Chaplains College does not provide specific training on Muslims but does train chaplains on facilitating the religious needs of all members of the Australian Defence Force. Chaplains are trained to provide ministry to personnel of all religious faiths, including Muslims.