

# Appointment of Australian Defence Force senior leadership


## Media release

Tuesday 9 April 2024



The Hon Anthony Albanese MP

Prime Minister of Australia

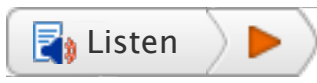


The Hon Richard Marles MP

Deputy Prime Minister

Minister for Defence

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The Australian Government is pleased to recommend to His Excellency, the Governor-General, a number of senior command changes within the Australian Defence Force (ADF). Subject to the Governor-General's consideration and approval, the changes will take effect in July 2024.

The Vice Chief of the Defence Force, Vice Admiral David Johnston, AC, RAN will be appointed as the new Chief of the Defence Force. Vice Admiral Johnston joined the ADF in 1978 and has demonstrated outstanding leadership as the Vice Chief of the Defence Force since 2018. His experience in command and the strategic design of the integrated force will be critical to embedding the outcomes of the Defence Strategic Review.

The Government extends its deepest gratitude and thanks to retiring Chief of the Defence Force, General Angus Campbell AO, DSC. General Campbell joined the ADF in January 1981 and has had a distinguished career, leading the nation through regional and global security challenges. He has been at the forefront of driving organisational and cultural change to enhance the ADF as a modern, highly capable, integrated force centred on its people and Defence values.

Air Marshal Robert Chipman, AO, CSC, will be appointed as the new Vice Chief of the Defence Force. Appointed as the Chief of Air Force in July 2022, Air Marshal Chipman has provided excellent and considered leadership of the Royal Australian Air Force over the past two years.

Air Vice-Marshal Stephen Chappell, DSC, CSC, OAM, will be appointed on promotion as the Chief of Air Force. Air Vice-Marshal Chappell is currently the Head of Military Strategic Commitments and is well placed to lead Air Force and its people at this critical time.

Following confirmation of the Federal Executive Council of the preceding statutory appointments by the Governor General, other senior ADF appointments will also change in early July 2024. The Chief of the Defence Force, in consultation with the Secretary of Defence, Mr Greg Moriarty, AO, and ADF chiefs has recommended to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, the following senior appointments:

Rear Admiral Justin Jones, CSC, will replace Lieutenant General Greg Bilton, AO, CSC, as the Chief of Joint Operations. Rear Admiral Jones is currently the Deputy Chief of Joint Operations.

Major General Susan Coyle, AM, CSC, DSM, will replace Lieutenant General John Frewen, AO, DSC, as the Chief of Joint Capabilities. Major General Coyle is currently the Commander of Army's Forces Command.

Lieutenant General Gavan Reynolds, AO will complete his term as the inaugural Chief of Defence Intelligence. The Chief of Defence Intelligence position will rotate to a civilian appointment with the replacement to be identified in due course.

The Government extends its sincerest gratitude to General Campbell and Lieutenant Generals Bilton, Frewen and Reynolds, and to their families, for their longstanding commitment to defending the nation, their service to country and their lasting contribution to the ADF.

## Quotes attributable to Prime Minister Anthony Albanese

"I'd like to congratulate all personnel for accepting these appointments, and leading the Australian Defence Force with the values and tenets the Australian public expect of our military leaders.

"I look forward to working with you to plan and deliver a more integrated and focused Defence Force.

"I'd personally like to thank General Campbell for his service over many years.

"General Campbell has served our nation with great distinction, during a period of significant strategic change and cultural reform."

## Quotes attributable to Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles

"It is an honour to announce these senior appointments who will lead the Australian Defence Force during a period of increasing strategic competition and remain focused on delivering on key defence priorities and outcomes.

"I'd like to thank General Campbell who has been a pivotal Defence leader through thoughtful, necessary and difficult change. He oversaw the drawdown of Australian troops in the Middle East region and reorientation of our military focus to the Indo-Pacific. He has been a strong advocate for operational accountability, strengthening our alliance and regional relationships, supporting the wellbeing of ADF personnel and maximising the power and effectiveness of an integrated force.

"I thank General Campbell, and all outgoing senior ADF leaders, for their service to our nation. I also want to acknowledge their families, and thank them for their commitment and their sacrifice."

**Portraits of Defence senior leaders are available at:** <https://images.defence.gov.au/assets/S20182391>