

OFFICIAL



**Australian Government**

**Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force**

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

## **2023-2025**

*2<sup>nd</sup> Edition - Updated October 2024*

OFFICIAL

## 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 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:** Trusted to independently examine concerns about Defence



**Mission:** Provide an avenue for impartial, fair and independent outcomes, and oversight of matters concerning Defence



**Values:** Respect. Integrity, Independence. Impartiality. Fairness.

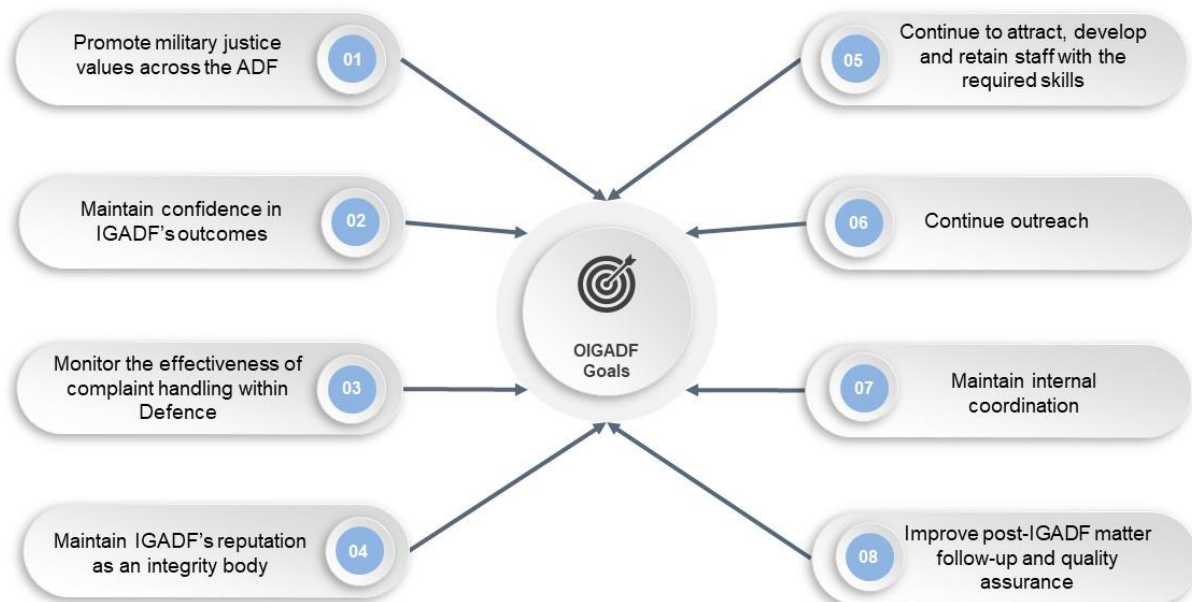
## Strategic Plan 2023-2025 Summary

The IGADF and staff, collectively OIGADF, strive towards being trusted by all stakeholders and promoting fairness in Defence. 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 fair and impartial in our work and in our decisions.

We have identified eight strategic goals to achieve our vision.

- ◆ promote military justice values across the ADF
- ◆ maintain confidence that IGADF's outcomes are fair, impartial, accurate, and timely
- ◆ monitor the effectiveness of complaint handling within Defence
- ◆ maintain IGADF's reputation as a trusted and respected integrity, oversight and inquiry body
- ◆ continue to attract, develop and retain staff with the required attitude and aptitude to undertake the work of the IGADF
- ◆ continue outreach
- ◆ maintain internal coordination
- ◆ improve post-IGADF matter follow-up and quality assurance

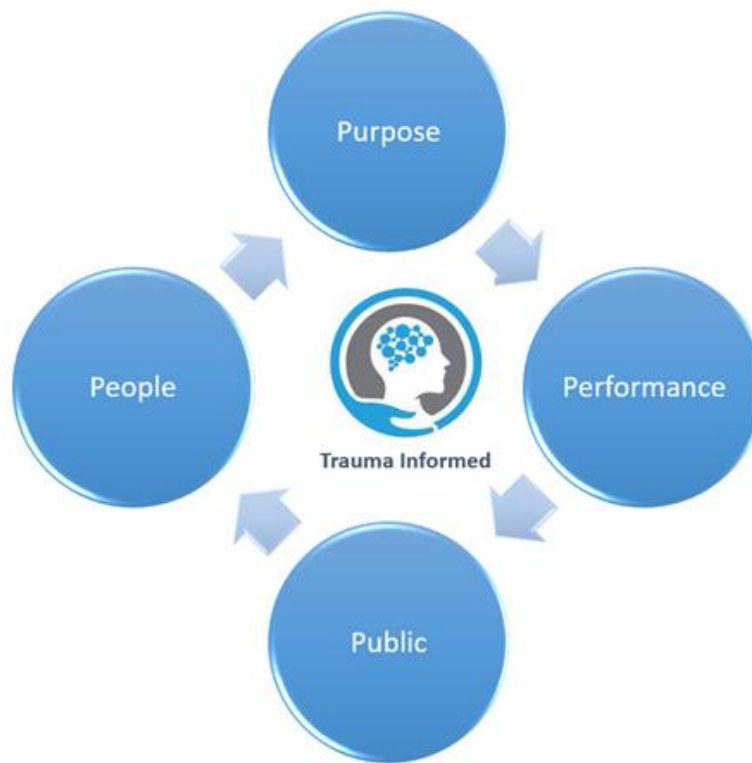


To achieve our vision we have identified:

- ◆ 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.

OIGADF has a staff of about 160 people, which includes Australian Public Service employees, and members of the Australian Defence Force. About 60 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 the OIGADF's 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 (including audits) 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 Disciplinary Infringements, charges, commanding officer summary proceedings and superior summary authority 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 and confidence in the military justice system.**
  - *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:*
    - Military Justice Performance Audits continue to show positive ratings for confidence and fairness in the military justice system.
    - Command continue to comply with the requirements and requests of Military Justice Performance Audits.
  
- ◆ **Goal 2 – Maintain confidence that IGADF's outcomes are fair, impartial, accurate, and timely.**
  - *Goal Statement:* OIGADF communicates about its processes openly and consistently through its assessments, inquiry reports, Military Justice Performance Audit reports, and outcome correspondence. We will be fair, accurate and timely.
  - *Goal Strategy:* We will continually strive to improve the timeliness of our products without compromising quality. We will also communicate how we arrive at an outcome so that in the event that a person does not agree with the outcome, they understand how we reached that view. To the greatest extent practicable, we will ensure a participant feels heard, fairly treated, and understood.
  - *Goal Measures:*
    - Participants in IGADF processes continue to report, both formally and informally, confidence in IGADF outcomes, communication, and feedback.
    - There are few successful challenges of IGADF outcomes by external review bodies.
    - There is positive external commentary about OIGADF and its work both from the media and from other government agencies.
    - All submissions to the office are acknowledged within 5 days.
    - 85% of assessments, including professional standards matters, are finalised within 110 days.
    - 85% of Military Justice Performance Audits are finalised within 90 days of the audit.
    - Once all documentation for a complaint under the Redress of Grievance scheme is received, 85% of complaints are finalised within 90 days of IGADF taking sole-carriage.
    - 85% of inquiries into the deaths of ADF members are completed within a year from the date that Inquiry directions are signed.

◆ **Goal 3 – Monitor the effectiveness of complaint handling within Defence.**

- *Goal Statement:* Complaints and the decisions and products which result from them must be fair, impartial, accurate and timely. Defence personnel and the Australian public must be confident in the integrity of the Defence complaint handling process.
- *Goal Strategy:* We will work closely with Defence to ensure 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:*
  - Military Justice Performance Audits continue to show positive ratings for confidence and fairness in the military justice system and Defence complaint handling.

◆ **Goal 4 – Maintain IGADF’s reputation as a trusted and respected integrity, oversight and inquiry body.**

- *Goal Statement:* Through its assessments, inquiries and audits, the OIGADF identifies failures and flaws in Defence systems, policies and processes, and reports on these flaws so that they can be remedied. OIGADF’s success relies in maintaining trust and respect from Defence personnel, their families, and the Australian public.
- *Goal Strategy:* We will maintain IGADF’s position of trust among Defence personnel and the Australian public by ensuring that all IGADF work continues to be of an extremely high standard and by following up, as far as practicable, the implementation of IGADF recommendations by Defence.
- *Goal Measures:*
  - There are few successful challenges of IGADF outcomes by external review bodies.
  - Submissions and redress of grievance applications to IGADF continue to increase.
  - IGADF recommendations continue to be consistently implemented by Defence.

◆ **Goal 5 – Continue to attract, develop and retain staff with the required attitude and aptitude to undertake the work of the IGADF.**

- *Goal Statement:* A professional, skilled and motivated workforce is key to enabling IGADF to fulfil their 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:*
  - OIGADF has a staff vacancy rate no greater than 15% of our establishment and a general attrition rate of less than 10%.
  - OIGADF staff receive role-relevant training including wellbeing training and training outlined in the IGADF Learning Coordinator program.

◆ **Goal 6 – Continue outreach.**

- *Goal Statement:* IGADF is a public-facing organisation. 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 openness, 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 carries out 10 engagement/outreach activities annually.
  - Improved public engagement should lead to increased interest and interaction with the office. We will measure success by a seeing an increase in website visits, commensurate with the activity in which we participated.

◆ **Goal 7 – Maintain 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:*
  - 90% of matters progressed to the IGADF or a delegate acting for the IGADF for decision are finalised or returned to the Directorate for finalisation within 60 days.
  - Material produced is consistent and in accordance with the IGADF's style and preferences.
  - Coordination meetings are held with all OIGADF Directors on a regular basis.

◆ **Goal 8 – Improve post-IGADF matter follow-up and quality assurance.**

- *Goal Statement:* OIGADF is an oversight body and examines Defence issues to identify and recommend remedies for flaws or failures in the military justice system. After OIGADF has examined an issue, its role changes to liaison and post-inquiry witness follow-up.
- *Goal Strategy:* Appropriate follow-up is a significant part of the identification and rectification or deterrence of systemic issues in the military justice system. Follow-up

with those involved in IGADF matters – including, but not limited to, complainants, respondents, next-of-kin and witnesses - ensures that Defence acts on IGADF reports. It also underpins one of the IGADF's core roles, that is assessing the health of the military justice system. Such follow-up also provides IGADF with feedback from participants in OIGADF processes to ensure its practices continue to meet its mission, vision and values.

- *Goal Measures:*
  - All completed IGADF matters are followed-up with Defence and with certain individuals who participated in the matter within 90 days of OIGADF finalising the matter.
  - Feedback is provided to the OIGADF Executive group on a routine basis.