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LEADERSHIP PAPERS

Negative Leadership

Breaking Point: Antecedents to Change in the Australian Defence Force

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DL&E – Defence Leadership and Ethics
Australian Defence College

AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE COLLEGE
DEFENCE LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS

The Centre for Defence Leadership Studies was established at the Australian Defence College (ADC) at the Weston Creek campus in January 2002. It moved to the UNSW@ADFA campus in May 2009 and was renamed the Centre for Defence Leadership and Ethics (CDLE) in June 2009 to reflect the increasing focus on ethics education in the ADF. The team joined the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies (CDSS) in September 2011 and subsequently moved back to the ADC site in September 2013. In 2016, CDLE was renamed Defence Leadership and Ethics (DL&E).

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Breaking Point: Antecedents to Change in the ADF

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INTRODUCTION

Between 1998[i] and 2013 the Australian Defence Force (ADF) faced a number of public scandals that largely focussed on the mistreatment of servicewomen. While women weren't the only targets of negative organisational behaviour, over time the effect of successive scandals created the impression women weren't safe in the Australian Defence Force (ADF). These incidents only involved a small minority of ADF personnel, but the unremitting media focus on the issue resulted in increasing public and political pressure on ADF leaders to do something about it.

The ADF has a proud history and a positive reputation both within Australia and throughout the world. Indeed, despite the scandals noted above, the ADF continues to be rated as one of the most trusted Australian institutions by the general public.[ii] Nevertheless, when a scandal involving the sexual exploitation of a young female cadet at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) was broadcast by the media in 2011 it hit a nerve, both in the general community and amongst former and currently serving ADF members. Soon after the story became public the then Defence Minister received numerous personal accounts detailing historical allegations of abuse. In response to this apparent watershed of allegations of abuse, a special inquiry into the issue was launched which became known as the DLA Piper review. The DLA Piper inquiry subsequently recommended the establishment of the Defence Abuse Response Taskforce (DART).

During the course of the DLA Piper and DART investigations (2011-2013), in excess of 2000 allegations of physical, verbal and sexual abuse occurring in the preceding five decades were reported[iii]. On the available evidence, a substantial number of cases have been assessed as plausible and complainants have received financial compensation of up to $45,000 from the Commonwealth[iv]. In the worst cases incidents of abuse have been referred to the police and are currently being investigated for criminal prosecution. However, the DART also uncovered a previously ignored fact about abuse in the ADF, namely, that the majority of victims were male and many were minors (under 16) when the victimisation occurred. More disturbingly, the majority of these reports involved physical violence, sexual abuse or both.

While the preponderance of males amongst the reported cases is unsurprising given the larger number of men in the ADF[v], the finding still seems to shock audiences when raised. Defence personnel, like the general community, have become accustomed to hearing about harassment and abuse directed at women and to a lesser extent, minority groups. By contrast, there was almost no public outcry about the abuse of men in the ADF over the past half century. The results of the DART revealed that 58% of the over 1600 male cases reported to the inquiry alleged physical violence, one third reported sexual abuse and 68% reported bullying and harassment. Of the 570 plus female cases investigated, 59% reported bullying and harassment, 50% reported sexual abuse and 20% reported physical violence. Almost four times as many women (42% compared to 9%) reported experiencing sexual harassment compared to men[vi]. The majority of abuse allegations occurred while individuals were undergoing their initial training or early in their careers.

After the release of the three DART reports, the ADF commenced a deep process of restorative engagement[vii] to help address the psychological injuries experienced by those who had revealed their stories, sometimes after decades of silence. Even prior to the release of the reports Defence leaders had already promulgated large-scale programs to address the cultural issues that led to the abuses. These programs, such as 'New Generation Navy' and 'Pathway to Change', placed particular emphasis on the treatment of women and other minority groups, and especially the need for a more inclusive culture amongst the broader, mostly male ADF community. However, almost nothing was said about the way men had been treated at the hands of more violent peers and/or superiors. Raising awareness about the experience of institutional violence against men, in addition to women, has been a particular focus for the Defence Leadership and Ethics (DLE), as the gender, sexual orientation or race of the victims of abuse should not distract attention from the wrongness of abusive behaviour itself.

Given the focus of this paper is negative leadership there is a need to put this into perspective. The vast majority of ADF leaders use their power wisely and with consideration and respect. Unfortunately, the history of abuse outlined in the reports of the DART and other investigations suggests abuse of power is a subtle problem that evolves over time[viii] and is heavily influenced by institutional cultural norms and deeply held attitudes. Indeed, to this day, the mistreatment of women and other minorities within the ADF is represented as the rationale for cultural change, despite the unacknowledged reality that men from all backgrounds have also been frequent

victims of abuse during their military service. While the over-arching problem of institutional violence and abuse of power is a cultural artefact that is still not well understood in the ADF, the role of leadership in allowing this culture to continue is a particular blind-spot.

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DEFINING NEGATIVE LEADERSHIP

There is an endless fascination with how leaders exert influence to achieve results, with hundreds of articles and books produced every year on the positive aspects of leadership. However, research into positive leadership only reflects half the picture. There is now a growing interest in the "dark side" of leadership, where leaders use their influence for reasons other than the greater good. Interestingly, this area of research has been slower to develop into a field of academic study. Presumably this is because the very idea of 'destructive leadership' appears counter-intuitive when considering the role of a leader in an organisation. Of course, such a view ignores the substantial historical and contemporary evidence of capable and otherwise competent individuals in positions of authority using their influence destructively – either against individuals, organisations or nations. For an organisation as reliant on a hierarchical and, at times, authoritarian leadership model, the military has much to gain from a clearer understanding of negative organisational leadership, especially why it occurs and how it is maintained.

In their seminal article on destructive leadership behaviour (DLB)[ix], Einarsen, *et al*[x], provided the first comprehensive definition and conceptual model of negative leadership:

> The systematic and repeated behaviour by a leader, supervisor or manager that violates the legitimate interest of the organisation by undermining and/or sabotaging the organisation's goals, tasks, resources, and effectiveness and/or the motivation, well-being or job satisfaction of subordinates.[xi]

According to Einarsen, *et al*, destructive leadership negatively effects organisations, subordinates or both, it can be passive or aggressive but it must involve repeated behaviour – not just a leader having a "bad day." Moreover, to qualify as DLB the behaviour violates the legitimate interests of the organisation, even though this may not necessarily be the intention. As Einarsen, *et al* point out, while negative leadership/DLB itself is undoubtedly volitional (e.g., the individual has made a decision to act in this way), inflicting harm to one's own organisation does not have to be the leader's 'goal', although, as the authors acknowledge, it could be.

By focusing on two intersecting continuums, pro and anti-organisational behaviour and pro and anti-subordinate behaviour, Einarsen, *et al*, proposed a model of DLB with four measurably different leadership styles; namely, "Supportive-Disloyal" pro-subordinate-anti-organisational,

"Tyrannical", pro-organisational and anti-subordinate, "Derailed" neither pro-organisational nor pro-subordinate, and finally "Constructive" both pro-organisational and pro-subordinate. While laissez-faire leadership (e.g., where a leader opts to avoid their responsibilities leaving their subordinates to make leadership decisions) appears to fall outside this model as it is not clearly anti-organisational nor anti-subordinate, Einarsen, *et al*, argued this style of leadership still remained within the destructive leadership framework [perhaps as a form of derailed leadership] rather than comprising a less damaging style of leadership behaviour, "ineffective leadership"[xii].

When examining the consequences of negative leadership behaviours, Schilling[xiii] found that negative leadership had a direct effect on the work environment, and especially on the attitudes, behaviour and feelings of followers. However, respondents perceived such behaviour also negatively effected the wellbeing of leaders, and undermined the relationship between leaders and their subordinates. While a negative leadership style led to employee demotivation and lack of commitment, changes in employee behaviour also changed the relationship with the leader altering the leader's behaviour. This double effect created a "vicious cycle" where destructive/negative leadership and its effects on employees continued to escalate until they risked "organisational ruin".

NEGATIVE LEADERSHIP IN THE MILITARY

Given the potential for interpersonal and/or organisational damage caused by negative leadership, it is not surprising this issue has begun to hit the radar within the military, both in Australia and internationally. In a strongly worded paper focusing on the affect of toxic leadership in the United States Army, Colonel John E. Box[xiv] discussed the unique harm done to units by leaders who displayed the characteristics of the toxic leader. He argued that military toxic leaders tend to be micro-managers, pretenders or "ego-maniacs"[xv] with each pattern of behaviour reflective of specific aspects of the character of the individual. Contrary to Einarsen, *et al's*, more corporate definition of DLB, Box argues that military toxic leadership is more distinguished by the direct harm done to individuals within units, with the decline in unit effectiveness occurring as a consequence. According to Box, toxic leaders are driven primarily by self interest, steal credit for the achievements of their subordinates and lack empathy for subordinates and their families. As they, "rise to their stations in life over the carcasses of those who work for them" (p.3), Box argued toxic leaders pose a particularly serious threat to military personnel and unit performance.

While Box is referring to a particularly negative style of leader, negative leadership does not have to involve the kind of tyrannical, self-serving behaviour described in his paper to have dangerous consequences for operational effectiveness. For instance, concerns have been expressed by some ADF commanders about the ability of junior leaders to maintain military standards during overseas deployments. Instead of decisively addressing an increasing drive for individuality and non-conformity amongst junior troops, there seems to be a desire amongst some junior leaders to avoid confrontation and simply to ignore the issue. Not only does such an approach have potentially negative consequences for the overall effectiveness of the mission, including the safety of the personnel involved, it also risks leaders losing their authority to manage their troops.

The impact of inconsistent, laissez-faire and/or arbitrary leadership can obviously affect soldier behaviour in many ways. Perhaps the starkest examples of this in recent times are the now infamous experiences of Canadian troops in Somalia and Bosnia and the abuse of prisoners by US and British personnel in Iraq. However, leaving aside these extreme cases, failing to enforce rules consistently erodes soldier confidence, military standards and unit morale, and as noted

above, Australia is not immune to this problem.

To provide a means of investigating precisely this type of issue, Australia introduced the Profile of Unit Leadership, Satisfaction and Effectiveness (PULSE) as a command climate survey tool in 2004. By 2007, Australian Defence researchers were concerned by the percentage of junior Army personnel reporting witnessing the abuse of power frequently or always in their units[xvi]. Indeed, the finding was so pervasive researchers developed the view the PULSE was tapping a cultural factor and not behaviour specific to an individual unit. The research was hampered by the absence of a clear definition of 'witnessing' abuse of power making it difficult for Commanders to target specific issues. Nevertheless, a review of the comments provided suggested most of the incidents related to unfairness and/or double standards in the application of rules and punishments, and the perception of favouritism operating in the chain of command[xvii].

While these results were troubling, of greater concern was the effect that witnessing the abuse of power had on the morale of soldiers who reported it. While no significant differences were found between soldiers on most PULSE variables, those who reported witnessing abuse of power frequently or always also reported significantly higher scores for "amotivation" (e.g., feeling detached and unmotivated from their work) and lower scores for feeling valued by their unit than those who did not. Moreover, reporting witnessing frequent abuse of power was significantly correlated with future discharge intentions. While leadership did not form a central part of this research, it seems reasonable to speculate that leadership was a factor in individual perceptions of fairness amongst these troops. If indeed this was the case, then the results also align with Tepper's[xviii] research showing the damaging effect of negative leadership on individual wellbeing; and especially on those without the resources or opportunity to leave.

The Influence of Negative Leadership on ADF Culture

As stated in the introduction, the vast majority of leaders in the ADF are good people who lead with compassion and professionalism. However, there are simply too many reported examples of negative organisational behaviour in the ADF[xix] to suggest the organisation does not also have its fair share of negative leadership. The examples discussed below reflect a culture in the ADF it is hoped is relegated to the past. However, the lessons to be learned about the insidious nature

of negative leadership, in particular the negative affect such leadership has on individual wellbeing and morale, remain one of the *most* important leadership lessons for the ADF.

Abuse of Power and Institutional Violence in the ADF 1950-2011

> *When someone wants you to do the right thing they appeal to your sense of integrity, but when someone wants you to do the wrong thing they appeal to your sense of loyalty.*
>
> Warrant Offer Kevin Woods, RSM of the Army 2004-08

Negative leadership in the ADF generally comes in two forms, acts of commission and acts of omission. In other words, a negative leader can actively do things that undermine the integrity of their organisation or the wellbeing of their people – as per Einarsen, *et al's* definition, or they can fail to prevent such behaviour. In the PULSE findings noted above, fairness was a significant issue for many young respondents. Where rules or privileges are managed in a way that appears to undermine the integrity of the 'system', this understandably has a deleterious effect on the motivation of those experiencing it. However, if the people with the power to right this wrong stand by and do nothing, the affect can be considerably worse. The ADF has a depth of policy and rules to function effectively as an institution. Nevertheless, if there is a perception rules do not apply equally and fairly, then the system that upholds these rules loses the confidence of its people and the social contract underlying military service begins to fail.

It is the values of individuals and groups that actually determine when and where people will do the right thing. One of the strongest of Australia's (and the ADF's) cultural norms is mateship. Included in the code of mateship is the requirement to demonstrate loyalty towards one's mates, and this can include when a mate is at risk of getting into trouble with the authorities. To "dob"[xx] on a mate is a cultural taboo that had its genesis in Australia's early history[xxi] and remains to this day a deeply ingrained aspect of our nation's culture. Mateship is, on the whole, a wonderful cultural norm, especially amongst soldiers. Australian troops will fight to save their mates generally over political ideals, religious dogma or jingoistic platitudes. However, from a leadership perspective, mateship can be a problem.

To prevent the secondary consequences of acts of omission, Australian leaders should make wrongdoers accountable for their actions. But if the wrongdoer is a 'mate', then it is a cultural

anathema for an Australian male to inform a higher authority of their behaviour. The taboo against "dobbing" also makes it difficult for individuals to complain and/or identify their persecutor/s, resulting in an organisation that has tolerated considerable unfairness rather than critically address the cultural ideal of mateship.[xxii]

The evidence of this unfairness has been playing out in the Australian media over the past two decades, to be capped off by the tragic accounts of abuse and institutional violence reported to DLA Piper and DART. Most of the accounts of extreme abuse occurred in training institutions where young men and women became easy prey for perpetrators both amongst their more senior peers and staff. The fact that institutional violence and abuse of power can occur in military training is hardly surprising, as the cultural norms of these environments create a strong delineation between those with power and those without. However, when a cultural taboo against making complaints – or even investigating complaints – is also in place, it is not hard to see why it took years before these problems were addressed.

It is testament to the professionalism of Australian military instructors that the abuse of trainees has become a rarity in the modern ADF[xxiii]. However, the belief that obedience to legitimate authority is both necessary for military success and also necessary for survival in combat, has long provided the justification for maintaining the status quo in military training institutions. So despite the fact the ADF is an all volunteer force, attracting a more educated and worldly population of young Australians, military discipline has not changed a great deal over the generations. This, in itself, is not a problem, as the training system is generally very sound. However, negative cultures evolve because people on the inside fail to see their behaviour has drifted away from the norm and become a source of harm. Once again, under the rules of mateship, it is actually quite difficult to point out this problem because it means stepping outside the confines of mateship and enforcing accountability. It is therefore no surprise that Defence has generally *responded* to public demands for accountability rather than taken the initiative to address these problems proactively.

While the results of DLA Piper and DART identified evidence of abuse of power throughout the ADF, two institutions featured repeatedly amongst the complaints, HMAS *Leeuwin*[xxiv] and ADFA[xxv]. Both institutions were similar in a variety of ways and these similarities provide an insight into the underlying cultural drivers for what subsequently occurred. In the case of

Leeuwin, the institution was responsible for training Junior Recruits (JR) for the Navy between Jan 1960 and Dec 1984. All JRs were male and most were minors, with the youngest aged 15 and three quarters at the commencement of their training. However, as the training went for 12 months JRs grew bigger and more powerful while at the same time they assumed positions of authority over their smaller and weaker juniors. In the early years of the institution, around 300 boys were housed at *Leeuwin* to complete their school education before entering the broader Navy[xxvi].

Most of the accounts of abuse at *Leeuwin* were perpetrated by more senior recruits against the younger and smaller new recruits. It would appear staff either did not know the abuse was occurring, or regarded the behaviour as largely benign and possibly a 'right of passage'. However, according to the DART report into abuse at *Leeuwin*[xxvii] many complaints involved sexual abuse, extreme violence and episodes of ritualised violence, and some of it was perpetrated by staff. These accounts are chilling, especially when one considers the isolation from family and youth of the boys involved.

In the late 1960s, possibly at the height of this abusive culture, stories about abuse of boys at *Leeuwin* were leaked to the media resulting in one of the first public scandals for the Navy. To address community concerns, the Government commissioned Justice Trevor Rapke to investigate allegations of abuse at *Leeuwin*. The Rapke Report was released in 1971, but was not made public at the time. Nevertheless, the conclusions reported by the Government of the day suggested there were no examples of systematic abuse at *Leeuwin* and certainly no evidence the staff colluded in any way with the few incidents reported to Rapke. Indeed, the review cleared the CO and staff of *Leeuwin* of any failure of leadership[xxviii]. While this may have been an understandable result given the culture of the day, it seems fair to conclude the Rapke Report did not address the harm done to the men who experienced brutality in their time at *Leeuwin*.

While many of the details of the case were similar at ADFA the outcome was very different. This was an institution tasked with providing a university education for future officers in all three Services of the ADF. Both men and women could be selected, but from the day ADFA opened in Jan 1986 the number of female cadets comprised less than a quarter of the male population. Officer Cadets and Midshipmen[xxix] commenced training straight from school, generally aged 18 years but sometimes as young as 16 years. While staff throughout the

Academy could be from any Service, the military training model largely reflected the training conducted at the neighbouring (Army) Royal Military College - Duntroon. Duntroon provided the first wave of cadets from first to third year and this group largely comprised the ADFA cadet hierarchy, perhaps instilling an RMC culture at ADFA. The Navy and Air Force provided a few senior cadets and Midshipmen, but nowhere near enough to address the imbalance of male Army cadets. Army women at the Academy were almost exclusively in their first year in the ADF.

Looking at this arrangement it is unsurprising that ADFA fairly quickly ran into problems with the integration of women into co-educational officer training. The ongoing abuse of women at the Academy by more senior male cadets eventually became one of the longest running public scandals to ever occur within the ADF. To address the public demand for something to be done, the government commissioned Bronwyn Grey[xxx] to conduct an investigation into allegations of abuse at ADFA. Unlike the approach that followed the Rapke Review, the Grey Review reported numerous accounts of violence and sexual abuse directed at women at ADFA. The government accepted the recommendations of the report almost in their entirety and ADFA was suddenly changed beyond recognition. Indeed, the evidence was clear that it was acts by cadets with rank, combined with acts of omission by some ADFA staff that enabled the toxic culture to continue, to the detriment of generations of young women, and men. Perhaps of even greater concern, support agencies within the Academy that knew about some of the abuses, also did very little to alert the hierarchy to the extent of the problem. While not specifically recommended by Grey, ADFA cadets lost their internal cadet hierarchy, making the institution unique amongst similar officer training institutions in other countries.

As noted in the introduction, in 2011 ADFA faced another public scandal about the abuse of a young woman at the Academy. However, on this occasion a Midshipman, a graduate of the Navy's New Officer Year One Scheme, informed ADFA staff that a serious incident of abuse had occurred. ADFA staff immediately informed the Commandant. The Commandant informed the Chief of the Defence Force, the local police and ADF Investigative Service (ADFIS). The police, and subsequently ADFIS, failed to treat the incident as an offence because in 'law'[xxxi] no such offence existed. The young woman, believing her concerns were not being met, told her story to the media. A media storm broke out, the Commandant of ADFA was stood down[xxxii], the police changed their minds and decided a crime had been committed and eventually the main perpetrators were convicted. The Commandant of ADFA was then reinstated having been

cleared of wrongdoing. So while young female cadet had been abused, no one in the chain of command, including a peer of all those involved, committed a further act of omission by hiding what had taken place. The ADFA scandal is actually a testament to just how far ADFA (and the ADF) has advanced from the days of the Grey Review.

The F-111Deseal-Reseal Program

The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) introduced the F-111 aircraft into service in 1973, when the nation was coming to the end of its involvement in Vietnam. It was an era when societal attitudes to the military were at an all time low and this probably included concern about the welfare and wellbeing of military personnel. Moreover, across industry, employer obligations to protect the health and well-being of employees were lower than those of today. The culture of the military was largely 'can-do' at any cost, so the profoundly unpleasant task of climbing into the F-111's extensive fuel tank to identify and repair leaks simply had to be done. This maintenance activity became known as the F-111 deseal/reseal program and against this backdrop, the cultural norms that enabled the F-111 reseal/deseal program to injure the lives of many young Air Force personnel were established. In an Air Force review of the work in 1979, it was acknowledged that "in winter this is cold, cheerless, obnoxious and very demanding work…[but importantly] there should be no need to reiterate the importance the nation places on this work… [nor] to doubt the motivation of those employed on it."[xxxiii]

A phenomenon observed in human psychology is the attribution of failure in another to innate factors of the person, but to extrinsic circumstances when it is oneself[xxxiv]. This is not necessarily well recognised in the day-to-day interactions within organisations, but there is evidence in the F-111 deseal/reseal Board of Inquiry (BOI) it affected the perceptions of leaders when issues about this maintenance activity were raised. Given leaders recognised deseal/reseal was unpleasant work, it is unsurprising workers felt their complaints were dismissed with the attribution they were just being 'troublemakers' or 'whingers'. However, this attribution was real and not merely an erroneous perception. One maintenance supervisor stated, "well, usually it was the undercurrent of things amongst the troops … They would run the place down amongst them. These fellows had to be watched to keep them on the go." [xxxv] Moreover, punishment ensued for those who refused to comply with the direction to enter the tanks: for one member it resulted in seven days detention.[xxxvi] It is therefore incongruous that in such a climate a leader would argue that "At no time was there anything preventing [squadron] members from passing

up this information through the Chain of Command"[xxxvii] and "I feel confident that should a serious safety concern be identified, it would have been raised through the management chain rapidly."[xxxviii]

Other indicators of the potential for harm caused by the deseal/reseal program were apparent. Members working on the program and who lived on base (paid for their Rations and Quarters) were prevented from going to the Mess, the 'boozer' or the cinema[xxxix] because the smell of fuel was so abhorrent to other people. Yet no one seemed to consider the long-term effects of this severe level of exposure to fuel on the young men concerned. Not even the unfairness of denying them access to social activities available to everyone else raised concerns. Medical personnel, who were aware of a range of physical ailments attributable to the deseal/reseal program, also failed to alert the hierarchy of concerns about the damage being done. In the end, the personnel completing deseal/reseal duties were treated as second-class by all those with control over their lives, and this largely justified ignoring their personal and physical wellbeing to achieve a difficult but necessary outcome, namely, keeping F-111s flying.

There is no suggestion the problems of the deseal/reseal program were the consequence of toxic leadership. None of the leaders involved were remarkably self-interested, careerist or tyrannical. Nevertheless, the choice to apply a double standard of leadership meets the criteria of destructive leadership as defined by Einarsen, *et al.*, even though the behaviour itself does not fit neatly into the categories they defined. In the case of deseal/reseal program leaders showed an undue loyalty to the F-111 platform over the care and welfare of their personnel, which is an odd reversal of the supportive-disloyal category described by the Einarsen, *et al*. These leaders were blind to the effect of a toxic culture on themselves and their subordinates, and even when the young men being damaged pointed out to them what was happening, they labelled, blamed and even punished them. This is beyond an act of omission. By continuing a program that both reduced the quality of life and actually physically damaged the young men involved, these leaders were complicit in the act of harm itself.

The 2001, the F-111 deseal/reseal BOI into the program concluded the "responsibility for safety lies ultimately with the chain of command" and as such, the outcomes were acknowledged as a failure of leadership. However, given the that the program lasted over 20 years, it was also recognised that it was a "deep seated failure for which no individual or group of individuals can

be reasonably held accountable" instead "if anybody is to be held accountable … it is the Air Force itself."

Managing the Army ' JEDI Council' Incident

In 2011, around the same time the Skype Scandal was causing a media furore for ADFA, rumours within the Army began to surface about something similar involving a large number of ranking Army members. While the scandal was never actually leaked to the press, it was fairly clear that the then Chief of Army was facing a complex set of problems. On the one hand, an unknown number of male Army personnel, self described as the 'JEDI Council', had been producing electronic images of consensual sex with female partners who had no knowledge they were being filmed, and sending these images to their friends using the Defence email system. These emails were sent to over 100 recipients. While the women involved remained ignorant of the breach of their trust and privacy, the Army remained marginally out of the public eye, but this was a disaster in the making.

At the time, the Chief of Army was trying to introduce a well designed and carefully developed program of institutional change, namely Plan Beersheba, which included the Force Generation Plan to restructure Army units in 'like' combat brigades and inaugurate Exercise Hamel. This was a vast program of change designed to strengthen the best in the Australian Army's culture and structure while also addressing some of its weaknesses. In the midst of this program, the Chief of Army was faced with a crisis. As the community, the ADF and the then Defence Minister became further embroiled in the ADFA Skype scandal, and the subsequent DLA Piper and DART investigations, the Army's JEDI Council incident must have loomed like the sword of Damocles over the Army and its Chief.

Like all good institutions the Army conducted an inquiry to discover the truth of the allegations. At the end of this investigation a group of people faced charges and six individuals were discharged from the ADF.[xl] Some of those discharged did not commit an act of commission they did not produce illegal images of themselves having sex with their unwitting female friends and colleagues. However, they appeared to know the images had been produced and had been promulgated, and instead of taking action, which one might have expected given their more senior rank, they did nothing. This is the act of omission that causes a crisis of conscience in the hearts of too many Australian leaders. To 'do something' means *becoming* the person in

authority. Despite all the training and preparation for the role, some people will still avoid this level of accountability when there is a choice between doing the right thing and protecting a mate, and this is ground zero for negative leadership in the Australian context.

In the end, the Chief of Army decided to reveal the story of the JEDI Council to the media himself and to broadcast his feelings about the issue. While there was no right or wrong answer on his decision to take this step, the leader by choosing to take the lead was taking a proactive approach rather than simply waiting to react. In a society where being an authority figure is always tinged with accusations of self-interest, it would be impossible not to attract criticism for taking such a public stand on this kind of issue at such a highly charged time. But no one can say this wasn't an act of positive leadership.

CONCLUSION

The military is unique in society. It is the *only* institution authorised to take human lives as a central aspect of its role. It is one of very *few* organisations where members are expected to ignore a safer alternative to deliberately and energetically risk wounding, maiming and death to achieve mission success. It is one of the *few* institutions where the difference between life and death can be measured by a young person making a split second decision or a pound of trigger pressure; and both under extreme stress. Indeed, because the military is populated by young people – as war is a young person's game, there is a heavy reliance on older more experienced leaders to show these young people the right way. Herein lies the paradox of the Australian military: while able to make the decisions necessary to conduct a war, it often struggles with the seemingly more ordinary decisions about what is right and what is wrong in interpersonal relations.

While institutional violence and abuse of power are acts of commission, it is acts of omission by leaders and peers that enable them to continue. The ADF has changed because leaders were no longer prepared to tolerate or turn a blind eye to abuse, or naïve enough to believe it couldn't be happening. Moreover, ADF personnel across the organisation are now fully aware they have a responsibility to take action to identify the causes of inappropriate workplace behaviour and do something about it. This is the primary message of single Service cultural change programs, and especially the broader ADF 'Pathway to Change'. The task for the organisation now is to learn how to retain everything good about the culture of mateship, while at the same time encouraging all ADF members to feel comfortable with taking responsibility and, when necessary, assuming authority.

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[i] This was the year the Grey Review (see note 24 below) into inappropriate behaviour at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) was published.

[ii] A 2004 study found that 91 per cent of Australians surveyed reported a high level of confidence in the ADF: C. Bean, 'Is there a crisis of trust in Australia?', in Shaun Wilson *et al* (eds.), *Australian Social Attitudes: the first report*, University of NSW Press: Sydney, 2005, pp. 122-40, available at <http://eprints.qut.edu.au/5624/1/5624.pdf> accessed 6 October 2015.

[iii] Len Roberts-Smith, "Defence Abuse Response Taskforce: Report of Abuse in Defence." (Commonwealth of Australia, November 2014).

[iv] Defence Abuse Response Taskforce: Reparations Scheme Fact Sheet. <https://www.defenceabuseresponsetaskforce.gov.au/Outcomes/Pages/DefenceAbuseReparations Scheme.aspx> accessed 15 March 2016.

[v] The number of female cases appearing in the DART investigation comprised around one third of all cases, which is substantially higher than the representation of women in each of the Services over the past 50 years.

[vi] Len Roberts-Smith, "Defence Abuse Response Taskforce: Report of Abuse in Defence." 94.
[vii] Defence Abuse Taskforce: Restorative Engagement Program Frequently Asked Questions - https://www.defenceabuseresponsetaskforce.gov.au/Outcomes/Pages/RestorativeEngagementProgramFAQs.aspx accessed 15 March 2016.
[viii] Evolution in this context refers to how the intensity of violence can escalate step by step, taking what might have started as relatively benign behaviour to extreme levels over time.
[ix] Destructive leader behaviour is one of many terms for leadership from the dark side. In this case the authors are quite specific about the behaviour, and its consequences – which makes this a useful definition for the purposes of this paper. It is acknowledged by the authors that there are other definitions of negative leadership – including toxic leadership. Given the obvious overlap between these constructs, the terms negative and destructive leadership are used interchangeably in this paper.
[x] Ståle Einarsen, Merethe Schanke Aasland and Anders Skogstad, "Destructive Leadership Behaviour: A Definition and Conceptual Model." *The Leadership Quarterly*, no.18, (2007): 207-216.
[xi] Einarsen, et al, "Destructive Leadership Behaviour: A Definition and Conceptual Model." 208
[xii] The ineffective leader can also be a negative leader but their behaviour falls short of being destructive. Such leaders may behave in petty, self-serving ways, but their leadership is not so problematic that it risks the goals of the organisation or subordinate welfare.
[xiii] Jan Schilling, "From Ineffectiveness to Destruction: A Qualitative Study on the Meaning of Negative Leadership." *Leadership*, no. 5, (2009): 102-128.
[xiv] Colonel John E. Box, "Toxic Leadership in the Military Profession." United States Army War College, (Unpublished Manuscript 2012).
[xv] It seems clear from his description Box is referring to narcissistic leaders.
[xvi] Anne Goyne, "Perceptions of Abuse of Power in the Australian Regular Army: A Preliminary Review of PULSE Data." (PRTG, Internal Working Paper. 2007).
[xvii] Anne Goyne, "The Impact of Military Culture on Unit Climate: For Better or for Worse." (Presentation to a special meeting of the Army Capability and Modernisation Committee (ACMC) and the Army Element of the Australian Command and Staff College, Australian Defence College, 2007).
[xviii] Bennett Tepper, "Consequences of Abusive Supervision." *Academy Management Journal*, no.43/2, (Apr 2000): 178-190.
[xix] Prevalence of Defence Unacceptable Behaviour Survey Results – 1013-2014 data (personal communication, 2015).
[xx] Dobbing is to inform on another – generally a peer, potentially a friend. To 'dob' on a mate is generally considered the lowest thing an Australian male can do to one of their friends. Australian women also have a taboo on 'dobbing' but it is applied less stringently on behaviour committed between the genders. In other words, it is quite acceptable for a woman to tell someone when a man has committed a crime (especially sexual) against her.
[xxi] Robert Hughes,"The Fatal Shore: The Epic of Australia's Founding." (Random House, USA, 1988)
[xxii] It should be noted, the military is not the only institution in Australia where mateship is a strong cultural value – it would be fair to argue the social demands of mateship affect Australians across the spectrum, but especially in workplaces heavily dominated by men raised in Australia. This may explain why Australian men can be suspicious of perceived outsiders.
[xxiii] Bronwen Grey, "Australian Defence Force: Report of the review into policies to deal with sexual harassment and sexual offences at the Australian Defence Force Academy." (Canberra: Director Publishing and Visual Communications, 1998).
[xxiv] Len Roberts-Smith, "Defence Abuse Taskforce: Report on Abuse at HMAS Leeuwin." (Commonwealth of Australia, June 2014)
[xxv] Len Roberts-Smith, "Defence Abuse Taskforce: Report on abuse at the Australian Defence Force Academy." (Commonwealth of Australia, November, 2014)
[xxvi] Brian Adams, "HMAS *Leeuwin*: The Story of the RAN's Junior Recruits." (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009).
[xxvii] Len Roberts-Smith, "Defence Abuse Taskforce: Report on Abuse at HMAS *Leeuwin*." 19-32.
[xxviii] Adams, "HMAS *Leeuwin*: The Story of the RAN's Junior Recruits." 91-94
[xxix] The Navy introduced the Navy Officer Year One (NOYO) Scheme in 2000 in response to a higher than expected drop out rate of Maritime Warfare Officer trainees post completion a degree at ADFA. Under the NOYO scheme, Midshipmen complete year in the Navy prior to commencing their training at the Academy. During this time they also complete an officer training course at HMAS *Creswell*.
[xxx] Bronwen Grey, "Australian Defence Force: Report of the review into policies to deal with sexual harassment and sexual offences at the Australian Defence Force Academy." (Canberra: Director Publishing and Visual Communications, 1998)

[xxxi] The view reported at the time was there was no offence in the ACT relating to the behaviour being reported.
[xxxii] The decision to stand down the Commandant related to the perception he had undertaken actions against the young woman's welfare by allowing a charge process against her to be completed. It was subsequently revealed this decision was made with the young woman's willing consent as she wanted to rebut any accusations she had gone to the media to avoid punishment.
[xxxiii] F-111 deseal/reseal BOI Vol 1 Ch 9, p9-1 -9-2.
[xxxiv] Vincent Yserbt, Steve Rocher and Georges Schadron, "Stereotypes as explanations: A subjective essentialistic view of group perception." *The Social Psychology of Stereotyping and Group Life*, eds. Spears, R., Oakes, J., Ellemers, N., & Haslam, A. (Blackwell, UK, 1997).
[xxxv] F-111 deseal/reseal BOI Vol 1 Ch 4 p4-4
[xxxvi] F-111 deseal/reseal BOI Vol 1 Ch 9 p9-1 – it should be noted however, that the BOI did highlight that there was no evidence that this punitive approach existed in the latter years of the program
[xxxvii] F-111 deseal/reseal BOI Vol 1, Ch3 p3-2
[xxxviii] F-111 deseal/reseal BOI Vol 1 Ch3 p3-1
[xxxix] F-111 deseal/reseal BOI Vol 1 Ch3 p9-2
[xl] http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-11-14/army-personnel-sacked-over-explicit-emails/5092966 accessed 16 Mar 2016.