



**Professionals  
Australia**



# THE UNDER-REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN DEFENCE: MORE THAN JUST A PIPELINE ISSUE

*A PROFESSIONALS AUSTRALIA POSITION PAPER ON THE ATTRITION  
OF WOMEN FROM THE DEFENCE WORKFORCE*



# ABOUT PROFESSIONALS AUSTRALIA

Professionals Australia (formerly the Association of Professional Engineers, Scientists and Managers, Australia) is an organisation registered under the Fair Work Act 2009 representing over 23,000 professionals including professional engineers, scientists, veterinarians, surveyors, architects, pharmacists, information technology professionals, managers, transport industry professionals and translators and interpreters throughout Australia.

Professionals Australia's engineering members are employed across all sectors of the Australian economy. Engineering-based industries are worth \$479 billion or 32 per cent of national gross value added and exports from engineering-based industries excluding mining totalled \$92 billion or 29 per cent of total exports. This figure swells to \$249 billion or 78 per cent of exports if mining is included. Engineers perform design, scoping and project management roles in a diverse range of industries throughout the private and public sectors including defence, roads, rail, water, electricity, information technology, telecommunications, construction, mining, oil and gas exploration, shipbuilding and manufacturing. The contribution of our engineers and their ability to develop solutions to complex challenges will be fundamental to building a competitive defence industry and protecting our national security.

Professionals Australia's scientist members work each day in areas as diverse as they are critical to our future. Our scientists are engaged in a range of roles in industry - and are just as likely to be working on the latest cybersecurity challenge or latest technology enhancement of a submarine guidance system as on-site in a hi-vis vest checking water contamination or at the laboratory bench. Our scientist members deploy the skills they gained in their undergraduate and post-graduate science degrees in roles as diverse as quality assurance officers, software developers, health and safety officers, science communicators, sustainability coordinators, technical officers and advisors, policy-makers and regulators, web-developers, directors and CEOs and of course, in the defence industry in roles from manufacturing designer to biosecurity officers to technical advisors.

As part of a comprehensive range of services, Professionals Australia advocates for members in workforce and employment-related areas with the aim of positively impacting their operating environment and ensuring their interests are represented at the policy and decision-making level. This includes advocating for ways to ensure proper workforce development in particular industries including defence.

We are a not-for profit organisation owned by our members.

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