



HYDER GULAM
Member

ADR in the Australian Defence Force

Like most government departments, the Australian Defence Force employs ADR as a means of resolving disputes. Its sole accredited mediator in the Northern Territory is Darwin-based IAMA member, Flight Lieutenant Hyder Gulam.

The Top End of Australia really is a special place. Not only are there glorious sunsets, but one of the advantages of living in Darwin are the people. Generally hard working, honest, the real salt-of-the people. However, members of the Department of Defence who live and reside here are no different to people elsewhere, and they too occasionally have disputes in the workplace.

I am an IAMA accredited mediator and a registered Defence mediator working in the Australian Defence Force (and managed for this purpose by the Directorate of Alternative Dispute Resolution in Defence). I have been the sole Defence Mediator in the NT since I posted into Darwin at the start of 2005.

My main role as an accredited mediator has been the provision of mediation and workplace conferencing with the Department of Defence located in the Northern Territory. I also have a role in the provision of advice on training in conflict management, including conflict coaching.

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My training to be an accredited mediator was via study at ANU as part of a Masters in Law, as well as undertaking courses by IAMA (*The Practitioner's Certificate in Mediation*), LEADR and the Trillium Group. Defence is also progressive in ensuring all its mediators have regular training and updates. To this end, I am now also a Conflict Coach, which I have found not only complements mediation, but also defuses many conflicts before they reach flash-point.

In the mediations I have undertaken I use the IAMA model. In addition, Defence also has policy guidance, which assists in clarifying the grey areas of mediations. The mediations I have undertaken have generally been workplace disputes. Because of Defence's emphasis on mandatory Equity training, many Defence personnel are aware of ADR. In addition, Defence runs a large number of courses on ADR Australia-wide. These are very well attended, and provide our serving members

the tools to manage disputes within their workplace. The best thing I have found about these training sessions is the change of mindset in our personnel when they are introduced to the dynamics of a conflict (the 'ice-berg' theory, and the co-operation model (the orange model - 'orange juice vs the orange rind').

Within Defence, ADR is an excellent tool as it reinforces the authority of the chain of command and the civilian hierarchical management structure. Additionally, it provides our sailors, soldiers, airmen and airwomen, and Defence public servants at all levels with a process to resolve issues at the lowest possible level. Because of the size and spread of Defence across the globe, ADR has been a key tool in resolving complaints in a 'safe', flexible, timely and cost effective manner. The accessibility of ADR within Defence, the many access points, has gone a long way to managing disputes.

Having the support of managers and commanders in the use of ADR processes is important to the success of this initiative and is essential in promoting wider acceptance amongst people in Defence as a means that they may consider using to help them resolve workplace difficulties, disputes and conflict.

In the mediations I have undertaken, commanders have been very receptive in considering mediation and other ADR processes as a means of dealing with conflict and disputes in their work-place.

As for me, I look forward to the IAMA updates and publications, such as *The IAMA News* and *The Arbitrator & Mediator*. Apart from the Defence updates, this is a good way to keep up to date with changes in the mediation world.

I hope you are able to enjoy the beauty of Australia's north. A great part of the world.

I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Helen Marks CSM, Director of Alternative Dispute Resolution Defence, in the drafting of this article. These are my own views and do not represent that of the ADF or the Commonwealth of Australia.

FLTLT Hyder Gulam is the Wing Legal Officer, 396 Combat Support Wing in the Australian Defence Force based in Darwin. He is also a lawyer and registered nurse. His article 'ADR in Islam' was published in The Arbitrator & Mediator (Vol. 22 No. 3) 2003.



FLTLT Hyder Gulam on board the HMAS Dubbo during patrol in north Australia.