

Call out exercise – Operation Civil Assist 2026

Student reserve members and educational institution information

Overview

At the request of Government, the Governor-General of Australia may issue a call out order to some or all of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) Reserves for defence service.

Operation Civil Assist is conducted annually to test Defence's preparedness through the rehearsal of a call out. This means it's not an official call out, but it is exercised like one.

Civil Assist 2026 will run from **18 to 20 September**. Reserve members will be notified by their unit if they are required and members are required to serve unless an *exemption* applies.

Guidance

Releasing reserve members

Australian educational institutions must release members from their studies to render defence service on Operation Civil Assist.

Seeking an exemption

Members identified for Operation Civil Assist who believe they cannot render service due to **irreconcilable circumstances** may apply for an *individual exemption*. Requests must be submitted in writing to the member's Commanding Officer and include a statement outlining the reasons for the exemption, which will then be considered by the delegate.

Australian educational institutions cannot apply for an exemption or direct a reserve member to submit one.

Exams and/or assignments

If a member has upcoming exams or assignment deadlines, they should contact their educational institution as soon as possible. Educational institutions are required to make *reasonable adjustments* for reserve members who render defence service on Operation Civil Assist.

Reasonable adjustments

A *reasonable adjustment* may include:

- not failing a reserve member
- recognising assessment or practical work undertaken by a reserve member before starting to render defence service
- allowing a Reserve member to defer undertaking or completing assessment or practical work
- refunding or crediting fees paid by or for the reserve member.

Pay

Service on Operation Civil Assist is performed on reserve service days (RSD) and attracts standard RSD remuneration.

More information

Scan the website QR code below for further information.

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