



Army

Questions and Answers from the speech by Chief of Army, Lieutenant-General Angus Campbell, AO, DSC, to the National Press Club of Australia on Army's Domestic Violence Campaign.

17 Aug 2017.

CHRIS UHLMANN:

THE ABC, AM.

QUESTION:

You gave us the figures, the run-down of figures of reportable incidents and noted that it's gone up since this campaign because people are now feeling like they can report it. Ideally, when would you like to see that figure come down? And I know you have talked about meeting victims and have you also spoken to perpetrators about why they do it?

ANGUS CAMPBELL:

Sabra, I would expect that for a while yet we'll see the figures rise. But we'll see them rise to a plateau that reflects an army of approximately 45,000 Australians – full-time and part-time – and indeed, added to that, another 16,000 Australian Army cadets. So it's a big population from which incident reporting might arise. I want it to increase because I want people in need to speak out. And I have spoken to a combination of bystanders, victims, perpetrators. It is a deeply complex issue as I know you appreciate. We're still in the early stages. This needs long perseverance and commitment.

CHRIS UHLMANN: Just on that when you're talking about perpetrators, what evidence do we have that when they seek counselling that their behaviour changes?

ANGUS CAMPBELL: It's an imperfect process, of course. And we have seen some who deeply embrace a desire to change, and that's wonderful. But this is also a long process; it's not changed in a week or a month, it's changed over years. And where we see people who are truly obviously committed to change, we seek to support them. As I say, it's early days and there's long, hard yards ahead, but if we keep people talking about the issue and we keep focusing on our values as an army we will get to the right place in the end.

CHRIS UHLMANN: Fairfax.

QUESTION: David Wroe from *The Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald*. I found it a powerful moment in your speech when you said something to the effect that those army members who are prepared to hurt their loved ones can't be trusted to uphold the values of discipline on the battlefield. I wonder if you could spell out to us how you are putting that into practical effect or how you might? And I note you mentioned somebody who has been reported to be the subject of a prevention order can't handle weapons. Presumably that means they couldn't be deployed, obviously at least for a period. Are you saying that somebody who has a demonstrated history of domestic violence could not be deployed

or can you just spell out the practical effects?

ANGUS CAMPBELL:

The point to my comments were that the army as an instrument of war is an extraordinarily lethal element of our national institutions. And to use that lethality, I need to have confidence in people – I need to trust them. People who are not respecting those closest to them, I would contend are least likely in circumstances of extreme stress to respect others that they do not know. And so, if we want an army that serves our nation and pursues the missions given to us, I need to know our people can do that. I see some, as you are describing, who will not rehabilitate, who reject rehabilitation. I reject them as members of the army. They cannot serve in the army if they cannot find a pathway to the disciplined use of violence only in lawful circumstance.

CHRIS UHLMANN: SBS.

QUESTION:

Chief, Miles Morgan from SBS. Thank you for your speech. Just on the topic you spoke of before, do you have any evidence of how many members have been kicked out of the army for family violence over the last 12 months or so?

ANGUS CAMPBELL:

We don't actually record by specific perpetrator statistics. Because what we're interested to do is to build that conversation, take the individual case-by-case circumstances – and they vary very broadly – and recognise the variation in

law and circumstances in our different states and territories of the Commonwealth and support the victims, remove the immediacy of violence, seek to find pathways for the perpetrator to rehabilitate and reinvent. Now, as I say, there are many reasons, and for that, that's the variety of circumstances is the reason why we don't have a single column perpetrator kicked out. There's many different aspects to it. But my point earlier, if you are not committed to rehabilitate your behaviour and align with army values, I do not wish you to serve in the army and I will remove you from the army.

CHRIS UHLMANN: Sky News.

QUESTION: David Speers from Sky News. What has been the experience here in the Australian Army? Have there been issues with the service of transgender people in the Australian Army? Any concerns that you can share with us at all?

ANGUS CAMPBELL: No, there hasn't. And all Australians who volunteer and pass the employment specification requirements for service in the army, navy and air force, are welcome – all Australians.

CHRIS UHLMANN: Can I ask you too, for parents and someone with a daughter, having seen some of the things that we have seen about the army in the past, what assurances can you give them if their daughter wants to sign up to the army now, that they're going into a work place

their parents would be happy to have them in?

ANGUS CAMPBELL:

The reason I am here and the reason I'm talking about it and the reason I'm offering the statistics I am and acknowledging the pathway we have been on is because it mustn't be denied and it mustn't be forgotten. And part of the reason for asking every general and officer down to the rank of colonel to participate in the restorative engagement activities with those many persons who over 60 years had been victims of abuse in our defence organisation, was to embed into the psyche of the army at very senior levels an acknowledgement of the failures of command leadership and of institutional expectation that we have suffered.

I do not want it to be forgotten and I have no intention of denying it. And I say to mother and father, we'll do everything we can to ensure your son or daughter has a very positive and challenging career in the Australian Army, or indeed the Australian Defence Force?

QUESTION:

General Campbell, Misha Schubert, director of the National Press Club. I wondered if you can talk about whether you've had any resistance within the organisation to the work that you've been leading and what form that's taken and how you have handled it. And can I also ask a broader question, at that kind of conceptual level, wearing your hat as Chief of Army, do you think the

world is becoming a more dangerous place today?

ANGUS CAMPBELL:

We have learnt, as we have moved along this story, to better explain and connect across our army, which is across Australia, across the world, across age demographics and communities, to better explain, better engage on this issue and connect it more clearly to why it matters to the Chief of the Army and the Army command structure, why it should matter for anyone who regards themselves as a professional soldier and why it matters as a citizen of this nation.

So, I think that we have learnt and grown better at telling our story internally and I hope that you can all help me tell that story externally also. It has been a really important journey. And we have many years, I think, of work ahead of us. Because any organisation that thinks it's all okay, they've got this squared – in any issue – is suffering the hubris before the fall. We should always be striving to be better. And that way, we know we will be moving forward, or at least holding steady.

In regard to the challenges of the international system that we see – I am very conscious that most defence white papers and international policy papers in most countries start with a comment that might indicate that we live in very complex and challenging times. I believe that we live in complex and challenging times. But I cannot give you any real sense if it is more

so or less. The important part is that we are all, in our different professions and responsibilities, we're active agents in seeking to drive the story in this complicated world forward in positive directions, working with others cooperatively. That's the effort of thousands of people here in Canberra, millions of people in this country, billions of people on this planet. We all have a choice to move forward in a positive direction. And I think that's what we've got to do, because otherwise I will return to we live in a complex and challenging world and it seems that we always do.

CHRIS UHLMANN:

The ABC.

QUESTION:

Gillian Bradford, General Campbell. Just a question going to culture and I know there is an independent inquiry going on now at a very long arm's length to your leadership within the ADF about the role of special forces in Afghanistan. I'm just wondering quite separately to that and your long history in special forces if you think there has been a cultural problem and if there currently is a cultural problem?

ANGUS CAMPBELL:

I think that the scoping inquiry that I referred to the Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force is a necessary- a very necessary and important aspect of understanding issues, which at the time I referred to as rumours and unsubstantiated comment and the like. That is one aspect, and as you say,

you are speaking more broadly. More broadly, I know the stress and the demand we have placed on our special forces community in particular, but not only our special forces community, over recent decades and that stress necessarily is something that can effect culture. So, the recently retired Commander of Special Operations, Major General Jeff Sengelman, the Current Commander of our Special Operations, Major General Adam Findlay they are determined not to seek to pitch or position special operations anywhere, but rather to drive it always in the right direction it should be. And to bring all their people with them. It's an extremely positive and constructive approach and I think from what I have seen in the first couple of years of this effort and what I see General Findlay now pursuing, it's extremely impressive.

I want Australian special forces, like every commander in the world wants their special forces, to be the best in the world. And I think in Australia that can be the case. And they are certainly determined in capability sense, in cultural sense, in strategic awareness sense, to drive that outcome. And I'm really proud of them.

CHRIS UHLMANN:

Sabra Lane.

QUESTION:

You've talked about the recruitment numbers for women in the army, what else do you think can be done to make it an attractive work place for women?

ANGUS CAMPBELL:

In regard to women serving in our army, our navy and our air force, we see around 20 per cent, a little bit more than 20 per cent in the navy and air force. In the army it's 13.2 per cent of the full-time force – slightly higher, about 14 per cent of the part-time force. Now I want more, of course.

Right now, I am getting 87 per cent of my talent from only 50 per cent of the population. And on the other side, the other 50 per cent – actually 51 per cent – they are the majority of the high school graduates, the majority of those who enter university, the majority of those who graduate from university, they are the majority who get the Dean's Scholar Awards at university and they are the majority of entrants into professional graduate programs. What is not to like about the talent in that other half of the population, of which right now I am only receiving about 13 per cent? I'm not - the army's not getting our fair share.

Importantly, when you ask someone about the army, typically the answer is an answer that describes the infantry, which is clearly – perhaps with the field artillery – the most physically demanding component of the army experience. But there are many parts of the army – many parts – and we have a very small number of women serving in our infantry, very large numbers of women serving in

traditional areas such as logistics or health services and a portion in between in things like intelligence and signals and engineers. What I have sought to do is broaden the advertising campaign. So instead of pitching an army that looks awfully like a 1980s light infantry army which I joined, if you look at the television and the cinema advertising and the web-enabled advertising for army today, you see a complex, sophisticated, diverse environment with interesting jobs for everybody.

I don't think I will probably get very many women who want to join the infantry. I've never thought that. I want them to be able to do so should they wish to do so and pass the test; but I want a whole lot more of that 50 per cent of this talent pool in many other parts of our army. I want them wherever they wish to serve and I think by telling the story, broadening the story from the infantry to a complex, sophisticated, modern army, we've got a great message to pitch.