

DEFENCE 2020 YOUTH CHALLENGE

Operation Resolute

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Operation RESOLUTE

An Issue Facing the Australian Defence Force Protecting Australia's Maritime Borders

Everyday, Australia's vast maritime zones are subject to much activity. Australia's Defence Forces (ADF), along with other government organisations have a very important need to monitor what vessels go in and out of our territories and what the purpose of these vessels are. Operation Resolute concentrates on Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The EEZ is the concept of allocating each nation with a coastline to the ocean maritime zones in which they control and have special rights to the resources and activity inside the zone. The ADF's domestic maritime security activities are conducted under Operation RESOLUTE. There are around 450 - 500 ADF personnel who support the operation. Because of this operation, the ADF undertakes a huge responsibility to help protect Australia's maritime zones. Participating in activities such as this ensures that the ADF is being a responsible citizen by conforming to the current political environment and policies.

About Exclusive Economic Zones

Under the law of the sea, an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is a sea zone over which a state has special rights over the exploration and use of marine resources inside that particular area. Usually a state's EEZ extends to a distance of 200 nautical miles (370 km) out from its coast perpendicular to the coastline. The exception to this rule occurs when EEZ's overlap. When an overlap occurs, it is up to the states to negotiate the actual boundary. This concept of allotting nations EEZ's is to provide better control of local maritime affairs.

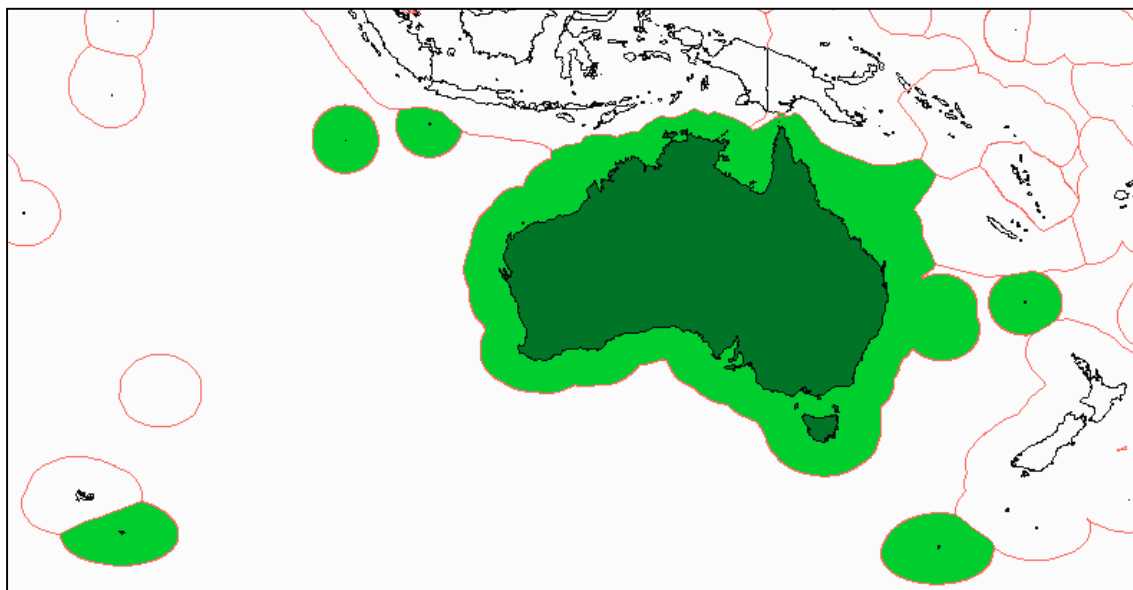


Figure 1: Map showing Australian's Exclusive Economic Zones (light green)

About the Operation

Operation RESOLUTE commenced on 17 July 2006 and is the ADF's contribution to the Australian government's efforts to protect and manage Australia's EEZ. It is the continuation of other Australian maritime operations. Operation RESOLUTE consolidates previous ADF operations. These operations include Operation RELEX II (focussing on unauthorised boat arrivals), Operation CRANBERRY (illegal fishing and smuggling) and Operations CELESTE and MISTRAL (patrols of Australia's southern ocean EEZ). It also includes the monitoring of Australia's Southern Ocean and Indian Ocean territories. The ADF contributes to this operation the Royal Australian Navy for surface patrols, the Royal Australian Air Force for maritime aerial surveillance and Australian Army Regional Force Surveillance Units for patrols.

Australia has the third largest Exclusive Economic Zone, with the total territory

EEZ	Area (km ₂)
Heard and McDonald Islands	410,722
Christmas Island	463,371
Cocos Islands	325,021
Norfolk Island	428,618
Macquarie Island	471,837
Australia	6,048,681
TOTAL	8,148,250

exceeding that of its land territory, as shown in Table 1. As UN convention states, Australia's EEZ extends 200 nautical miles (370 km) from the coastline of Australia and its external territories. Australia has the right to explore and exploit the resources within its EEZ. The ADF has the responsibility to patrol Australia's EEZ. It does this with regular patrols and the gathering of information referring towards activity happening inside the zone.

Table 1: Area (km₂) of Australia's Exclusive Economic Zones

What are the ADF's Values?

The ADF has a set of values which it expects all its members to adhere to and respect.

These values are:

Professionalism - striving for excellence in everything we do;

Loyalty - being committed to each other, their leaders and their organisation;

Integrity - doing what is right;

Courage - the strength of character to do what's right;

Teamwork - working together with respect, trust, and a sense of collective purpose.

Innovation - actively looking for better ways of doing business; and
Teamwork - working together with respect, trust, and a sense of collective purpose.

These values are what transpire into being a good citizen. The organisation and its members do their best to best obey these values and carry out their actions in the correct manner, on whatever operation or mission they happen to be on, with whoever they may be working with.

How is the Australian Defence Force being a good Citizen?

Australia, with its huge EEZ, makes it particularly susceptible to illegal poaching of marine life and smuggling of goods and people. This means that its borders need constant monitoring and protecting. The ADF is being a good, active citizen from these actions. By doing these, the ADF is protecting Australian interests inside their EEZ. The ADF should continue this Operation as it is very important to protect Australia's national interests and it is also very important to the sustainability and management of the EEZ. Assuming the ADF does not continue this operation or downgrades it, Australia could see an influx of illegal fishing and poaching, the increased vulnerability of natural resources and the increase illegal vessels and boats entering and exiting the EEZ without detection. It is of benefit to all Australian's for the ADF to continue this operation into the near future and to continue being a good citizen.

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