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DEFENCE FORCE
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Defence Reserves Association

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MEDIA RELEASE

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A Historic Milestone for Army and the Nation

The nation's leading ex-service organisations stand united in congratulating Lieutenant General Susan Coyle AM CSC DSM on her appointment as the 42nd Chief of Army, the first woman to lead the Australian Army in its 125-year history.

This is a moment to celebrate. Lieutenant General Coyle brings to the role more than 40 years of distinguished service, including operational command in Afghanistan and the Middle East, the historic distinction of becoming the first woman to command Joint Task Force 633.

As Head of Information Warfare and Chief of Joint Capabilities, Lieutenant General Coyle has shaped the Australian Army's approach to integration across the joint forces, and its engagement with emerging technologies, particularly in space and cyber. She is the first service chief to come from Joint Capabilities Command, a choice that reflects where the Army is heading, and accelerates the transformation already underway.

Lieutenant General Coyle's appointment reflects exactly the kind of merit-based, capability-led leadership selection the Army, and the broader Defence and veteran community, expect and support.

The organisations co-signing this statement – RSL Australia, Legacy Australia, Soldier On, the Defence Force Welfare Association, the War Widows' Guild of Australia, Women Veterans Australia, and Defence Reserves Association – collectively represent hundreds of thousands of veterans, serving members, and their families.

The RSL and its fellow ex-service organisations have long supported the appointment of leaders across the Australian Defence Force based on merit, experience, and demonstrated service, regardless of gender, background, or identity. That position is not new, and it is not contingent on circumstances. It is who we are.

Lieutenant General Coyle's appointment is historic as the first woman to lead the Australian Army in 125 years of its existence. What that means for the servicewomen who follow will be written by them.

We speak with one voice: we congratulate Lieutenant General Coyle. She does not walk alone. The veteran community stands with her – collectively, publicly, and unequivocally.

Signatories

RSL Australia

Peter Tinley AM
National President, RSL Australia

Legacy Australia

Mark Lax OAM, CSC
Chairman, Legacy Australia

Defence Reserves Association

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Note to Editors:

Peter Tinley AM, National President of RSL Australia is available for comment or interview.