

Interview with (WO1) Jody Collier



1. What rank did you become in the Army and what was your main role?

I reached the rank of Warrant Officer Class One (WO1) and my main role was a Clerk/Operator Admin

2. And join Army and when did you leave?

I joined in March 1990 and discharged in April 2012, 22 years service.

3. What made you want to join the military?

I was in Wollongong with my mum one day and there was a march through town. I remember looking at the boots on the soldiers and thinking they were so shiny and I said to my mum that day that I was going to join the Army, I think I was 12 years old.

4. What does it feel like to be in a war zone?

I didn't deploy to a war zone, I did deploy to East Timor in a peacekeeping capacity. I remember feeling proud that we were helping the local community and it also made me feel very fortunate to be born and raised in Australia.

5. Did you have any difficulties being away from your family while serving in the military?

Only in the first few weeks of basic training, I remember I didn't know if I could get through that training and it was a very different way of life for me but once you become close with you fellow soldiers it became a lot easier. My initial employment training was in Ingleburn in NSW which wasn't far from Wollongong so I spent time with my family on the weekends and I remember travelling home a fair bit and family travelling to me so it wasn't that difficult for me.

6. Have you seen opportunities for women in the Army change over time?

There definitely have been lots of changes for women in the Army, integration into combat roles and more representation in leadership roles. There have also been changes to retain women such as flexible work arrangements and changes to maternity leave entitlements.

7. Were there any female role models who inspired you?

Mostly females in leadership roles inspired me to work hard and strive for promotion so I could be hopefully an inspiration to other women.

8. Do you feel like your time in the military has equipped you for any roles outside of the Military?

Yes absolutely, there are many transferable skills that you learn/develop in the military such as resilience and adaptability, managing teams and leadership, problem-solving and discipline.

10. What was your favourite part of your time serving in the military?

I really enjoyed my deployment to East Timor but I think my favourite part was being posted to Kapooka and instructing recruits, it was a very enjoyable 3 years.

11. What was the proudest moment of your service?

I have many proud moments but I think the proudest was when I was awarded a Chief of Army Commendation, I was working long hours with a small team and we all did an amazing job I was proud of the Commendation and was equally proud of the team I led.

12. Did you face any challenges as a woman in the Army?

Only really in the early years when the men would sometimes take things a bit too far but I feel like that happens much more rarely these days.