

Dear Minister

Defence Force Posture Review

This submission deals with the strategic geographical re-location of selected Navy assets to the Wollongong region in order to meet the following:

- **economic stability in a region** that is the sole producer of Australian Steel
- enhancing the **security of both energy based minerals handling terminals and the expanding southern gas fields,**
- growth in the number of SME's to **support the declining Australian Manufacturing Industry.**

As the Prime Minister pointed out in her recent address in Wollongong, manufacturing is key to sustaining both the Australian and Illawarra economies. The relocation of strategic assets to the Illawarra region in support of the development of this local manufacturing and resource handling economy will help to buffer the impact of recent job losses, and provide for a more diverse regional economy that is currently heavily dependent upon steel production and exposed to global financial markets. The diverse and stable regional economy that results from this relocation will provide Australia with a foundation upon which to build a more resilient Defence and Manufacturing Industry.

In addition to the obvious regional economical benefits that result from re-positioning military assets, the placement of key amphibious craft (Future LHD) in the region will ensure Australia is well placed to deal with the Asia-Pacific as a region of global strategic significance. The ability of the Illawarra industry and the assets to respond in a timely way to the security concerns that arise from both regional humanitarian and political instability will be important as pressure is placed upon the countries and their inhabitants in our region. Furthermore, having a robust regional economy and industry base will ensure adequate facilities and ILS strategies are in place and developed to achieve endorsed capability support requirements.

Relocation of these assets to the Illawarra region also assist in dealing with other significant domestic issues such as residential expansion in regions of low employment, urban encroachment of Sydney harbour based facilities and a growing concern in the community over the cost of maintaining expensive assets in Capital cities. Whilst I cannot provide funding models to support this proposal, the following anecdotal points are worthy of significant and immediate further consideration:

- *Sydney water front real estate is in short supply and **Navy Warships occupy prime position**, the eventual sale of these will help fund relocation costs.*
- *Long and short term **accommodations in Sydney is expensive**, the Navy pays a considerable sum to sailors and officers to live ashore in Sydney, the **cost of living in Wollongong is lower than Sydney***
- *Transport and **commuting for Navy personnel to GI is difficult and time wasting***
- ***Wollongong has an underutilised and stressed industrial community** that is close to ports and has a **potential to expand** to meet technical demand*
- *By relocating assets we **reduced the pressure on carbon based industry** to solve local employment challenges*
- *Increased morale and **sense of purpose in a local community** that needs significant Stimulus*
- *Wollongong has **deep water port access** with very limited residential interference*
- *Wollongong has **capacity to expand harbour facilities** to support assets and improve port security*

- Wollongong has a **University that can adapt** to meet regional needs – trade and education
- Wollongong has a **Navy community focus** and currently houses Defence elements
- Navy will need to **home port two large assets** and their support networks in 2013
- **Defence industry partners** will grow local business arms to support assets
- **Regional job growth will increase** as area adapts and grows to meet asset maintenance and family support requirements
- A **staged asset relocation program will ensure growth** of services and support infrastructure can be established over time as military de centralises
- Navy **training programs will be moved** to enhance local attendance
- Defence **recruiting strategies will expand** into region and provide **long term family stability for regional serving members**, as well as provide **posting diversity** to existing Navy personnel
- The regions **RSL will develop** to support more Defence related activities
- **Increased revenue for existing businesses through increased retail** spending
- A 4 to 1 **increase in local resident numbers** as a result of Defence families
- **Local sporting clubs will increase memberships and competitions** to support growth
- **Well placed asset** between two existing Navy ports – Sydney and Nowra
- Local transport infrastructure in **Railway provides access** to Capital city
- **Regional transport services will increase** to support new family requirements
- Increased Residents numbers will **help fund increased health** care services
- Opportunity to run **local events to celebrate Navy presence** – Navy cup etc
- **Local council services and hence jobs can be increased to support** every day programs such as garbage, water supply etc.
- Navy personnel have **special conditions of service such as relocation allowances, home purchase etc** that will provide for increased housing ownership and rentals
- Local property **markets will have opportunity to reduce vacancy** numbers
- **New apartment complexes built** to house and support single and young couples
- The **demographic of the potential new residents is not in the aging** category
- **Illawarra infrastructure growth will be funded by the ROI from relocation** – roads schools etc.

Yours Sincerely
Lawrence Stubbs