



THE HON. JOEL FITZGIBBON MP Minister for Defence

Saturday, 2 May 2009

WHITE PAPER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS – THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE YET

The 2009 Defence White Paper represents the most comprehensive Government statement on Defence ever produced.

“The Government decided from the outset to take a comprehensive approach to the development of this Defence White Paper,” the Minister for Defence, the Hon Joel Fitzgibbon said.

“Today, more than ever, Defence planning needs to be done with clear linkages between strategy, priorities and resources.”

“With this White Paper, the Government now has an integrated plan for the management of Defence, based on a clear strategic framework and a realistic budget,” Mr Fitzgibbon said.

The Government has re-examined the foundations of our defence policy and our strategic outlook to 2030. This included consideration of a comprehensive suite of intelligence assessments, and a re-evaluation of the threats and risks which matter most for defence planning purposes. It also examined our strategic interests, as well as the role played by our alliances and international defence relationships in enhancing our security.

In preparing the White Paper, the Government considered a comprehensive Force Structure Review, which evaluated the Defence Force’s ability to achieve the strategic tasks required of it in the period to 2030. The outcomes of the Review are outlined in this White Paper.

“The Government also examined the critical support functions required by our armed forces, through a comprehensive suite of reviews and studies, including the independent audit of the Defence budget undertaken by Mr George Pappas, and a series of internal reviews,” Mr Fitzgibbon said.

These covered Defence’s workforce, the Defence Capability Plan, ADF preparedness management (and the associated personnel and operating costs), logistics, information and communications technology, the Defence estate and infrastructure, Defence science and technology, and industry capacity to support Defence’s needs.

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In addition, the White Paper was informed by a number of associated reviews concerning the future of our air combat capability, Defence's intelligence capability, and Defence procurement and sustainment.

The White Paper's development has involved consultation with the Australian community, specialist advice from eminent practitioners and deep strategic conversation within the Government itself.

"Finally, the Government considered the White Paper on the basis of a fully-costed plan for Defence during the 2009-10 budget process. This is the first occasion that a Defence White Paper has been linked explicitly to the Government's full budget process," Mr Fitzgibbon said.

Through this White Paper, the Government has made provision for remediation of the current and projected force, by addressing crucial deficiencies and gaps which create unacceptable risks in some more demanding scenarios in which the ADF may be involved. Additionally, the Government has also made provision for remediating Defence's critical 'backbone', such as facilities and infrastructure, ICT systems, warehousing and distribution systems, storage and loading facilities at ports, capabilities of airfields and training ranges, and fuel and weapons storage.

The 2009 Defence White Paper represents the most comprehensive statement on Defence ever produced. It affirms the Government's commitment to the defence of Australia, the protection of our sovereign interests and the security and stability of our region.

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