



## **THE HON. JOEL FITZGIBBON MP Minister for Defence**

Saturday, 2 May 2009

### **A NEW DEFENCE WHITE PAPER EVERY FIVE YEARS**

In order to periodically adjust our view of the challenges in our strategic outlook, the Government intends to prepare a new Defence White Paper at intervals no greater than five years.

“This five yearly White Paper development process will be the centrepiece of the Government’s new strategic risk-based approach to defence planning. The capacity to develop regular White Papers will be facilitated by an improved internal strategic planning process within Defence,” the Minister for Defence, the Hon Joel Fitzgibbon said.

“Improved defence planning will be crucial to the success of this, and future White Papers, based upon an enhanced Defence strategic planning process, and a strengthened ability to analyse and develop force structure needs within Defence.”

“Force structure development is a vital capability that the previous Government had allowed to wither on the vine. Defence’s ability to look at the threats and challenges the world is presenting and to then build a defence Force to protect Australia and meet those challenges is core business for the Defence organisation,” Mr Fitzgibbon said.

In order to ensure a closer alignment between strategic guidance, capability decisions and resources, the Government has directed that the Defence Planning Guidance (DPG) process be overhauled and strengthened. The DPG will become the Government’s premier defence planning document between White Papers. The DPG will be reviewed annually and will look 3-5 years ahead to ensure that we are properly managing strategic risk.

The new five-yearly cycle will act as a series of gates for progression for the key aspects of Defence planning. It will consist of the annual DPG cycle for the first three years; a strategic assessment, force structure review and independent audit update in the fourth year; and development and release of a White Paper in the fifth year.

The Government has decided that no future force structure option will be considered unless it has been generated as a consequence of this new improved process, with proposals to adjust our strategic posture or force

### **A Defence Force for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

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structure to be considered by Government through the annual classified DPG. This will be the primary means by which the Government will consider how best to manage strategic risk in the defence domain.

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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