



THE HON. JOEL FITZGIBBON MP Minister for Defence

Saturday, 2 May 2009

NAVY TO ACQUIRE A NEW UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT VESSEL

The 2009 Defence White Paper sets out a new capability direction with a significant focus on enhancing our maritime capabilities for the 21st century, the Minister for Defence, the Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon MP announced today.

The Government today unveiled plans to acquire a new underway replenishment vessel by the end of the next decade to replace HMAS *Success*, which is the older of the Navy's two current underway replenishment ships.

"The size of the area in which our maritime forces operate, as well as the extended periods they may be required to remain at sea, means that underway replenishment of our deployed ships is an essential capability for the Navy to possess," the Minister for Defence, the Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP said.

This new replenishment ship will be capable of carrying fuel, stores, food and ammunition and have the ability to transfer this cargo to other major fleet units while underway. This enables ships to remain on task longer and at further ranges than would otherwise be the case if they had to rely on having to divert into port to replenish supplies.

The new underway replenishment ship will have the capacity to carry at least one helicopter, which will also ensure that it can extend its role to limited re-supply of land forces operating ashore.

Ahead of this new underway replenishment entering service, HMAS *Success* will undergo internal modifications in order to maintain ongoing compliance with new international requirements for tankers to be 'double hulled' to reduce the risk of environmental damage if an accident occurs.

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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