



THE HON. JOEL FITZGIBBON MP Minister for Defence

Saturday, 2 May 2009

EQUIPPING OUR SPECIAL FORCES FOR THE FUTURE

The Minister for Defence, the Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon MP, today confirmed that the Government will enhance the capabilities of Australia's Special Forces through the continued acquisition of advanced equipment, provision of state of the art training facilities, and further recruiting and retention initiatives.

"Australia's Special Forces undertake a unique type of operation often in dangerous and difficult conditions. They work at the tactical level but the effects of their efforts are designed to achieve wider operational and strategic objectives," Mr Fitzgibbon said.

The Government intends to enhance the Australian Defence Force Special Operations capability, in order to maintain a capability edge over emerging threats to Australia's national interests.

"Defence will acquire a new fleet of purpose-built vehicles to support the tactical manoeuvre of Special Forces. This capability enhancement will focus on the key requirements of mobility, survivability, sustainability, knowledge and lethality," Mr Fitzgibbon said

The acquisition of a Networked Special Operations Capability will provide an integrated information environment and a range of electronic systems to support the broad spectrum of Special Operations. This system will be integrated into the wider Defence network and battle management system.

The Special Forces will also leverage off a range of broader land projects including direct fire support weapons; enhanced night fighting capabilities; chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear explosive capability; and mortars.

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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