



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

Saturday, 2 May 2009

### **RECOGNISED AIR PICTURE OF AUSTRALIA'S PRIMARY OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT TO BE DEVELOPED**

The 2009 Defence White Paper, released today, delivers an Air Force for the 21st century that will be better equipped, fully networked and better prepared to meet Australia's air power requirements.

The Minister for Defence, the Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon MP, said developing a fully networked Australian Defence Force (ADF) is a strategic priority for the Government.

Enhancing the Air Force's ability to compile the operational air picture will improve situational awareness and greatly support the networked force.

"The ability to see the 'big picture' is crucial. The Defence Force needs the highest quality and most comprehensive information possible to support the planning and conduct of operations," Mr Fitzgibbon said.

The Minister outlined that Australia's air combat capability is achieved by combining advanced multirole combat aircraft with other force multiplying capabilities, including Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance systems, air-to-air refuelling, Airborne Early Warning & Control aircraft, as well as joint command and control systems. Enhancing the effectiveness of Australia's air combat capability requires knowledge of friendly, neutral and enemy airborne operations in combat airspace.

The integrated air defence command and control system delivered to the Australian Defence Force's Regional Operations Centres will support the development of the recognised air picture. The recognised air picture is used to enhance our planning and management of airborne operations and will enhance our ability to coordinate air defence efforts.

The Mobile Regional Operations Centre will provide a deployable integrated air defence command and control system to provide aerospace surveillance and battle space management from our base bases or deployed locations overseas

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

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All of these important elements will work together to create a Recognised Air Picture of the environment in which the men and women of the ADF are required to operate.

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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