



THE HON. JOEL FITZGIBBON MP Minister for Defence

Saturday, 2 May 2009

NAVY TO BE EQUIPPED WITH LAND ATTACK CRUISE MISSILES

The Government today announced plans to broaden the Australian Defence Force's strategic strike options by acquiring a maritime-based land attack cruise missile capability.

"The land attack cruise missiles are intended to be fitted to the Navy's new Air Warfare Destroyers, the future frigates, and the next generation of submarines" said the Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon MP, Minister for Defence.

"The Government has directed Defence to develop proposals for fitting the necessary fire control systems to the AWDs as an early enhancement," Mr Fitzgibbon said.

The incorporation of this capability will be integral to the design and construction of the future anti-submarine warfare frigates and the next generation of submarines.

"This acquisition will provide the Government with additional options to conduct strategic strike operations against targets that are hardened, heavily defended and more difficult to access by strike aircraft, while minimising the exposure of Defence personnel and platforms to enemy forces."

Advanced internal guidance and supporting weapon control systems in modern versions of this capability would also enhance the accuracy and strategic effect of these weapons. This strategic strike capability will be supported by enhanced geospatial capabilities, targeting analysis and mission management support.

Mr Fitzgibbon further commented "The acquisition is consistent with Australian treaty obligations and customary international law. It is also consistent with our long held policy of maintaining credible capabilities for the defence of Australia, and will act as a hedge against longer-term strategic uncertainty."

The 2009 Defence White Paper represents the most comprehensive statement on Defence ever produced. It affirms the Government's

A Defence Force for the 21st Century

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commitment to the defence of Australia, the protection of our sovereign interests and the security and stability of our region.

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