



THE HON. JOEL FITZGIBBON MP
Minister for Defence

THE HON. DR MIKE KELLY AM MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support

Saturday, 2 May 2009

**GOVERNMENT COMMITS TO BETTER INTEGRATION
BETWEEN RESERVE AND REGULAR SERVICE IN THE
AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE**

The Minister for Defence, the Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP, and the Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, the Hon Dr Mike Kelly MP, today announced plans to better integrate and manage its Reserve forces.

“An appropriate balance of full and part time members in the Australian Defence Force enhances the flexibility with which the Government can respond to changing circumstances. Striking the right balance will greatly improve the ability to surge and rapidly increase force levels in a dynamic strategic environment” said the Minister for Defence, the Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP.

Reserve service has long been a feature of the Australian Defence Force. The roles of part time Defence members have changed significantly over the last decade - Reservists have been actively involved in military operations, disaster relief and humanitarian relief work. There are now Reservists serving in every Australian operation.

Whether as individuals, small teams or sub-units, part-time members have served alongside their full-time colleagues in East Timor, the Middle East, Solomon Islands as well as during multi-national peacekeeping activities. They contributed to the Australian Defence Force support after the tsunamis that struck Banda Aceh, the Solomons and Papua New Guinea. Most recently Defence Reservists were involved in helping their fellow Australians faced with bushfires in Victoria, and floods in Queensland.

“The men and women who serve the nation as part-time members of the Australian Defence Force are a highly valuable resource. In addition to their military skills, they bring other expertise and life experience that have proven to be very useful to Defence. Their training and professionalism is of the highest standard, and Reservists continue to provide an important capability

A Defence Force for the 21st Century

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for the Australian Defence Force”, said Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, the Hon Dr Mike Kelly AM MP.

The Government is committed to continuing this integration, by investigating additional employment models of part-time service. These may allow even greater opportunities for personnel to move between levels of commitment based on differing requirements during their working career.

“Reforms will focus on better integration between part-time and full-time service in the Defence Force and removing the barriers, to ensure Reservists can make a full contribution to the capability of the Australian Defence Force,” Mr Fitzgibbon said.

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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