Executive Summary:

Australia should take a neutral role in global conflicts unless we are specifically called on to assist nation states in the event of an emergency. Our investment for protection should primarily be technological; surveillance and monitoring. We should have the capacity to rapidly respond to disaster events; eg global epidemic or multiple natural disasters. We should increase disaster preparation within communities; particularly food security in urban environments, and resilience in rural and remote communities. Protecting our water, energy and communication networks are required in such a large and diverse nation. We should enhance our role within our political context by opening dialogue with many cultures and nations to enhance peace and security in the region and prevent conflicts from occurring. We should strongly condemn the killing of civilians as a result of conflict.

Main Threats:

Health risks associated with diseases relating to poverty eg malaria, ebola

Breakdown in food and water security (Asian region), natural disaster and general scarcity

Peak Oil: conflicts relating to remaining and accessible fossil fuels

Defence Policy:

I would expect Australians to act if they are called upon in an emergency, eg disaster. Our relationship with the US could potentially increase the threat to Australians due to the aggressive stance the US has taken in Asia and the middle east both in terms of economic sanctions, control of the food market (including food aid that has undermined local farmers), embargos on countries that has increased their income reliance on drugs and arms trade and so on. Australia should be a neutral nation. Defence forces could partner with communities to increase disaster resilience through schools or other community groups.

If the defence force appears to be used as a political puppet for factions within government it undermines their role as an agency to increase security of Australians. Greater democratic control over when and where our forces are used are important.

Defence capabilities:

Primarily passive and technological, eg Surveillance and early warning systems

Rapid mobilization in case of disaster.

In the unlikely event of an international scale conflict I would expect assistance evacuating citizens and protecting infrastructure of importance, eg energy, water, medical and transport of food.
In the event of a global epidemic that undermines political stability I would expect the defence force to implement both border control and epidemic containment within cities etc.

Australian citizens have poor disaster preparation (50% have no preparation).

I am opposed to buying redundant air and water defense infrastructure if it doesn’t have a demonstrated cost benefit analysis associated with it. Engage with the community more to increase the acceptability of what your using their money for.

**Enhance international engagement on defence and security:**

Multi-stakeholder and multicultural engagement within Australian waters and abroad to keep communication open; resolve issues before they become militarized. I do not seek to politicize issues, particularly humanitarian crises; we need sensible discussions with appropriate targets and goals. Everyone wants access to a fair and secure way of life.

**Defence/Defence industry goals:**

We all want to contain threats, no one wants to see or be associated with the death of civilians in the process. Passive approaches via monitoring and surveillance are targets.

**Defence investment in its people:**

Ensure multicultural relations continue so defence personnel aren’t marginalized within the Australian community, along with ensuring that our participation in international affairs are fair, transparent and needed. Many Australians do not want participation in Middle Eastern conflicts. A referendum or other transparent democratic process prior to engagement in international conflict is one method to ensure that the people’s voices are heard.