

CHIEF OF ARMY SPEECH**RUSI****22 AUGUST 2008**

Thank you for inviting me here this evening. RUSI has an important role to play in Australia in the debate on defence and national security issues. It is a pleasure to be here and have the opportunity to talk to you.

This is an exciting time for me to serve as the Chief of the Australian Army. The first decade of the new century has proved to be a demanding time for our men and women. The tempo of our global operations has challenged our personnel and material resources. We have seen many successes, and at times have experienced the painful loss of our soldiers. Through all this, the men and women of the Australian Army have maintained a very strong focus and dedication to their mission while adapting to changes which have been required.

At the same time as we are providing highly capable, tailored force elements for our operational commitments, we need to keep an eye on the future of the Army. This strategic approach to maintaining Army's long-term capability, and health, is a central part of my responsibilities as the Chief of Army. And the future we are planning for will be defined by a convergence of three challenges.

Our first challenge is to continue to excel on operations. I've already indicated that our tempo is high and it is likely to remain so. The Army has been on operations in many areas of the world, without respite, conducting a variety of tasks since 1999. The planning, execution, and support to these operations has resulted in the Army becoming a more operationally focussed, and vastly more experienced, organisation. This is a great position to be in, but we cannot rest on our laurels – we need to seek every way we can to improve.

Our second challenge is to ensure our Army remains capable, responsive and relevant now and into the future. Our continued implementation of the Hardened Networked Army and Enhanced Land Force initiatives will ensure that we have the capacity to undertake a broad range of operations in a wide variety of environments.

Our third challenge is to ensure that Army's structure, organisation and processes are best suited to get the most from our existing capabilities and resources, and that we can develop new capabilities as they are required. Our command and control of Army must be adaptive to the significant changes that the Australian Defence Force has undergone in the last few years. The Australian Defence Force has fundamentally changed the way it plans and conducts operations - the formation of the Joint Operations Command attests to that. Army's conduct of force generation and preparation needs greater alignment with the new command and control paradigm. Intimately related to this, is our pressing need to ensure that we are able to more effectively employ and manage Army's huge fleet of equipment.

Essential to meeting these challenges is the recruitment, training and retention of first class soldiers, officers and public servants. Our people are not just a fundamental input to capability – they **are** our capability. They are not a priority – they are **the** priority for Army. Our success or failure in responding to the three challenges I have outlined previously will be determined by our ability to recruit sufficient numbers of quality men and women, train them in the requisite skills and trades, and then ensure we employ them in a manner that gives them meaning and a desire to remain in what is a unique and highly respected national institution - our Army.

We face these challenges at a time when our population is ageing and our robust economy is developing job opportunities in many sectors. Our Army is aiming to grow from its current size of around 26 000 people, to a figure of about 31 000 over the next eight years. This is an ambitious undertaking but must be achieved if we are to remain a potent force for the future security needs of our nation.

With this in mind, I want to tell you where I intend to take Army over the next three years.

Getting the Thinking Right

We must continue our focus on the support of our soldiers deployed on operations. They provide a highly distinctive contribution to our nation's security. Many of them are in harm's way. The conduct of operations is our core function and we are constantly posing the question to ourselves of how we can better enable the success of our deployed soldiers.

Contemporary operations are characterised by the need for our deployed land forces to work *among the people*, and establish a broad relationship with the supported population, while simultaneously engaging in offensive, protective and information operations to deprive the adversary of his support base. This requires extensive employment of Civil Military Cooperation, Humanitarian Assistance and other non-warlike skills, as well as the synchronisation of manoeuvre within a joint – and often interagency - environment. Such warfare requires small teams of highly flexible soldiers. They need to be able to rapidly move from a non-aggressive posture to one of controlled aggression with superior firepower to defeat threats, and then transition back again.

As if these demands are not enough, the individual soldier is also affected by the increasing importance of the law of armed conflict, humanitarian issues and international law. Combine this with the growing pervasiveness of domestic and international media (both traditional and new media) and it leads us to an environment that demands we prepare our people for levels of contextual awareness, flexibility, expertise, sensitivity and precision which have rarely been required of the soldier in past conflicts.

This is not to say there is a lesser imperative to sustain and develop our conventional warfighting skills. Indeed, the opposite is the case. And this is why; training and structuring for high-level combined arms warfighting provides a crucible for the growth of highly-developed leadership skills and very necessary adaptation mechanisms. No other form of training hones these essential components of land forces for contemporary operations to such high levels. These skills provide the essential foundation for all types of operations that we may undertake.

So, initiatives that will generate and prepare our soldiers for this environment in task-organised combined arms teams are key to our ongoing development as an Army. Our contemporary, and likely future, operations are about rebuilding (and often building for the first time) and influencing civil societies. Our operations will often be less about killing the enemy than about making them irrelevant to the population. The role of kinetic operations in this context is to keep the enemy at arms length while others (not always military) undertake the capacity building so essential to re-starting societies. Our operations *amongst the people* will require a level of precision and discrimination for non-kinetic operations that we have previously demanded from kinetic operations..

But training and equipping for operations is not enough. Our adaptability and our capacity to out-think an adversary is critical for operational success. We have recognised this through the development of our core philosophy – *Adaptive Campaigning*. This is the product of much of what our Army has learned in the past decade. It builds upon the hard learned lessons of our forebears, from places such as Vietnam, Korea, New Guinea, North Africa and Europe to ensure our operations achieve the appropriate balance of land combat, population support, protection, public information and indigenous capacity building regardless of the scenario.

Our developing doctrine for counter-insurgency operations is now at an advanced level. Combined with the training and equipping of our soldiers, the intellectual foundation for contemporary operations that this provides helps ensure our soldiers are among the best prepared troops in the world.

Continuing Army's Modernisation

Over the next few years, Army will introduce a range of capabilities that will improve our firepower, mobility, survivability and our capacity to collect and analyse information. Platforms as diverse as the Armed Reconnaissance Helicopter, upgraded Armoured Personnel Carriers, the Bushmaster, new troop-lift helicopters, unmanned aerial vehicles, new communications systems and Army's new fleet of trucks and trailers will challenge our training and maintenance systems. As if this is not complex enough, we need to integrate these platforms into combined arms teams which are able to base themselves on, and launch from, the new Canberra Class Landing Ships and that can conduct operations in accordance with our *Adaptive Campaigning* approach.

None of this will be possible if we don't recruit and train the right men and women to operate and maintain these wonderful new capabilities. This will require us to have innovative strategies to train sufficient numbers of people, while also retaining our people with experience.

If this was all we had to do it would challenge us. But we will introduce these platforms while remaining involved in operations in many different theatres and concurrently re-aligning our command and control to reflect 21st century realities. This will require careful synchronisation, prioritisation and allocation of resources.

On assuming command of the Army last month, I forecast changes in how Army operates. In particular, I undertook to review our structures and organisation to ensure that we adapt to changes in the security environment, and in the ADF's joint command and control, over the last decade.

Our current approach with multiple levels of command in a strict hierarchical structure reflects the pre-HQJOC command and control arrangements. It would be fair to say that Army's higher level command and control has not evolved significantly at a time when we have seen huge changes in ADF command and control. There are, arguably,

too many headquarters. This slows down decision cycles, constricts the passage of information in an age of email and Blackberries, and the sharing of lessons learned.

We have not yet fully transitioned to a culture where Army's mission is to undertake the force generation and preparation of land warfare capabilities for employment by joint commanders. Army provides forces for operations; it does not conduct operations. In doing so, I intend to ensure our force generation and preparation processes mirror our adaptive approach to operations, encapsulated in our Adaptive Campaigning doctrine.

As we have transitioned to an Army that is constantly deploying force elements, it has made us focus more on the supporting mechanisms. In particular, we have learned much in the last decade about the strengths and weakness of our current structures and processes for generating and preparing personnel and organisations for operations.

Rapidly evolving operational and contingency requirements for joint operations demands an equally flexible force generation and preparation process. We believe an optimum level of support for operations can be achieved through a more systemic approach to adaptation within the force generation and preparation of Army force elements.

To this end, since the start of this year a team of planners from across the Army have developed and war-gamed a range of options to ensure that Army's generation and preparation of land forces is conducted more effectively and efficiently, and in better alignment with the new joint command framework. The principal aims of this work are to:

- Improve Army's alignment with, and capacity to inform, ADF's strategic and operational joint planning.
- Better execute force generation and preparation, in a manner that balances operational commitments and contingency planning.

- Increase the effectiveness and efficiency of training within Army.
- Improve the linkage between resource inputs and collective training outputs within Army's force generation and preparation continuum.
- Improve the quality and timeliness of information flows throughout Army in order to enhance Army's adaptation mechanisms at all levels.

I hope to be able to make an announcement in the short term on the outcomes of this planning. It will form a natural and evolutionary step in Army's continuous modernisation.

I would like to acknowledge the leadership of LTGEN Leahy, for the tremendous advances in the capability of Army over the past six years. It is my aim to build rapidly on the very sound foundation he has provided to continue improving the ability of Army to provide first-class people and units when and where are nation requires them. We will continue the development of a hardened, networked, adaptive – and above all – ready Army.

Conclusion

The last decade has challenged Army's conduct of its core role: the generation and preparation of land forces for operations. And while Army has met the challenge on every occasion, we have learnt much that we can exploit to more effectively and efficiently provide land forces for operations.

The success of our operations indicates that our soldiers are of the highest quality. They continue to perform at exceptional levels of individual and collective performance even when under significant pressure. But, we need to accept that operational excellence requires constant re-evaluation of how the Army as a whole thinks and operates. To ensure our soldiers continue to excel on operations, our challenge is to continually ask ourselves 'how can we, as an Army, improve?'

This is an ongoing process; I see one of the principal challenges of my time in command of the Army as ensuring we are postured to be able to continually adapt to the environment around us. We must ensure that Army's structure and organisation is appropriate for the challenges we face – now and in the future. We must ensure that our command and control is adapted to the changes that the Australian Defence Force has undergone in the last few years. We must ensure we improve the conduct of our force generation and preparation with the resources we are given. These are not insignificant undertakings. But we owe it to our soldiers deployed on operations, and those who will do so in future, that we apply to the task every measure of intellect and energy we possess.

I would be happy to now take your questions.