



**Stephen Smith MP**  
Minister for Defence

## **M E D I A R E L E A S E**

MR 177/11

22 June 2011

### **Australian Defence Force Posture Review**

Minister for Defence Stephen Smith announced today that the Government will undertake a Force Posture Review to assess whether the Australian Defence Force (ADF) is correctly geographically positioned to meet Australia's modern and future strategic and security challenges.

The Force Posture Review will be undertaken by the Department of Defence and overseen by an expert panel made up of two renowned Australian national security specialists: Dr Allan Hawke and Mr Ric Smith.

The results of the Review and the views of the Expert Panel will help provide a strategic context for the next scheduled Defence White Paper in the first quarter of 2014.

The Review will address the range of present and emerging global, regional and national strategic and security factors which require careful consideration for the future, including:

- the rise of the Asia-Pacific as a region of global strategic significance;
- the rise of the Indian Ocean rim as a region of global strategic significance;
- the growth of military power projection capabilities of countries in the Asia Pacific;
- the growing need for the provision of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief following extreme events in the Asia Pacific region; and
- energy security and security issues associated with expanding offshore resource exploitation in our North West and Northern approaches.

It is essential that into the future Defence and the Australian Defence Force is appropriately positioned to respond in a timely way to Australia's strategic and security demands.

The Review will build on the strategic and capability judgements contained in the Defence White Paper 2009 *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030*, and consider the implications for Force Posture from the array of emerging strategic and security influences.

The Review will be informed by the work currently underway in relation to base consolidation, through which Defence is assessing basing requirements and developing options for changes to Defence's estate over the next 25 year period.

The Force Posture Review will:

- a) as its starting point draw on the security, strategic and capability judgements outlined in the Defence White Paper 2009 *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030*;
- b) draw on work currently underway in Defence through the 2011 Annual Defence Planning Guidance;
- c) outline the future security and strategic environment and challenges Australia needs to be positioned to respond to up to 2030;
- d) consider the potential strategic and security role of Australia's offshore territories, particularly Cocos and Christmas Islands, for Force Posture requirements;
- e) consider the implications for ADF Force Posture of the need for energy security, including security issues associated with expanding offshore resource exploitation in our North West and Northern approaches;
- f) consider how the future ADF Force Posture will support Australia's ability to respond to a range of activities including:

- deployments on missions and operations overseas;
  - support of operations in our wider region; and
  - practical engagement with the countries of the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean rim in ways that help to shape security and strategic circumstances in Australia's interest;
- g) assess the impact on the ADF's Force Posture of a range of domestic, demographic and economic issues including:
- more intense minerals and petroleum resource activities around Defence training and exercise ranges;
  - urban encroachment on existing Defence facilities;
  - community attitudes to living standards and residential locations; and
  - the need for a more cost-effective approach to basing;
- h) make recommendations in relation to the basing options for Force 2030 across Australia including in relation to:
- Navy platforms (including the Air Warfare Destroyers, Landing Helicopter Docks, Future Submarines, the ANZAC Frigate and its replacements and offshore patrol vessels);
  - Army's additional northern basing requirements; and
  - Air Force's plans to introduce a range of new aircraft and associated support systems into service; and
- i) consider other relevant issues including population and population spread.

The Review will complement the work currently underway with the United States on the ongoing United States Global Force Posture Review by the joint Australian-United States working group.

The Review will be developed by the Department of Defence.

The expert panel of Dr Hawke and Mr Smith will provide overall guidance to the Defence Force Posture Review.

Dr Hawke is a former Secretary of the Department of Defence. Mr Smith is Australia's Special Envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan, and a former Secretary of the Department of Defence.

On Dr Hawke's and Mr Smith's recommendation, the Expert Panel may be augmented with additional expertise during the course of the Review.

The panel will provide a progress report to me before the end of 2011, with its Report provided to Government during the first quarter of 2012.