



THE HON. JOEL FITZGIBBON MP
Minister for Defence

THE HON. WARREN SNOWDON MP
Minister for Defence Science and Personnel

Saturday, 2 May 2009

REFORMING THE DEFENCE WORKFORCE

The Minister for Defence, the Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP, and the Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, the Hon Warren Snowdon MP, announced today that the Government will reform the Defence workforce by creating an integrated workforce that has the right balance of military, civilian and contractor staff.

“Over the next decade Defence will grow both its military and civilian workforce, but will manage the balance in a way that is more cost effective and adaptive to future Defence needs,” Mr Fitzgibbon said.

“On average, full-time uniformed members cost around 30 per cent more than their civilian counterparts. Defence will use civilian staff to perform military support roles where they represent a more efficient use of Defence funds.

“As part of the Strategic Reform Program, Defence will employ permanent Australian Defence Force members only where there is a direct operational or operational support requirement to do so, and will employ contract staff primarily in areas of labour market shortage.

“This will ensure that our uniformed members are focussed on performing combat and combat related activities, thus best utilising their military expertise.” Mr Snowdon said.

Over 75% of current Defence Force members are already posted to combat or combat-related roles, and will not be affected.

“Defence has identified military positions within the support workforce that may be suitable for conversion to civilian roles. This will reduce workforce costs, and ensure the right balance between combat and support roles within the Defence Forces,” Mr Snowdon said.

A Defence Force for the 21st Century

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“Contracted staff, who also form part of the Defence workforce, generally cost between 15 and 40 percent more than their equivalents in the civilian workforce, dependant on market pricing,” Mr Snowden said.

While the civilianisation of military positions and conversion of contractors to civilians will see a rise in the number of public service positions, the total workforce mix will remain in balance.

“These important changes to the Defence workforce will not compromise Australia’s defence capability, and will take into account the important role of military positions in areas such as training, respite, trade sustainability, representative duties, and specialist military skills,” Mr Snowden said.

In addition, to complement these workforce reforms Defence will redesign its core business processes to streamline and automate workflows where possible and revise the level of services offered.

“Defence will consolidate, centralise and standardise ‘like’ services such as garrison support, payroll, human resources and finance functions,” Mr Snowden 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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