



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Defence**

# THE HARDENED AND NETWORKED ARMY



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The Government is committed to ensuring that the Army is of sufficient size and has the right equipment to meet the challenges of increasingly demanding strategic conditions. The Hardened and Networked Army will increase the size and firepower of the land force, improve the protection provided to our troops, and allow them to communicate better on the future battlefield.

The Army will be capable of providing a broader range of options and forces that can be employed for longer and if necessary, in more lethal scenarios. This is across the range of likely tasks, from humanitarian relief efforts to the more dangerous warfighting operations.

The Army will adapt in response to the demands outlined in the Defence Update 2005. It will also be prepared for operations against adversaries armed with increasingly lethal weapons that are all too easily available. The battlefield has also become more complex. It is characterised by close combat in cities and villages against adversaries who hide within the local civilian population. In the same place and at the same time, Army units are required to fight, conduct peacekeeping and provide humanitarian assistance. The Army will be structured, trained and equipped accordingly.

Through the Defence Capability Plan, the Army is already being enhanced. However, further improvements will be delivered under the banner of the Hardened and Networked Army. This next phase will be a ten year plan, starting in 2006.



## **BEST USE OF THE DEFENCE CAPABILITY PLAN**

The Army will make best use of the impressive array of equipment being delivered over the next ten years, from new helicopters and tanks through to new trucks, weapon systems and individual combat equipment.

## **ENHANCED SURVIVABILITY**

The Hardened and Networked Army will enhance the survivability of deployed land forces through an increase in Army's combat weight. This will include re-rolling the 3rd Battalion the Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR) from a light parachute battalion to generate a second mechanised battlegroup in 2011.

## **IMPROVED SUSTAINABILITY**

The Army will be more capable of sustaining its deployed forces through an increase in size of 1,485 personnel. The majority of the additional personnel will be provided to the Army's front line deployable units with a small number supporting training.

## **ENHANCED READINESS**

Through a redistribution of personnel and equipment and by increasing the Army's size, readiness across the Army will be enhanced.

## **A NETWORK ENABLED ARMY**

The Army will improve its communication networks to ensure the rapid transfer of information across the



battlefield. This includes the provision through the Defence Capability Plan of radios to individual soldiers through to battle management systems for commanders.

## **A MORE RELEVANT AND CAPABLE ARMY RESERVE**

The Army Reserve will be re-focused to provide a smaller number of high readiness forces at the individual and small team level rather than providing larger units that are at lower readiness. Approximately 2,800 high readiness Reservists will be made available to support the Army's front line deployable units.

## **BETTER JOINT AND COALITION INTEROPERABILITY**

The Army will be more capable of working with the other Services and with other Armies. Should Australia be asked

again, the ADF will be more capable of leading any future regional coalitions in operations such as those conducted in Timor - Leste and the Solomon Islands.

### **INCREASED CAPABILITY AND VERSATILITY**

The Army will be more capable and versatile through the development of a new force structure of combined arms battlegroups.

### **IMPROVED GEOGRAPHIC DISPOSITION**

On the recommendation of the Army, the Government has agreed in principle to relocate 3 RAR from Sydney to Adelaide. Adelaide offers the ideal location for the 3 RAR mechanised battlegroup and for Defence families. Adelaide has good access to training areas in Central and

Northern Australia via the new Darwin to Adelaide rail link. Importantly, this training can be easily combined with other mechanised elements from the 1st Brigade in Darwin, further lifting the Army's capability. Furthermore, having mechanised battalions in both Northern and Southern Australia will allow rotations from tropical conditions during a soldier's service.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Army has achieved great success in recent times and has provided tremendous service to the Government and the people of Australia. The Hardened and Networked Army will capitalise on the Army's strengths, principally its people and its equipment, and will set the Army on a course for success for the next 10 years and beyond.

