



THE HON. JOEL FITZGIBBON MP Minister for Defence

Saturday, 2 May 2009

THE 2009 DEFENCE WHITE PAPER – THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE WHITE PAPER OF THE MODERN ERA

The Prime Minister and the Minister for Defence today released the most comprehensive Defence White Paper ever produced by an Australian Government.

“Representing over 14 months of hard work, involving all areas of Defence and the complete re-examination of Defence strategy, capabilities, business processes and resources, this is the most comprehensive White Paper ever released,” said Mr Fitzgibbon.

The new White Paper affirms the Rudd Labor Government’s commitment to the defence of Australia, the security and stability of the regional security environment, and a rules-based global security order.

The primary outcome of the White Paper is to build a future force required for the defence of Australia and the security of the immediate region. In meeting this aim, the existing force will be fixed to bring it up to its intended strength after years of under investment and over commitment by the former Liberal Government.

This White Paper confirms the centrality of the alliance relationship with the United States, and reaffirms Australia’s commitment to the United Nations system.

The White Paper notes the increasing uncertainty of the strategic environment, and better positions Defence to respond to the broad range of possible conflicts and contingencies likely to impact upon Australia’s future security.

“The capabilities outlined in the White Paper will, over the next 20 years, create one of the most capable Defence forces in our region, with the world’s best people, equipment and support systems,” said Mr Fitzgibbon. “The Australian Defence Force we are creating will have access to leading edge technology, the finest equipment and the most professional and capable soldiers, sailors and air men and women

A Defence Force for the 21st Century

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To achieve this, the Government has directed the most complex and far reaching reforms of Defence business ever undertaken, with the redirection of significant internal Defence financial resources to the development of new capability.

Fundamental reform to Defence personnel management arrangements will also take place through the creation of an integrated workforce that has the right balance of military, civilian and contract personnel. This will be combined with a new People Strategy that will drive a range of initiatives to recruit and retain the right people.

To ensure Defence optimises the resources available for its core business, Defence will standardise and consolidate shared services and develop smarter methods of undertaking support functions such as facilities management, major equipment maintenance, logistics, procurement and business information systems.

The Government has agreed to reform the way Defence is funded, to better align Defence funding with the costs of delivering the future force required for the defence of Australia and its immediate region. This involves a new funding model, which includes the continuation of 3% real growth in Defence funding to 2017/18, with a commitment to growth, in real terms, at 2.2% per annum beyond. This would maintain Defence funding at a broadly constant share of Australia's Gross Domestic Product.

"This is a necessary White Paper that brings with it essential reforms of how Defence is managed to delivers the Defence Force Australia needs and deserves," Mr Fitzgibbon 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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