



THE HON. JOEL FITZGIBBON MP
Minister for Defence

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

Saturday, 2 May 2009

**INVESTING IN THE DEFENCE FORCE OF THE
FUTURE**

The Minister for Defence, the Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP, and the Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, the Hon Warren Snowdon MP, today announced that, over the next decade, the Australian Defence Force will grow by over 3000 members to approximately 57,800 people. The Defence organisation will also grow its civilian workforce, including contractors, by around 300 to approximately 21,900.

“This growth in the Defence workforce is essential to develop, deliver and operate the new capability announced in the White Paper,” the Minister for Defence, the Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP said.

“Attracting and retaining our future workforce will be one of the most significant challenges in the implementation of this White Paper, and the Government is determined to ensure that Defence puts in place the right strategies to achieve these outcomes,” Mr Snowdon said.

The Government is developing a new strategic approach to managing its people and will commit an additional \$880m over the next four years to initiatives that will target the changing needs of those who serve and those attracted to a career in Defence, Mr Snowdon said.

“People are the key to delivering the goals set out in this White Paper,” Mr Snowdon said.

“The new Defence People Strategy will be the foundation on which the future workforce will be built” the Minister said. “It will address the key issues of the size and shape of the future Defence workforce, and how Defence will deliver that work force.”

A Defence Force for the 21st Century

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“The strategy will drive a range of initiatives aimed at improving Defence’s ability to attract the right people, better manage its workforce and ensure they remain satisfied with their choice of Defence as an employer,” Mr Snowdon said.

Almost \$400m over the next four years will be spent on housing initiatives aimed at providing greater flexibility in housing choices, supporting the mobility of Australian Defence Force members, and ensuring continued access to quality housing.

An additional \$55m over the next four years will be invested in supporting Defence families, including extending post-deployment support to Reservists and for additional Community Development Officers. The Government will also extend the trial health care arrangements announced in the 2008-09 Budget, and has committed additional funding over the next three years to progressively deliver basic medical and dental care to Defence families.

A further investment in Health of almost \$150 million over the next four years will include the implementation of the recommendations from the independent *Review of Mental Health Care in the Australian Defence Force and Transition through Discharge* conducted by Associate Professor David Dunt; continuation and improvement of the Australian Defence Force Rehabilitation Program to assist members in their successful and timely return to work; and increased support for critically ill Defence members.

Diversity initiatives totalling \$35 million will be implemented to increase recruitment opportunities and retention of women, Indigenous and multicultural Australians, including an Indigenous development program.

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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