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Submission: This submission on behalf of Charles Darwin University focuses on five points for consideration of government in the development of the Defence White Paper. These points are:

- a) The effects of northern environmental and climatic conditions on equipment and personnel need to be considered in developing Defence Policy
- b) That the new and evolving situations that the ADF are undertaking continue to produce stressful situations on personnel. This clearly manifests itself when personnel try to integrate into normal Australian life.
- c) Bio-security is rapidly becoming one of the most important considerations for the security of the nation. The ability of the ADF to respond quickly and appropriately to an outbreak, irrespective of whether it was orchestrated or random, is of paramount importance in formulating a defence strategy for this century.
- d) The ADF is world renown for its humanitarian capacity at both strategic and tactical levels. Future Defence policy should build on this established strength.
- e) NORFORCE with its effective ability as a military model to bridge the gap between collective and mainstream Australian cultures represents a strategic ability to generate capital value in Indigenous labour.

Each of these points is examined in more detail below.

a) Effect of Climate on Personnel and Equipment

The defence build up in the north of Australia, including the locating of major ADF platforms, will be a key part of defence strategy for the foreseeable future. The South-East Asian region continues to be a fast growing area both in terms of economy and political influence. The economic mining boom will continue to see large infrastructure growth in the Northwest of the country - a wet tropical region vastly different to the eastern and southern regions of our country; it is in these south east areas where the majority of defence personnel are trained, and equipment (including major platforms) are tested.

The different climates that the country experiences will produce unforeseen effects on both equipment and personnel (e.g. water condensing in patrol boat fuel lines due to high ambient humidity). To understand and compensate for these different climatic conditions on both equipment and personnel should be an important aspect of defence readiness that must not be overlooked in the white paper. The "troppo" effect of the build-up to monsoon season, is a well known occurrence for inhabitants in the Top End.

In order that personnel remain effective during such times, the ADF will need to have developed effective procedures for all endeavors it carries out under such climatic conditions. In developing such procedures, it must be remembered that the cognitive ability of personnel may be of more importance than their physical ability in these extreme climates.

b) Human Integration into Society

The widespread roles of the ADF (National Security, Defending Sovereignty, Stabilizing Operations, Disaster Relief, Fighting Terrorism etc) exposes its personnel to many stressful and varied situations, most usually enmeshed on a background of different cultures. The long term effect of these new situations on the ability to integrate back into Australian civilian life is little understood. After a sustained period in the Defence Force, the transition back to civilian life continues to be difficult for many service personnel. While support is available in many forms, updated research is needed to better understand how the current roles of the ADF can and do affect the ability for returning service personnel to integrate back into civilian roles. The Northern climes and isolation from family networks drives vicarious trauma deeper into

the cognition which in turn stimulates the anger component in adult separation anxiety. This will have a significant impact indirectly on retention.

c) Bio-security

While an orchestrated outbreak of a pathogen may be targeted at the high population centres of the country, the chances of a natural or unintentional outbreak would be highest closest to the major population centres of the world – South East Asia. The ADF would need the ability of rapid deployment to contain the spread of such an outbreak (with other appropriate authorities) in the north of the country, as well as being able to call upon the diverse and often unique biological research assets that exist in the north.

Bio-security can also be enhanced with an expanded and versatile NORFORCE, equipped with marine and equine capabilities.

d) Humanitarian

Since the East Timor crisis the ADF has evolved into a world renowned peace keeper and effective humanitarian operation. This professional approach has resulted in delivering rapid stability in the host community and a 'safety shield' for the diggers. A successful strategic direction recognized in the minimal casualties experienced in the ADF since East Timor. Charles Darwin University has recognized expertise in developing Australia's first Humanitarian degree and a partnership between CDU and ADFA can only strengthen the ADF's Humanitarian platform.

e) NORFORCE

As a military model NORFORCE has effectively demonstrated an organizational ability to bridge the cultural divide that exists between the Indigenous collective constructs and the mainstream individualist constructs.

NORFORCE, being army, is a very collective organization, and since WW2 the army's egalitarian approach in recruiting Indigenous people has engendered significant respect with all the elders across the North. Indigenous people identify with the army's collective values and strict discipline. NORFORCE personnel are in the main community based but its training activities suit the 'collective group' and the semi nomadic motivations of indigenous tradition.

NORFORCE also harnesses the collective labour ability of indigenous community and delivers it as capital value. The capital value of NORFORCE is its ability to deliver long range patrols across the North thereby protecting Australia's interests with highly skilled stealthy, bush craft.

NORFORCE should be enhanced with marine and equine capacity, and expanded and resourced to two regiments. This would also have a benefit as a significant social infrastructure investment to sustainably 'close the gap'. Two thousand employed Indigenous soldiers stationed across our Northern coasts and in our deserts would provide indigenous people with REAL employment, and for the young the hope for employment. The economic impact of two regiments would go a long way to removing poverty and marginalization.

Highly trained and mounted NORFORCE Regiments enable a much higher security protocol for Australia and a solution to the collective/mainstream divide.

I agree to my submission being published on the Defence website

I agree to my submission being quoted in the Community Consultation Report