
Sent: Monday, 4 August 2008 18:33
To: White Paper
Subject: WWW Submission: 13. Miscellaneous [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

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Submission: A 1000 word limit to respond to such a key government document is ridiculous, but as this is what has been imposed...

the ADF has announced that it will, at long long last, promote ADF recruitment to ethnic communities; as the first of my ethnic group to have served in our Navy I argued this case for years, only to be given all sorts of excuses; but to be effective you do need current and ex serving personnel such as myself to work on such key programs it is critical that recruitment and PR target the vast multicultural population of Australia for a host of reasons including better understanding of potential threats due to cultural insights, increasing ADF numbers, better communications with nations overseas, in house interpreting...

further, as a former teacher I am aware better than most just how limited the otherwise great ADF personnel are who visit schools to promote the ADF; that unit NEEDS persons with both ADF and teaching backgrounds, even if 'only' Reserve, so as to best get at what kids want to learn, what questions they ask and what happens after they return to their units; sadly, all too often, they are unable to provide what a class room teacher and a class of students seek due to their own backgrounds on the issue of personnel, current recruitment standards are, with respect, too severe; a person wearing glasses the day of assessment will be rejected but if they need them the day after, they are accepted; also, some 40% of the Australian population is obese - to require all recruits to be of a combat fitness level places a restriction on otherwise brilliant and capable personnel who could fill many a office/ administration/ non combat role of which there are so many in the ADF but unless this is done then the ADF will continue to lose out on attracting the best personnel it is also absolutely ridiculous that a person can be seen to enlist and the waiting times for assessments, examinations and boards can be as long as one year but at least six months; this is absurd given our needs in the ADF and the fact that some people will be forced to seek another role as they wait and wait, a role that could impose limitations that otherwise would not have existed there is also a need not to be too demanding in boards etc as there are many candidates who could well learn "on the job" but who on the day of a board are nervous as happened to me when I sought to return to service; are there adequate numbers of billets for personnel? this has been a problem for years cadets are a great way of instilling all types of relevant values to youth and yet the Howard government's investment in that area was totally pathetic as the Commanding Officer of one state's body then so advised me - the money then granted by Howard was superficial and did not result in one additional billet, one additional instructor or one additional cadet recruit; the cadet program should be expanded with more instructors, more units and more places for more cadets, including ethnic Australian youth who are interested as my former experience teaching at Melbourne High School proved too many bases have been closed over the past twenty years such that, for example, the Navy only has one real base in Victoria, that being HMAS Cerberus, and this has created many problems for personnel especially Reservists; greater use should be made of Victoria Barracks and nearby locations to achieve specific needs; equipment has always been an issue; while I am unable to be accurate as to today's situation, it was a joke years ago that personnel had to buy their own gear and bring their own private equipment; but then given numerous media articles and exposes last year it appears that this has not changed I also refer you to the many service that the USA offers current and ex personnel and how much further they go to support their people I am a firm believer in the Coast Guard mooted as ALP policy especially if Reserve personnel can also serve in this area as with the USA; such a body is critical for Australia's security, can be accommodated through much smaller and less costly boats than the Armidale or other patrol boat class and ensures that Reservists can train outside of the class room the training arm of each service needs qualified teachers and trainers - there is a real difference - but at present the emphasis appears to be far more towards trainers; yet teachers have other skills beyond training and they have a place that can be of value especially when dealing with some younger personnel I am amazed that we have a very limited Emergency List; at present,

to join this list one needs to be a Lt (Navy) or higher and yet personnel with years of training and experience and a continuing interest to be available are excluded due to an arbitrary decision made many years ago; many a former ADF person could be "drafted" into this arm of service and should be at least asked to so consider to ensure that, in time of need, personnel can be accessed who require far less training than raw civilian recruits

I know that in reviewing this submission it may appear that I am negative. Far from it. I love the Navy and would dearly love to return, regular (if based in Melbourne) or Reserve. But positive comments will be common place and would not serve the true purpose of the White paper - to examine the future (immediate and long terms) defence and security needs of our nation.

I believe in the ADF and am sincerely pleased that this inquiry is under way

I agree to my submission being published on the Defence website

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