

DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

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Submission to the Defence White Paper Team

Attached is a submission from this Association which addresses Categories 1 and 6 for your consideration.

DFWA thanks the team for the opportunity to contribute to this important review.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'David K Jamison'.

David K Jamison, AM.
National President
Defence Force Welfare Association



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Tailoring the ADF Forces for the Unknown

Preamble

The lessons of history are able to be viewed in such a way that allows every situation to then be interpreted to meet almost any view. However, like the laws of physics there are some measures that are unchangeable and should always be considered. There are also dynamic factors concerning the culture of Australia itself, the changing nature of warfare, the rise of new agendas (global warming, globalization, extremism), the changing nature of our "enemies" and the increasing lethality of new weapons.

The central question for the ADF is: how to raise, equip, train, retain, maintain and deploy a force that is capable of dealing with a range of threats that require quite different responses?

The major options that must be considered at the strategic level are:

1. **Conventional War** requiring a high-tech, hard hitting capability. Such conventional force was required for the original invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, and would be required for the defence of mainland Australia;
2. A "**Limited War**" capability – requiring forces capable of carrying out specific missions of limited duration and objectives. For instance, on several occasions the ADF has positioned naval and army forces for a 'civilian evacuation' role in Fiji, with the possibility that the Fijian Defence Forces would have resisted and caused casualties;
3. An **anti-Terrorist capability** – of highly trained specialists for deployment to places such as Iraq and Afghanistan, or with the ability to carry out high-risk surveillance, close protection and hostage rescue missions, including within Australia;
4. "**Peacekeeping**" missions and '**police actions**'- requiring a lightly armed force to assist 'failed states'. This has already been done with the deployments to the Solomon Islands and Timor Leste in which the military weapons are purely for self-defence. This role must also include those small symbolic elements attached to UN Missions in various countries, but may also involve the deployment of combat soldiers as required in Rwanda and Somalia;
5. **Humanitarian Aid** PNG, Indonesia (Acch Tsunami Relief) including as a sub-category 'aid to the civil power' in Australia for flood and bushfire assistance, or deployment to aid communities after natural disasters (Darwin 1974-75 after Cyclone Tracy). This role may also include 'nation-building' efforts such as those involving armed engineering units in Afghanistan or to remote aboriginal communities that have lost social cohesion;

Therefore, the problem is how to cover all these options with a balance that allows the ADF to develop and maintain sufficient capability to meet each and all of these requirements without spreading itself so thin that it becomes unable to deliver on some of them.

It would be naïve to think that 'military capabilities and necessity' are going to have sufficient influence on the White Paper to build a military capable of all of the above



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functions. As in the 1930s the military is in caretaker mode, but at least on this occasion with a limited deployment capability.

The Failure of Strategic Intelligence

Without a detailed examination it appears that the last Defence White paper released 15 years ago did not identify as threats or likely occurrences such events as terrorism, the creation of a new nation to our north, Timor Leste; the failure of the Solomon Islands as a state, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, or our involvement in them; peacekeeping missions to Rwanda and Somalia, or one single event that subsequently occurred. Despite satellites and electronic surveillance the CIA missed the movement of 180,000 Russians (14 Divisions) to the border and invading Afghanistan in 1979. Most recently, in 2008, no intelligence agency predicted the Russian invasion of South Ossetia in Georgia.

This failure of strategic intelligence is reminiscent of the joke about the retiring Intelligence Officer who first listed all his achievements then added '... but I am not perfect. In thirty years of intelligence work I did have two failures: I did not see or predict WW1 or WW2, but apart from that ...'. In short, relying on intelligence as a means of constructing a defence capability is a recipe for disaster and the loss of nationhood to the hegemony of others, even without the need to resort to arms.

The Recruiting Base & the Shape of Things to Come

In many ways warfare has never changed. The Falklands War of 1982 was to be a mechanized affair, yet when the Atlantic Conveyor was sunk the soldiers had to march over 80km in adverse conditions to the battlefield. The infantry will always require the 'muscle power' to march to battle. However, modern weaponry is now far more technical than ever with armed drones, remote surveillance, communications intercepts, etc requiring a new type of 'studious' soldier, one who might not have the physical attributes of the infantry, or who even regards himself as in the 'military'. These types are the new breed of 'warrior', ones who are good at computer games, but cannot march 40 km. Such people are essential, but are unlikely to be attracted to the military in its current form. The current under-manning of our fleet and poor recruitment for the navy emphasize this point already.

The second point that is also a strategic concern for Australia, is the changing ethnic mix. The military is not attracting the new immigrants. With exceptions such as Norfolk, Defence attracts the vast majority of its members from the white, Anglo-Saxon population. As this declines as a proportion of the total population so does the present source of recruits.

Mobilising the Population & our Allies

Australia cannot support a defence force of sufficient size to meet all of the potential threats nor commitments it faces. The continued failure of strategic intelligence to identify, predict and allow us to prepare must be factored into our national defence strategy. This leads to the conclusion that there are three complementary options:

1. Alliances with stronger nations (effectively the USA at the moment);
2. A broad strategy of highly trained regular core force able to provide at least the present planned level of operational capability as well as cadres capable of training the third category at short notice; and
3. A large "militia" of volunteers, ex-regular personnel and auxiliary civilian specialists (particularly in IT, communications and logistics {e.g. STUFT* sailors}).

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This leads to the conclusion that initiatives such as the 'gap year' service (despite its apparent poor return of effective service on the investment) is a good way of gearing the services for a high degree of training commitment while producing a pool of trained servicemen. This can be made highly attractive in several ways, through short deployments to Timor, the NT, the Solomon Islands, or even 'battlefield tours' of PNG, Vietnam and Gallipoli. Other initiatives such as the Cadet Corps have proven to equally successful and are capable of further development to expand the potential for willing recruits for the ADF.

One aspect that requires serious attention by government is the absolute need to provide attractive conditions of service including those applying "post service" such as superannuation, compensation and rehabilitation. These need to be seen to be fair as well as recognizing the demands and restrictions placed on those serving with the ADF. This is an area of great concern to both serving and former serving ADF members and unless it is adequately addressed will see any recruiting and retention efforts by the Government seriously hampered by a negative attitude by those people which will radiate out into the wider general community.

Other Issues

The other issue that space precludes is the requirement to maintain a defence research and manufacturing capacity in Australia, irrespective of the cost of the materials produced. The development of the highly effective 'Bushmaster' is an example of what can be done.

*STUFT - Ships taken up from trade.