MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR INVESTMENT TO REFORM DEFENCE ICT

The Minister for Defence, the Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP today announced that the Government will invest more than $940 million over the next four years to reform and remediate the Defence information environment and its supporting infrastructure.

“In the 21st Century, Defence will be more dependent than ever on information to drive decision making. By 2012 the Defence information and communications technology (ICT) reform and remediation program will deliver a more secure and robust ICT capability that supports our war fighters and business requirements,” Mr Fitzgibbon said.

Mr Fitzgibbon said in order to address long-term underinvestment in Defence ICT the Government will allocate $660 million across the next four years to reform access to, and management of, Defence information. An additional $280 million will also be spent on replacing obsolete hardware and improving information security.

“A number of reviews have highlighted that Defence ICT systems have been grossly under-funded for years, and have been developed in independent silos resulting in high levels of complexity, fragmentation, duplication and redundancy leading to poor performance and unreliability issues,” Mr Fitzgibbon said.

“In the future Defence will have one standard underlying computer environment to enable secure access to information through a single user interface. Currently this is heavily stove-piped requiring multiple desktops and passwords.

“This investment will improve computer systems to deliver a more integrated payroll and personnel management capability and a better coordination of estate management. New capabilities such as the automation of procurement, personnel and pay administration, vetting, recruitment, estate management and management reporting will be progressively introduced...
“The Government is determined to deliver the capabilities and systems required to allow deployed commanders and strategic decision makers to have a single view of the battle space, and are able to access the wide range of data from sensors and sources that they need.

“This will require technologies that simplify the process of reviewing, collating and sharing real-time information. This increased demand for collaboration will drive further use of internet technologies,” Mr Fitzgibbon said.

The reform program will deliver business efficiencies and lower long-term costs. These initiatives are consistent with the recommendations in the Gershon review into the Australian government’s use of ICT, and the outcomes sought from that review.

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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