Our mission — to defend Australia and its national interests — at times, requires our people to operate in hostile or hazardous environments. Protecting our people is therefore paramount in all activities undertaken by Defence. We cannot protect our nation if we do not first protect the health and safety of our people.

Achieving our safety vision requires us all to be focussed on the work health and safety of our people. The Defence Work Health and Safety Strategy 2017–2022 gives effect to the health, wellness and safety priority in our recently released Pathway to Change: Evolving Defence Culture 2017–2022.

A focus on health, wellness and safety is important to ensure Defence capability is maximised and sustainable. Importantly, work health and safety is everyone’s responsibility. Safe practice must be inherent in how we think and act. Each one of us has a duty to prevent harm to ourselves and others through identifying hazards and managing risks in our workplace, whether they be physical or psychological. When our people are adversely affected by their work, we must support their recovery, and their ongoing contribution to delivering the Defence mission.

Our Strategy sets the direction for the Department to achieve our safety vision, and identifies areas in which to focus our efforts.

The Defence Work Health and Safety Strategy 2017–2022 is structured around four focus areas:

- **Health and Safety Conscious People** – Safe practices must become inherent in the way we think and act. We must continue to support our people by providing them with the knowledge, skills, equipment and work environment they need to do their jobs safely and to remain healthy.

- **Healthy and Safe Workplaces** – The integration of work health and safety in all Defence activities will help provide the highest level of protection that is reasonably practicable. This includes a focus on workplace behaviours and psychological wellbeing as well as physical safety.

- **Health and Safety across the Capability Life Cycle** – The inclusion of work health and safety considerations and the possible effects on the workforce are considered from capability design through to disposal decisions.

- **Safety Assurance and Continuous Improvement** – We must learn from our experiences and identify opportunities for improvement.

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Mr Greg Moriarty  
Secretary  
September 2017

ACM Mark Binskin, AC  
Chief of the Defence Force  
September 2017