

## **Senate Standing Committee Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade**

Parliamentary inquiry – Implications of climate change for Australia's national security - 20 March 2018

### **ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

Department of Defence

**Topic:** SSCFADT - Implication of climate change for Australia's national security - 20 March 18 – Q14 – Gallacher

**Question reference number:** 14

**Senator** Alex Gallacher

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 6 April 2018

#### **Question:**

The Defence submission suggests climate change could affect the maintenance and operational performance major Australian Defence Force assets. Please provide examples of how this could occur.

#### **Answer:**

Climate change is altering the bio-physical environment in which Defence operates. This has flow on effects to capability and maintenance. These impacts may be positive or negative.

For example:

- More extreme weather events or weather events occurring outside normal ranges/patterns may directly damage equipment; with flow on to availability, maintenance and cost.
- More demanding conditions (wind/wave/humidity) may reduce platform performance or increase wear and tear on platforms; with flow on to availability, maintenance and cost.
- Extreme heat may impact military performance through multiple pathways, including:
  - direct impacts on system performance with flow on to availability, maintenance and cost;
  - impact on maintenance operators – impacting maintenance schedules; and
  - impact on energy infrastructure (power outages) – impacting maintenance schedules.
- Increase in ocean acidification could reduce the build-up of marine crustaceans on ship hulls reducing the requirements for hull de-fouling.



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### **ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

Department of Defence

**Topic:** SSCFADT - Implication of climate change for Australia's national security -  
20 March 18 – Q22 – Gallacher

**Question reference number:** 22

**Senator:** Alex Gallacher

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 6 April 2018

#### **Question:**

To what extent is the Australian Civil-Military Centre considering climate change and its impacts? How is it evaluating and addressing these impacts?

#### **Answer:**

The Australian Civil-Military Centre (ACMC) incorporates consideration of the potential impact of climate change in every aspect of its work where it applies to the ACMC's mission. The ACMC supports the development of civil-military-police capabilities to prevent, prepare for and respond more effectively to conflicts and disasters overseas. It does this through enhancing whole-of-government preparedness for offshore crisis response by supporting interagency: exercises; education and training; research and lessons learned. The ACMC is not the policy lead in these areas, it supports interagency connectedness. Consideration of the potential consequences of climate change is inherent in ACMC's work on regional disaster management and civil-military-police cooperation. ACMC has supported exercises in which the impact of environmental impacts is a consideration and promotes training and education on integrated risk management. ACMC promotes the Integrated Approach to policy development and joint interagency planning for offshore deployments for contingencies where climate change associated risks are operational considerations. Climate change is also an emerging theme in the ACMC's support for the implementation of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. Climate change risks will be considered at the forthcoming inaugural ASEAN-Australia Women Peace and Security Dialogue under the topic Gender and Disaster Management: From Risk Reduction to Recovery. ACMC will facilitate this multiagency Dialogue. ACMC has recommended that climate associated risks be addressed in the next National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

ACMC's mandate includes conducting research and lessons learned evaluation of integrated civil-military-police operations overseas. Where these operations include aspects of disaster prevention, management and response these impacts are addressed in report considerations and recommendations. As the ACMC role is to focus on operational planning and deployments its consideration of the impact of climate change concentrates on the implications of more frequent and severe disasters that may require more substantial responses than in the past.

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### **ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

Department of Defence

**Topic:** SSCFADT - Implication of climate change for Australia's national security - 20 March 18 – Q23 – Gallacher

**Question reference number:** 23

**Senator:** Alex Gallacher

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 6 April 2018

#### **Question:**

Many submissions recommended the development of a Climate Security Strategy to build on the 2016 Defence White Paper. Are there plans for such a document?

#### **Answer:**

As noted in the 2016 Defence White Paper, climate change is one factor that will contribute to state fragility, including within our immediate neighbourhood, and exacerbate the challenges of population growth and environmental degradation.

Defence is well placed to respond to these anticipated security effects of climate change. The Department's improved amphibious and strategic lift capabilities provide Australia's ability to contribute towards humanitarian and disaster relief operations.

The Department of Environment and Energy is the Government lead on climate change policy. While any such strategy would need to be directed by the Government, Defence is committed to supporting interagency mechanisms to address the challenges of climate change.